The Dichotomous Unity of Enterprise-Strategy Discourse in Interviews with Small-Firm Owner-Managers

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by

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Abstract

This thesis adds to the literature on strategy and enterprise discourses by analysing *how* they are used in interviews with small-firm owner-managers.

The literature describes features of strategy and enterprise discourses and their shaping by historical developments. There is much work on the operation of these two discourses at societal and large-organisation levels. Much less researched is how these discourses are used by small-firm managers or how these discourses interact in use.

This work characterises a particular discourse-analytical approach to the research interview as suitable for advancing the literature. Small, young publishing firms producing business magazines in late 'Celtic Tiger' Ireland are argued as an apposite context. Detailed analysis of three selected interviews illustrates the relevance of enterprise and strategy discourses in the particular ways these owner-managers talk. Drawing on the notion of ideological dilemmas, this work gives an explicit account of how strategy and enterprise discourses are used and interrelated in a manner described here as a 'dichotomous unity'. This unity depends not only on the discourses' commonalities but also on the dilemmatic tensions between them. These tensions allow creative and subtle uses of the unified discourse. Yet these same dilemmas also constrain the discourse within the bounds marked out by them.

The persistence and creativity, noted by the literature, in the use of enterprise and strategy discourses is explained by the interpretation offered here. This work also stresses the need to research these discourses as two aspects of the same phenomenon. The interview method used reveals the wholeness of a discourse that other methods might show as fractured. Discourse analysts generally recognise that people both shape, and are shaped by discourses. By explicating how strategy and enterprise discourses operate, this work adds to human agency. Small-firm managers may become more aware of the constraints otherwise implicit in enterprise-strategy discourse. Policymakers may gain an appreciation of the discursive balance that the promotion of enterprise and strategy demands of small-business managers, along with the kind of costs such balancing might entail.

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List of Abbreviations

BCE	Before the Common (or Christian) Era
CA	Conversation Analysis
CEB	County Enterprise Boards (Ireland)
CEC	Commission of the European Communities
CECEIDG	Commission of the European Communities Enterprise and Industry Directorate-General
CEO	Chief Executive Officer
CEU	Council of the European Union
CDA	Critical Discourse Analysis
CIPD	Culture, Ideology, Policy and Discourse
CRO	Companies Registration Office (Ireland)
CSO	Central Statistics Office (Ireland)
DA	Discourse Analysis
DASP	Discourse Analysis for Social Psychology
DOET&E	Department of Enterprise, Trade and Employment (Ireland)
DTP	Desk-Top Publishing
Ed.	Editor or edition
Eds.	Editors
EB	'Eoin' Brendan (used to refer to particular extracts in the interview between Eoin and Brendan)
EI	Enterprise Ireland
ESRI	Economic and Social Research Institute (Ireland)
IDA	Industrial Development Authority (Ireland)
IMI	Irish Management Institute
LUCID-DA	Literature-engaged, Unbundled, Context-constituting, Interpretative and Detailed Discourse Analysis
NACE	Nomenclature statistique des activités économiques dans la Communauté européenne (European industrial activity classification)

List of Abbreviations (continued)

NESC	National Economic and Social Council (Ireland)
NCC	National Competitiveness Council (Ireland)
NI	Northern Ireland
NNI	National Newspapers of Ireland
Orig.	Originally published
Para.	Paragraph
PB	'Paul' Brendan (used to refer to particular extracts in the interview between Paul and Brendan)
PD	Progressive Democrats (A political party in Ireland)
PPA	Periodical Publishers Association (United Kingdom)
PPA-I	Periodical Publishers Association of Ireland
RoI	Republic of Ireland
Trans.	Translator
UB	'Una' Brendan (used to refer to particular extracts in the interview between Una and Brendan)
US	United States (of America)

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CHAPTER 1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Introduction

This chapter argues that the academic literatures of both corporate strategy and enterprise are made richer by discourse-analytical contributions. It also shows how the thesis is structured to achieve its aim.The aim of this research is to examine ***how*** enterprise and strategy discourses are used by the owner-managers of small firms. This aim can be further elaborated into the following questions:

> 1) How are the grand discourses of enterprise and strategy, as described in the literature, relevant to the talk of owner-managers of small firms?
>
> 2) How, if at all, does the way owner-managers talk of strategy and enterprise vary?
>
> 3) How will the discourses of enterprise and strategy be used in relation to each other?

1.2 The academic literatures of strategy and enterprise

1.2.1 From organisational performance to the discourse analysis of strategy

Across a broad and diverse range of perspectives, it has been taken for granted that strategy is all about "… achieving an organization's purpose …" (De Wit & Meyer, 2004:590). The prescriptive schools (as described by Mintzberg, Ahlstrand, & Lampel, 1998) have gone so far as to insist that strategic learning has progressed enough to give strong advice on how superior organisational performance might be achieved through strategy (e.g. Porter, 1980). Even in over-viewing all their 10 strategy schools (including the descriptive schools), Mintzberg et al. (1998: 361-366) see the key questions as: "How tightly integrated should a good strategy be?" and "… what forms of … strategic style … are most effective?". These questions are declared important for "… those who have the ultimate responsibility for all this – managers of our organizations…" (Mintzberg et al., 1998:368). There are, of course, debates about what organisational purpose is or ought to be (Hayek, 1969; Freeman, 1984; Kay, 1995). However, the question of what strategy should be most good for, most effective for and what the 'all this' that Mintzberg's managers are responsible for is not made clear or questioned: The implicit assumption in Mintzberg's comprehensive survey of strategy is that the aim of strategy, and indeed academic effort in strategy, is

the optimisation of organisational performance. Levy, Alvesson, & Willmott (2003:93) point out that such an approach has taken "… for granted the historical and political conditions under which managerial priorities are determined and enacted."

In recent years, an increasing number of voices have taken the study of strategy beyond the confines of studying strategy as the science of optimising organisational performance. Knights & Morgan (1991:252) develop "a framework for the critical analysis of corporate strategy … [in which the] central concern is the emergence, development and reproduction of the discourse of strategy *per se*" (italics in original). Although Knights & Morgan (1991) draw on a critical tradition and are anxious to reveal the power effects of strategy, it is important to stress that this approach does not merely broaden strategy beyond the optimisation of organisational performance from a capitalist or managerial viewpoint (i.e. the optimisation of the interests of those who currently are the most powerful in the organisation). Rather this approach turns away from viewing strategy merely as an instrument of any organisational purpose and instead seeks to study strategy as a phenomenon in itself.

This turn to studying strategy less as a means to an end and more as a phenomenon in itself is not just the preserve of discourse analysts. The turn seems to be gathering momentum, particularly under the label of strategy-as-practice (Whittington, 1996; Hendry, 2000; Jarzabkowski, 2003) which draws on the work of De Certeau (1984), Giddens (1984) and Bourdieu (1990). Since discourse analysts view discourse as a practice, those who take the strategy-as-practice approach can argue that it incorporates discourse-analytical approaches to strategy (Jarzabkowski, Balogun, & Seidl, 2007), though it is claimed by some that DA might be capable of taking a more critical stance on strategy (Thomas, 2006). In any case, the broadening of our vision, from seeing strategy only as a tool an organisation acquires to achieve organisational purpose to also seeing it as something people do (as a discourse or a practice), has radical implications.

One of these radical implications concerns the units of analysis used in strategy and their interrelationships. As Whittington (2004:64) puts it viewing, strategy as a phenomenon in itself

> "…takes the level of analysis both above and below the firm. From a sociological perspective, the concern moves up a level, to consider strategy as a broad field of social activity … it is not so much firm performance that matters as strategy's performance as an entire field. From a

> managerial perspective, the concern shifts down a level, to get inside firms' overall strategy processes to the actual activities of strategy's practitioners."

Jarzabkowski (2004:544), too, points out that viewing strategy in this way allows a greater understanding of how strategy "occurs as the interplay within and between levels and categories of analysis". Thus studying strategy as a phenomenon in itself allows us to be "... mindful of the fact that discourses [or activities or practices] are not contained by organizations but cross through them and are related to the wider social, political and culture contexts of which they are part …" (Palmer and Dunford 2002: 1065). Or, as Watson & Bargiela-Chiappini (1998:285-286) put it: "Managers have numerous sources to draw upon in making sense of their situation, these ranging from their national culture, a corporate culture, an occupational culture, a popular culture and so on." There are other advantages to viewing strategy as a discourse or any other form of practice. These advantages are well discussed elsewhere (e.g. Whittington, 2004) but a focus on the benefits of DA is warranted here.

DA is a good approach to studying strategising. Even those who hold the more functionalist perspective of strategy observe that strategic management is often very hard for 'soft' reasons, so that some cultural perspective is needed (e.g. Pascale, Millemann, & Gioja, 1997). DA is one such perspective that is particularly suited where language is considered important. Language is important in strategy. Roos, Von Krogh, & Brønn (1996:55) have observed that "Strategy processes or strategising is essentially a series of conversations." DA work has shown the role of discourses in shaping strategy in a variety of organisations (Knights & Morgan, 1995; Hardy, Palmer, & Phillips, 2000; Ng & De Cock, 2002; Samra-Fredericks, 2004). Clegg, Carter, & Kornberger (2004:27) argue that it "… is the language of strategy that is the defining characteristic of contemporary strategy. It is what delineates strategy in the 'here and now' with what went before …". If language is so important for strategy, it is reasonable to suppose that a DA of strategy is needed.

1.2.2 From promotion and personalities to discourse analysis of enterprise

There are many streams to the enterprise literature and many reviews of that large, diverse and rapidly expanding literature. Within the mainstream, the field has been broadly defined as involving "… the study of sources of opportunities; the processes of discovery, evaluation, and exploitation of opportunities; and the set of individuals who discover, evaluate, and exploit them." (Shane & Venkataraman, 2000: 218). This

definition, though broad, would appear to focus on just one of Hjorth's (2002) 'genres' of entrepreneurship. Hjorth (2002:148) also points to studies of strategic entrepreneurship and to a genre of organisational theoretical writings where more "reflexivity on enterprise itself" can be found. Perhaps this shows the importance of taking account of national differences in enterprise research (Aldrich, 2000). Looking at Cornelius, Landström & Persson's (2006) list of eight clusters at the frontiers of entrepreneurship research also shows a broader field; entrepreneurship is linked with all of the following: innovation and regional development; strategy; ethnic business; women; legal aspects; financial aspects; self-employment; sociology of capitalism. Though broad, this review is a bibliometric study of articles having a word beginning with 'entrep' in the title, abstract or keywords. Words beginning with 'entrep' include *entrep*reneurship and *entrep*reneur but not *enterprise*. So Cornelius et al. (2006) exclude studies with only 'enter' rather than entrep words in their headings, for example, studies of enterprise discourse or culture. Other bibliographic studies also provide insightful overviews of work on entrepreneurship (e.g. Schildt, Zahra, & Sillanpää, 2006) but all have to make choices similar to Cornelius et al. (2006) that downplay some elements of the literature. Blackburn & Smallbone (2008), by confining themselves to UK work, provide a reasonably comprehensive and historically informed overview of small-firm and entrepreneurship research that "… is now a distinctive field of academic enquiry …" (Blackburn, & Smallbone, 2008: 268). Trying to capture a broader international view, Gartner (2008: 362) is driven to verse:

> "So what can the promise of entrepreneurship scholarship be?
> Can the field differentiate itself by being about opportunity? (Shane & Venkataraman, 2000)
> When there is so much variety in the topics we see?

Clearly, providing a survey of the whole territory is quite difficult and beyond the scope of this work; however, locating my work within the enterprise literature is part of what needs to be done here. My work is not located in the large stream of work that can be recognised from its "… obsession with dividing the world into entrepreneurs and nonentrepreneurs …" (Sarasvathy, 2004: 707). Such research has not only focused on the individual, "…it has also stressed the most innate of mental states and processes – intuition, judgment, wisdom, experience, insight" (Shane & Venkataraman, 2000: 218). Neither is my research focused on the more 'objective' side of measuring the opportunities that entrepreneurs might recognise or the

population-level factors that might determine rates of entrepreneurial activity. Rather, my research seeks to participate particularly in the academic conversations about enterprise which take enterprise as a phenomenon in itself, whether that phenomenon be considered a culture, an ideology, a policy or a discourse (Armstrong, 2005). Whereas these approaches can be quite different from – and even at times quite hostile to (see for example, Armstrong's (2001a) polemic against discursive approaches) – each other, culture, ideology, policy and discourse (CIPD) studies of enterprise do overlap and inform each other more tightly than other aspects of the study of enterprise.

The CIPD literature on enterprise largely developed in response to political changes, especially in the UK where the stress on enterprise in the policy of Margaret Thatcher was adopted by the administrations that followed her. By the early 1990s, volumes of collected works of those taking a critical approach to enterprise culture were published (Burrows, 1991; Keat & Abercrombie, 1991; Hargreaves, Heap & Ross, 1992; Heelas & Morris, 1992). These volumes used notions of culture (Morris, 1991; Ritchie, 1991) and discourse (Fairclough, 1991; Hobbs, 1991; Selden, 1991) to examine enterprise. Carr (2000a) examines enterprise as a cultural policy and Armstrong (2001b) looks at enterprise as ideology. Whereas the CIPD approach has been associated with a left-wing political perspective, this is not necessarily the case, as the works of Lavoie & Chamlee-Wright (2000) and McCloskey (2006) clearly demonstrate.

The CIPD approach has often been concerned with the macro, political and societal level. Where CIPD researchers have looked at the more micro level, it has been to trace macro, political concerns through to the level of the sector, organisation and individual. Du Gay (1996a) traces how enterprise culture is actively consumed by individuals in the retail sector and examines "… some of the effects that their 'tactics of consumption' have for the process of 'labeling from above'." (Du Gay, 1996a: 148). Llewellyn, Lawton, Edwards, & Jones (2000), Alexiadou (2001) and Cohen, Musson & Duberley (2004) examine how enterprise has fared in public-sector organisations. Storey, Salaman & Platman (2005) look at enterprise at the sectoral and individual freelancer level in the commercial media industry.

Much of this more micro-level CIPD work seems to be concerned with looking at how public and commercial bureaucracies are attempting to refashion

their practices on the model of the small commercial business, the ideal of the entrepreneurial firm. This work is valuable and appropriate in order to understand the practice of how "Defining internal organizational relations 'as if' they were customer/supplier relations means replacing bureaucratic regulation and stability with the constant uncertainties of the market, and thus requiring enterprise from employees" (Du Gay & Salaman, 1992: 615). However since "Enterprise has remorselessly reconceptualized and remodeled almost everything in its path" (Du Gay & Salaman, 1992: 622), a relatively unexplored question is: how has enterprise as a discourse affected its native home of the proprietorial business? Carr (2000a) does examine how small business has been subjected to a policy of enterprise, but what does this, and the general prevalence of enterprise, mean for the discourse used by small-firm proprietors? Only a few studies have focused on enterprise culture, discourse or ideology in the context of small firms. Blackburn, Curran, & Woods (1992) looked at enterprise culture in small service firms. Pitt (1998:387), for example, found that, when "… exploring the context-particular, experiential knowledge of entrepreneurs", it was useful "to treat their narrative explanations of how their firms have developed as *quasi* texts containing implicit, personal theories of managerial action" (italics in original). Others were moving explicitly from the macro observations of the CIPD approach to their empirical investigation of how enterprise "is experienced and constructed by people who are involved in small businesses on a daily basis, or whose organisations have had to become more 'entrepreneurial' in their orientation" Cohen & Musson (2000:33). Rae (2004) uses DA in a similar way to develop practice-based theories of entrepreneurship. Warren (2004) examined how the discourses of enterprise and professionalism interacted in the context of women transitioning to entrepreneurial roles. Rigg (2005) used a DA approach in exploring how the formal management education of managers might affect the discursive practice of their organisations. The empirical section of this work aims to contribute in the spirit of these more micro-orientated discourse-analytical works.

1.3 Organisation of the rest of the thesis

Chapter 2 provides a literature review. It signals where in the ongoing theoretical conversations of the academy the contribution of this work will be made. Academics do not live in a world apart from practitioners. This means that, in describing the

academic literature on the discourses of strategy and enterprise, Chapter 2 simultaneously provides knowledge of one of the discursive resources, in this case the academic, from which practitioners can draw in talking about strategy and enterprise.

The methodological choices made in this work are described in Chapter 3. In line with the particular discourse-analytical approach that I adopt, it is hoped that my methodological choices are unbundled in a way that makes their justification clear to a variety of readers. The choice of research instrument, the data selection and the description of the analytical method are also, it is hoped, such that these perennial issues that concern social science scholars are addressed in a way that does justice to both the strengths and limitations of my choices. Again, my academic account is not best achieved by pretending that my interviewees have no access to these resources, from which to build their own constructions of my methodological interactions with them. In particular, my academic account of the research interview may share common resources with how my interviewees construct the interviews.

The analysis presented in Chapters 4, 5, 6, and 7 describes how enterprise and strategy discourses are used in the interviews. Chapter 4 analyses the context in which the discourse used as topic was created. Chapters 5, 6 and 7 organised by interview for methodological reasons; this exposes something that might otherwise have remained hidden – the unity of the enterprise-strategy discourse. Here it is plain that Keynes was only writing a patronising partial truth when insightfully, and with his usual great style, he wrote:

> "Practical men, who believe themselves to be quite exempt from any intellectual influences, are usually the slaves of some defunct economist. Madmen in authority, who hear voices in the air, are distilling their frenzy from some academic scribbler of a few years back." (Keynes, 1973; 1936: 383)

The subtle and skilled achievements evident from my research interviews show a creativity that indeed does draw on defunct economists and academic scribblers, but also shows an inventiveness and appropriateness of use from which this academic scribbler in his frenzy has attempted to distil some scholarly insights. These insights relate primarily to how the discourses of enterprise and strategy are used by these practitioners, but are intended to be rendered in a way that completes and enhances, at least for this round, the circulation of discourses. Chapter 8 analyses the discourse material further by comparing the interviews and then attempts to synthesis the learning from the previous chapters.

The thesis concludes with Chapter 9 that draws together the lessons of the work and suggests implications that arise from it.

1.4 Conclusion

Now that the scene has been set, both in terms of the strategy and enterprise literatures' need for discourse-analytical work and of the structure of this work, the work of this thesis can begin in earnest in Chapter 2.

CHAPTER 2 THE DISCOURSES OF STRATEGY AND ENTERPRISE

2.1 Introduction

A 'discourse' in this work is understood in a number of senses. For example, a particular instance of talk, say a number of exchanges in a research interview or a passage from today's newspaper, can be called a discourse. A discourse may also refer to a particular recurring pattern of talk that is recognisable and separable from other talk in its shared characteristics, in terms of aspects such as vocabulary, metaphor, joint occurrence or history. In this chapter it is the latter meaning of discourse – discourse as a recurring pattern of talk – that is used, as the emergence of the discourses of first enterprise and then of strategy is discussed.

Reviewing the literature on strategy and enterprise from a discursive perspective means not just seeing the theoretical literature as being available only to the academy. Rather the literature is seen as forming part of the discursive resources circulating and interacting in society more generally. Breaking this circularity at any point risks the impression of a unidirectional relationship. However, acknowledging that the academic literature is part of the discursive resources from which practitioners may well draw, in the interactions under investigation, allows us to see an important function of this chapter. For:

> "*Sociological concepts thus obey what I call a double hermeneutic ...* there is a continual 'slippage' of the concepts constructed in sociology, whereby these are appropriated by those whose conduct they were originally coined to analyse and hence tend to become integral features *of* that conduct …" (italics in original) (Giddens, 1976:162).

Such use of the literature does not require the practitioners to be erudite in strategy or enterprise research, but merely that they live in a world where these discourses circulate. Thus this chapter not only places this thesis in the context of its academic conversation but also provides a context in which interactions about enterprise and strategy take place.

The task of tracing the separate origins of enterprise and strategy discourse is addressed in the next section of this chapter. The following section reviews the extant discourse-analytical research on strategy and enterprise. The chapter then closes with some conclusions based on what has been weaved together in this necessarily wide-ranging literature review. In particular, it will become clear at the end of this chapter

that there is a dearth of discourse-analytical research on the interaction between strategy and enterprise discourse in small firms.

2.2 The emergence of enterprise and strategy as discourses

2.2.1 Enterprise discourse: origins and extent

Enterprise discourse can be traced back to early writings on the entrepreneur in France, the United Kingdom and Germany. Until the 12th century, the typical use of the word *entrepreneur* in its native France was to describe the individual who, before the functions of planner, architect builder, etc became specialised, undertook the general responsibility for building castles, defences and cathedrals. As such functions became specialised, it appears that 'entrepreneur' came to mean the overall project-leader of, typically construction, works usually under privilege granted by government and often designed for defensive or military purposes (Hébert & Link, 2006:112-13). In the early 1730s, the Hiberno-French economist and businessman Richard Cantillon wrote of the 'entrepreneur' in his famous *Essai sur la commerce en general* (Cantillon, 1959: 167, orig., 1755). Cantillon used the concept of the entrepreneur to help explain – to those who still thought production was determined by direction of the landowners – the dynamic nature of the then emerging market system (O'Mahony, 1985:261). For Cantillon, the entrepreneur handled the uncertainty created by buying at known price and selling at unknown prices. As Hébert & Link (2006:18) point out, Cantillon's stress on economic *function* rather than social status was novel: "Social standing was practically irrelevant to Cantillon's notion of entrepreneurship". Cantillon's entrepreneur therefore represented a break with the established order of inherited tradition and property. Cantillon stressed that, although entrepreneurs needed to be able to risk something (uncertainty was inherent to his idea of the entrepreneur), what they risked could be merely their own invested labour.

Cantillon was one of the few economists explicitly referred to in Adam Smith's famous (1776) *Wealth of Nations* (Hayek, 1985 :217-218, orig. 1931). Smith used the word 'undertaker' where today we would use the word entrepreneur. He also used the two other contemporary equivalents of the French *entrepreneur*, 'adventurer' and 'projector', though in a rather disparaging way, since they then carried connotations of recklessness and excessive moral flexibility (Hébert & Link, 2006:37-

40). Smith stressed the role of undertaker or entrepreneur as a prudent provider of capital. C Wright Mills points out the ideological role of the capital-owning entrepreneur as described by Adam Smith and the political philosopher Thomas Jefferson. Mill stresses this importance of the capital-owning entrepreneur to Jeffersonian democracy by quoting the great American lexicographer Noah Webster as asserting in 1787 that

> " '… An equality of property, with the necessity of alienation constantly operating to destroy combinations of powerful families, is the very *soul of a Republic*. While this continues, the people will inevitably possess both *power* and *freedom*; when this is lost, power departs, liberty expires, and a commonwealth will inevitably assume some other form.' " [italicised as in Mills] (Webster as cited in Mills, 2002: 8-9, orig. 1951)

The British economist Jeremy Bentham (1748-1832) tried to inject some glamour and creativity into the idea of the entrepreneur:

> "Bentham's entrepreneur is an exceptional individual, one above the common herd; a minority in society. Smith's entrepreneur is a common type, widespread in society, one who exercises self-control in the exercise of economic activity in order to achieve the approbation of his fellow man." (Hébert & Link, 2006:44)

Subsequently, within English-speaking economics, a more mundane and less exciting view took hold for some time. The entrepreneur, and indeed any study of innovation in which an entrepreneur might partake, was submerged beneath the technical study of how markets attained equilibria and that was best studied without the messiness created by innovative and disturbing entrepreneurs.

While English-speaking economics generally had reduced the role of the entrepreneur to almost a mere supplier of capital, German-speaking economics was developing richer conceptions of the entrepreneur. Later, through the influence on American academia of German-speaking intellectuals, these richer views of the entrepreneur had a powerful influence on all English-speaking thinking on business. Johann Heinrich Von Thünen (1783-1850), building on his compatriots' development of French and English sources, combined the ideas of the entrepreneur as risk-bearer and as innovator. Hébert & Link, (2006: 53) argue that Von Thünen also "… turns the discussion from the trials of the entrepreneur into a kind of 'crucible' theory of the development of entrepreneurial talent … Adversity in the business world thereby becomes a training ground for the entrepreneur." With the work of Wilhelm Roscher (1817-1894), what became known as the German Historical School dominated German-speaking thinking about business, displacing less historical economics. Gustav Schmoller (1838-1917) saw the spirit of enterprise as a central factor in the

economy, with the entrepreneur possessing daring and creativity (Hébert & Link, 2006: 53). From disputes over methodology between Schmoller and Carl Menger (1840-1921) can be traced the subsequently very influential contribution of the Austrian School of Economics. More directly, Schmoller influenced the work of the later Historical School writers Werner Sombart (1863-1941) and Max Weber (1864-1920). Both Sombart and Weber developed the concept of the entrepreneur, although Weber was much more influential on its subsequent development. Weber's view that culture, in particular the Protestant Christian ethic, was key to the entrepreneurial spirit of capitalism continues to inspire (Carr, 2003; Lewis & Llewellyn, 2004).

Despite the emphasis in late 19th and early 20th century German-speaking scholarship on the role of the entrepreneur, the first few decades of the 20th century saw the entrepreneur sidelined. Even within Germany there was considerable consensus that the small, and so presumably more entrepreneurial, firms were in a 'death struggle' (Bögenhold, 2000). In America, Berle & Means (1933) showed that the separation of ownership from control had resulted in the rise of the professionally managed firm. There had been a move from entrepreneurial capitalism to managerial capitalism.

With managerial capitalism, the old-style entrepreneur seemed to have evolved somewhat:

> "The new entrepreneur makes a zig-zag pattern upward within and between established bureaucracies … The only way in which he can express his initiative is by servicing the powers that be, in the hope of getting his cut." (Mills, 2002:95, orig. 1951)

Nevertheless, in this description by Mills, the 'in-between-taker' that is this 'new' entrepreneur would not have been alien to Cantillon. The mainstream of economics, in response to the rise of managerial capitalism, the establishment of the Soviet Union and perhaps most importantly the Great Depression of the 1930s, was initially in crisis. The dominant solution to this crisis was offered by Keynes (1973, orig. 1936) and those who advocated macroeconomic management of the economy by government, and neglected the microeconomic role of the entrepreneur. This view and an associated view that celebrated planning and scientific expertise within the corporation (e.g. Galbraith, 1967) dominated developed economies from 1945 to the early 1970s. Macroeconomic planning seemed to show its success, without any central role for the entrepreneur, in the long-lasting post-war boom in the developed world.

The entrepreneur was to blossom again. While the mainstream consensus neglected entrepreneurs, the influence of the old German-speaking celebration of the entrepreneur was quietly growing, almost underground. Joseph Schumpeter and Frederick Hayek had both left continental Europe behind as the Nazis rose to power. Hayek, with his wife Hella, had published a German translation of the work of that Hiberno-French advocate of the entrepreneur, Richard Cantillon (Hayek, 1985, orig. 1931). The particular contribution of Frederick Hayek – an Austrian both by birth and intellectual tradition – was to point out the usefulness of contingent and local knowledge of circumstances, typically possessed by entrepreneurs, but generally sneered at by scientific planners:

> "… the shipper who earns his living from using otherwise empty or half-filled journeys of tramp-streamers, or the estate agent whose whole knowledge is almost exclusively of temporary opportunities, or the *arbitrageur* who gains from local differences of commodity prices, are all performing eminently useful functions based on specialist knowledge of circumstances of the fleeting moment not known to others." (Hayek, 1945:522)

Casson (2002) refers to this contribution of the Austrian school as focusing on 'low-level' entrepreneurship in contrast to the 'high-level' entrepreneur of Schumpeter. Schumpeter was influenced by both the Austrian tradition and by the mainstream German Historical School. Schumpeter's 'high-level' entrepreneur was the driver of economic progress through the entrepreneurial role of the innovator who unleashed the forces of 'creative destruction'. Those interested in these views remained an enthusiastic, and almost underground, few until the 1970s.

After the oil shock of the early 1970s, the collapse of the Bretton Woods system and the persistence of stagflation, the economics discipline, then dominated by the Keynesian consensus, needed to find a source of vigour. The entrepreneur came to the rescue in the form of, most famously, Milton Freedman who in various works brought into the mainstream, from its confinement in the writings of Hayek and Schumpeter, an enthusiasm for the free market and the entrepreneur (e.g. Friedman & Friedman, 1980). It was from this revival of the entrepreneur that we can trace the academic roots of the enterprise discourse that came to political dominance with Margaret Thatcher and Ronald Reagan.

In the United Kingdom, the enterprise culture was promoted by figures such as Sir Keith Joseph and Sir Alfred Sherman who, through the Centre for Policy Studies, ideologically took over the Conservative Party (Keegan, 1984). This was self-consciously a cultural campaign; Sherman declared his wish "… to reshape the

climate of opinion … to fight vigorously on this front of the battle of ideas" (as quoted in Keegan, 1984:47). A quote from Joseph is prescient of the persistence of the enterprise culture beyond the Thatcher administration:

> "I decided to devote myself to trying to persuade anyone interested that Western European countries had done better for their peoples whatever the names of the governing parties, by using the engine of a decentralized, profit-seeking competitive economic system more understandingly than we had done."   (Joseph as cited in Keegan, 1984:47)

It was as a critique of Thatcherite views that much of the CIPD (culture, ideology, policy and discourse) school of studying enterprise emerged. Much of the CIPD literature on enterprise has a left-wing perspective (e.g. Fairclough, 1991; Armstrong, 2005). However, right-wingers, too, have recognised the importance of enterprise culture and discourse (e.g. Lavoie & Chamlee-Wright, 2000). There have also been less explicitly politically positioned CIPD works (e.g. Carr, 2000a). What is evident is that enterprise as a discourse has been recognised as an important discourse of our time by a variety of scholars from a range of political opinions.

Enterprise discourse became both pervasive and persistent. Much entrepreneurship has become policy and the free spirit of enterprise is now institutionalised. As Jones & Spicer (2005a: 179) rather dramatically put it, "… entrepreneurship has bled out of its heartland … and has stained nearly every aspect of public life." This 'staining' has been so thorough, according to some, that "… the character of the entrepreneur can no longer be represented as just one among a plurality of ethical personalities but must be seen as assuming an ontological priority" (Du Gay, 1996b: 157). Others have argued that the success of enterprise promoters may have been exaggerated and bemoan the term 'enterprise culture' as carrying "… the unwarranted implication that they have achieved their intended aim" (Armstrong, 2005:7). However Armstrong (2005) himself documents the persistence of the enterprise discourse in the speech of Gordon Brown who, in 2007, became the third prime minister of the United Kingdom after that first modern crusader, Margaret Thatcher, to bring the 'spirit of enterprise' to that position. Whereas Armstrong prefers to talk of entrepreneurialism as a policy, he not only shows the substantial financial commitment to such a policy but also illustrates the durability and extent of 'enterprise-speak'. Du Gay & Salaman (1992: 615) are correct in pointing out that enterprise discourse is so pervasive that its operation in particular organisations is

better understood by seeing it within the grander "… social and political rationality of enterprise".

Enterprise discourse is not just dominant in state (EU, UK, Ireland, USA, etc) policy towards small business (Carr, 2000b) but is more pervasive. Enterprise, too, is advocated as the vigour needed for reforming the large organisations of the public sector (Osborne & Gaebler, 1993). While warning against assuming "… that entrepreneurial behaviour is as high on the agenda of public service managers as it is for some politicians …", Llewellyn et al. (2000:170) conclude that it "… does appear to have entered the discourse of public management." This is borne out in the studies of particular public-service organisations and sectors: Doolin (2003) looks at the introduction of enterprise into New Zealand public hospitals; Cohen et al. (2004) look at general medical practitioners and scientists dealing with enterprise discourse in the UK's National Health Service, and Bridgman (2007) looks at enterprise in the UK university sector.

Enterprise is also promoted as the solution to many of the problems of large private-sector companies. Kanter has argued that "… we need to reinfuse more American organizations with the entrepreneurial spirit responsible for America's success in the past" (Kanter, 1983:23). Curiously, these organisations are of the very kind whose rise to prominence heralded the change from entrepreneurial to managerial capitalism. Though Kanter admits that the entrepreneurial spirit has traditionally been found in small firms, she contends that enterprise may still allow 'giants to learn to dance'. Another advocate of enterprise in larger corporations more confidently noted that, despite its association with the new and the small, "… entrepreneurship is being practised by large and often old enterprises" (Drucker, 1985:20). Peters (1993) is more evangelical in his urging of 'necessary disorganisation' as he celebrates enterprise as the antidote to what he sees as the problem of bureaucracy.

In the last three decades, the discourse of enterprise, born with the small in-between traders at the dawn of capitalism, has been travelling, and no doubt evolving, in the lands of political rhetoric, large established public bureaucracies and large private-sector corporations. Discourses are not just parroted by dupes but rather are deployed with creativity and innovation by humans with agency who both draw on discourses and shape their evolution. In this regard Hendry (2004) argues, for

example, that the development of enterprise discourse within large organisations seems to have involved imposing on the identity of the enterprising individual an accountability that was in previous incarnations of the entrepreneur, as a small business founder and owner, alien to the entrepreneur's autonomous nature. Du Gay (2004:37) even contends that, at least to some extent, various, "… different understandings and conceptions of enterprise are non-reducible." As stated in the introduction the aim of this research is to examine *how* enterprise and strategy discourses are used by the owner-managers of small firms. In pursuing that aim, and in particular to address the first elaboration of that question, (How are the grand discourses of enterprise and strategy, as described in the literature, relevant to the talk of owner-managers of small firms?), it has been useful to examine enterprise discourse at a theoretical level in this section. However, there are some tasks best addressed before turning to empirical material. So next I will look at the development of that other key business discourse: strategy.

2.2.2 Strategy discourse: Origins and extent

Strategy is derived from the ancient Greek word *strategos* – itself derived from the words *stratos*, meaning a spread-out army – and from *agein*, meaning to lead. The title *strategos* was originally used to mean an elected head of of any one of the ten new tribes introduced to by the reforming Kleisthenes in Athens about 500 BC (Cummings, 1993). The word therefore carries with it from the start a flavour of planning and democratic accountability and, as Cummings (1993: 133) points out, a need to coordinate individual action:

> "The emergence of the term paralleled increasing military complexity. Warfare had evolved to a point where winning sides relied no longer on the deeds of heroic individuals, but on the co-ordination of many units of men each fighting in close formation."

Similar increases in the scale and complexity of military affairs seem to have been accompanied by what we now recognise as valuable sources of strategic thinking from military theorists. This was certainly the case in both ancient China (Tzu, 1993; circa 600 BCE) and modern Europe (Von Clausewitz, 1873; see below for further discussion).

The application of strategy in business was pointed as early the 5th century BCE when Socrates consoled a military man who had been defeated by a businessman in an election for the post of general. Socrates argued that the

organisational skills needed to run a business matched those of a good military strategist in the common task of matching resources to the attainment of objectives (Braecke, 2001: 219). On a rational level, there are clearly commonalities in handling both large armies for victory and large corporations for profit. Perhaps, at a deeper level, McCloskey (2006: 216) is right when she claims that the discourses of business have been dominantly developed by bourgeois men driven by an envy of the violent victories of their aristocratic social superiors and therefore such businessmen have adopted "… the mythical histories of knights and cowboys as their definition of masculinity". Pitt's (1998) tale of two 'gladiator' entrepreneurs suggests that battle as a metaphor holds attractions for business*men* (at least), regardless of scale.

The rise of modern military strategy in Europe and America was indeed associated with the large-scale organisation of the military (Ponting, 2001). Napoleon's victories in the early 1800s were attributed to his ability to manage the large-scale army made possible by the increasing scale of arms production and by mass conscription. Other powers, used to fighting with smaller armies composed of mercenary soldiers, realised the need for reform. Part of this reform movement in Prussia was Carl Phillip Gottfried von Clausewitz (1780-1831) whose work *On War* (Von Clausewitz, 2006, orig.1832) became a classic on military strategy. Bassford (1994) shows that, by at latest the immediate aftermath of World War I, Clausewitz's work was being referenced in the education of military professional elites in the USA.

Corporate strategy seems to arise to fill the needs of an elite of professional managers. Knights & Morgan (1991) trace corporate strategy as emerging from the need for legitimacy of the professional non-owner manager. Professional non-owner managers came to the fore with the separation of ownership and control in many businesses and when it seemed "that the 'control' of the great corporations should develop into a purely neutral technocracy" (Berle & Means, 1933:356). The rise of strategy as it was described by Knights & Morgan (1991), therefore has its origins in the very move to managerial capitalism that eclipsed the entrepreneur. Chandler, too, seemed to see strategy as being associated with the professional manager. For him it was the size and complexity of the organisations that formed in the late 19th century that replaced the entrepreneur with the manager. Chandler argued that modern economies were dominated by the visible hand of professional managers fashioning the strategy of large firms, and not the hidden hand of the market co-ordinating the

activities of small-firm entrepreneurs. The need for a discourse of strategy arose because of the separation of ownership from control, or just the sheer size and complexity of modern corporations, or perhaps a combination of both. In any case, Chandler (1962, 1977) and Knights & Morgan (1991) see the rise of the technocrat manager, as a core feature of modern capitalism, occurring as the centrality of the entrepreneur was undermined.

The development of corporate strategy and military strategy seem to be closely interlinked. In seeking knowledge of how to run corporations, it would have been natural for these early managers to look at the military for inspiration on how large organisations might be organised. The route from military strategy to the pre-1939 managerial thinking has not been fully traced. Indeed, it seems that the word 'strategy' was generally confined to its military use until relatively recently (Shaw, 1990). Nevertheless Hoskin & Macve (1988:66) provide a convincing argument that the organisational, not just engineering lessons, the elite learned at the West Point military academy were "… then exported to the world of business via the armories and the railroads". Though Hoskin & Macve (1988) make the argument in particular for accountability (discussed below as a key feature of strategy discourse), it would not be surprising if evidence were to be found for such an early explicit diffusion of other strategic concepts through the same sort of mechanisms.

Corporate strategy was soon to become the uncrowned king of professional management. In the USA, the first school, Wharton, dedicated to the training of managerial technocrats appeared in 1881 in Philadelphia (Amdam, 1996:4). Before World War I, the forerunner of corporate strategy, 'business policy', had spread across business schools in the USA (Booth, 1998:3). However it was not until after World War II that the science underlying this technocracy would be explicitly the strategy recognisable as such today. World War II and the Cold War meant that many of the concepts of strategy as developed and applied in the military were soon to be translated into business. For example, Von Neumann, who along with Morgenstern is credited with the first modern use of the word strategy in connection with business (Bracker, 1980:219), worked on both the atomic bomb and on nuclear strategy. The work of the RAND corporation (www.rand.org) facilitated the transfer of strategic theories and methodologies (such as game theory, scenario planning and systems thinking) into the business arena. In the business arena, academics like Ansoff, a

former military man himself who had published with RAND (Ansoff & Specht, 1950), were making claims for the role of strategy such as "… confronted with the growing variability and unpredictability of the business environment, business managers have become increasingly concerned with finding rational and foresightful ways of adjusting to and exploiting environmental change … [and that this] … problem is increasingly referred to as the *strategic* (or *strategy*) of the firm" (italics in original) (Ansoff, 1969:11). Such arguments cleared space for the newly produced theories, and the new science of corporate strategy was firmly established academically by the mid-1960s with the publication of works like Ansoff (1965) and Chandler (1962).

While these developments were located in the United States, this form of management education and thinking also spread to Europe (Gemelli, 1996). As management education has spread rapidly across the world (Amdam, 1996:2), strategy discourse has spread with it thus establishing strategy as an important discourse. Indeed, the success of strategy's spread is evidenced in Mintzberg's (2004:34) lament of "How Management became Strategy". Heracleous (2003:6) reports how consulting firms have, in addition to the academy, been influential in developing and diffusing strategy. Though occasionally suffering short-term set backs, "the global consultancy giants have beaten growth records after profit peaks" (Sorge & Van Witteloostuijn, 2004:1208). From the 1980s at least, such consulting giants "… circle the globe encapsulating corporate realities in 2X2 grids" (Baron-Gay, 2006:8). As Barry & Elmes (1997: 430) put it, "... surely strategy must rank as one of the most prominent, influential and costly stories told in organizations." Furthermore it seems that

> "Strategic management is not a passing fad, nor does it seem to be a discourse that will be readily overtaken by some alternative, in the way in which Computer Integrated Manufacturing appeared to be superseded by TQM [Total Quality Management], and TQM was in turn superseded by BPR [Business Process Reengineering]. What is apparent about the strategy discourse is its longevity and the tendency of contributors to absorb discursive resources into the order of discourse without that order being superseded." (Thomas, 1998: 12)

Thus, while strategy discourse may well have emerged from the need for non-owner professional managers to justify their positions, strategy discourse has colonised much of management thinking across all types of organisations. As Levy et al. (2003:93) point out "… 'strategy' can be seen in the ever-widening circle of problems which are deemed suitable for its application – from public sector and non-profit management to

regional economic development and business school accreditation." (Nutt, 1995) advocates strategic management for the public sector. Berry (1994) examines ways to help the diffusion of strategic planning in the USA public sector, documenting in the process its widespread penetration following the "intense budget pressures and the ideology of the Reagan Revolution". (Berry, 1994:322). Stoney (1998) examines the adoption of strategic management as the mantra for local government in England and Wales. Professional managers in the public sector, just like professional management in corporations who operate with dispersed non-executive ownership, lack the legitimisation conferred by ownership and so can be seen as natural users of strategy discourse. This is perhaps less obviously the case of small owner manager firms. However, to gain the support of investors and/or the state, the small business in need of such help is required to produce artifacts of strategy such as the business plan (Carr, 2000a;Van Osnabrugge, 2000). Even in the absence of the need for external support, volumes of literature exhort small-firm managers to use strategy (Aram & Cowan, 1990).

The historical development of the discourses of enterprise and strategy has been traced above. It is now appropriate to look at what previous work has told about the contemporary nature of these discourses.

2.3 Discourse analyses of strategy and enterprise

Reflecting the diverse origins and approaches in DA, there is a diverse and large range of studies of business discourse. These stretch from the use of conversational analysis to study organisations (Boden, 1994), to examinations of economics rhetoric (McCloskey, 1998; orig. 1985), to corpus studies of business English (Nelson, 2006) to investigations by English-as-a-foreign-language teachers of ergolect (Pickett, 1989). While this work will draw on some of these diverse sources, the main focus is on the DA of strategy and enterprise. For this reason the literature review below is confined to these studies and does not attempt to compete with more comprehensive reviews and collections such as Westwood & Linstead (2001), Grant, Hardy, Oswick, & Putnam (2004) or Bargiela-Chiappini, Nickerson, & Planken (2007).

2.3.1 Strategy discourse: the literature on its characteristics and effects

A key characteristic of strategic discourse is its holistic and integrative nature. Hendry (2000:970) notes: "Strategic discourses are characterized by a generality that is absent

from discourses associated with the functional areas of management …"   Lilley (2001: 75) observes that the "… most strategic of strategies seem to be, rhetorically at least, those which can claim the greatest purview or scope". Liedtka, (1998:122), too, points to the holistic nature of strategic thinking by declaring: "A strategic thinker has a mental model of the complete end-to-end system of value creation, and understands the interdependencies within it." Such a view is also present in popular strategy textbooks (e.g. Johnson & Scholes, 2002:10). This holistic view means that strategy "can identify, formulate and communicate one stable common goal that the entire organization should reach" (Clegg et al., 2004:24).

Strategy's holistic view then enables a whole organisation to be treated and directed as one. Strategy stresses direction (Barry & Elmes, 1997; Samra-Fredericks, 2003), rule-following (Ansoff, 1968:106), and hopes to steady the organisation through stormy waters. Strategy is about managing risk and turning uncertainty into risk; it is "… the means of transforming uncertainties in the environment into calculable risks" (Knights & Morgan, 1991:270). This assumes a certain passivity in the organisation (Clegg et al., 2004:22) as if strategy is to provide a unitary direction that all must follow. If the organisation is portrayed as passive in its willingness to be shaped by strategy, then strategy and those who wield it are powerful.

From the literature on strategy discourse, it quickly becomes apparent that strategists' use of power must be rationalised and explained. Accountability is a key feature of this discourse. Knights & Morgan (1991:258) see one of the sources of strategy discourse in the separation of ownership and control, which meant that

"… a discursive space has opened up – the corporation has to explain what it is doing and why it is doing it. It is this discursive space that is colonized by corporate strategy."

Strategy, to act as a discourse that can explain professional management action, must – at least in its traditional forms – make the most of "its roots in rationalist reference points (i.e. logic, objectivity, technique) and abstractions (i.e. modelling, simplification)" (Grandy & Mills, 2004: 1157). Strategy language is therefore analytical (Crouch & Basch, 1997) in nature. Knights & Morgan (1991:263) see strategy as having the effect of allowing management to rationalise both success and failure so that "…everything is explicable in the end". Whether strategy can always be so successfully deployed by managers may be an open question, but it seems to be a key part of the language used to make managers at least seem accountable. Grandy

& Mills (2004: 1157-1158) point out that there is "… the 'grand narrative of progress' that is inherent within mainstream accounts of strategy … with the prime purpose of this discourse serving as a means to justify" managers' actions. This need to justify and account to others shows that strategy is not an individualised affair but rather is its logic has the collective and the corporate at its centre (Crouch & Basch, 1997).

Optimism seems, too, to be central to strategy discourse. This is related to the progress narrative mentioned. Eriksson & Lehtimäki (2001:214) identify optimism in strategy discourse and note: "The rhetoric of 'developmental optimism' is rather persuasive, being imbued with deterministic but highly optimistic arguments invoking *change* and *development*, which are the key words of this rhetoric." (italics in original). This optimistic element of strategy discourse can function in strategists' accounts of their stewardship of organisations, evidenced for example in the 'Pollyanna effect' in company reports following disappointing company performance (Rutherford, 2005). However, optimism and positivity seems to be a more persistent feature of strategy and indeed general business discourse, as Nelson's (2000:9.3.2.1c) statistical study of business English shows.

Strategy discourse is masterful in the sense that it implies an active, powerful, intentional masculine agent who drives and shapes the world (Knights & Morgan, 1991:267; Liedtka, 1998:123; Lilley, 2001:73). Clegg et al. (2004:26) remarked: "It used to be the gods that determined the fate of men and women; now, at least in MBAs, it is the strategists." In the traditional discourses of strategy, the strategic decisions tend to be the preserve of elite directors and top managers; and the consequences of those decisions flow downwards, forcing the less powerful to act within the direction set by the elites (Samra-Fredericks, 2004:126).

All the power of being a strategist implies a burden that means the strategist must take a certain identity or subject position within the discourse of strategy. Such a "… preoccupation with identity frequently generates a subjectivity of internal self-discipline" (Knights & Morgan, 1991:267). We have seen above that the strategist must be masterful – powerful and full of intention that will dominate others. For all this the strategist must be dedicated. Porter (1996:77) talks of the strategist being subject to "constant pressures to compromise, relax trade-offs, and emulate rivals". While disagreeing with Porter on many issues, Mintzberg (1973:29) characterises the life of the manager as "Much work at unrelenting pace" and it is this typical manager

who, he observed, "… juggled a large number of strategic issues; [and it is] the manager not the group [that] made the strategic decisions." (Mintzberg, 1973:257). The strategist must be dedicated enough to get up and be, if not feel like, a strategy machine (Clegg et al., 2004).

2.3.2 Enterprise discourse: the literature on its characteristics and effects

Enterprise discourse shares some features with strategy discourse. In common with the rest of business discourse, including strategy, enterprise discourse is optimistic and progressive (Nelson, 2000:9.3.2.1c). Enterprise is "a righteous production of modernity" and "… Notions of progress, development, and universality are inherent in the enterprise culture paradigm." (Nicholson & Anderson, 2005:153-155). These authors also note that, as with strategy, enterprise tends to the male and masterful:

> "The entrepreneurial myth remains resolutely male. The entrepreneur is still the active seducer, aggressor, pursuer, rather than an object of affection or action. He bridges worlds, bends time with an 'unquantifiable, limitless' impact on the world around him."
>
> (Nicholson & Anderson, 2005:161)

Like strategy, enterprise discourse is concerned with expressing an overall grasp of the situation. Kanter (1983:27) "found that the entrepreneurial spirit producing innovation is associated with a particular way of approaching problems that I call 'integrative'." In common with strategy, enterprise discourse demands hard work from those positioned as entrepreneurs. According to Bygrave (2004:5-6), most entrepreneurs "are totally dedicated to their business, sometimes at considerable cost to their relationships with friends and families. They work tirelessly."

There are also, however, contrasts between the discourses of strategy and enterprise. While making the entrepreneur powerful, enterprise discourse also makes claims about making power an equal-opportunities, bottom-up affair. Enterprise is said to be about "… how the microchanges introduced by individual innovators relate to macrochanges or strategic reorientations" (Kanter, 1983:36). Peters (1993:473) talks about moving beyond hierarchy but admits "… that liberation leads to many a sleepless night – the result of membership in project teams with sky-high standards, imposed mostly by oneself, but by demanding peers as well." Enterprise claims to be an equal-opportunity discourse, empowering even the underdog. These claims are not universally accepted. Armstrong (2005:23) sees these claims as serving the

ideological function of masking inequality, with economically modest small enterprises functioning "… as a visible confirmation of the possibility of social mobility in a society marked by pronounced economic inequalities". Indeed, Ogbor (2000: 608) argues that enterprise discourse "has been used to further enhance the divisions among humans, race, ethnicity and gender, through processes of classification, codification, categorization and taxonomies".

Where strategy stabilises, enterprise disrupts and destroys (Schumpeter, 1976); it is the creative wave so destructive of those who wish for a quiet life of no change. For entrepreneurs, two characteristics seem to stand out:

> "One is self-interest, not in the pejorative sense of 'selfishness' but in the sense of being driven by one's own goals rather than by anyone else's. The other is unaccountability. Real entrepreneurs are certainly willing to take risks in pursuit of goals, but it is their own goals that motivate and energize them, not other people's. They are resolutely independent." (Hendry, 2004:55)

The use of the enterprise discourse in the public sector may have altered, at least for such contexts, this unaccountability; Cohen et al. (2004: 16) find an "… increasing focus on entrepreneurial conduct, emphasizing at once autonomy and accountability …" Hjorth (2002:48), too, notes: "What seems characteristic of the time of the 1980s and the 1990s in particular is a rationalisation … of entrepreneurship." The extent to which this altered version of enterprise circulates back to the use of the discourse in the other contexts, such as that of small firms, is an interesting and important question regarding the workings of this dominant discourse.

A key enterprising attribute expected of all entrepreneurs, even private-sector ones, seems to be a drive towards business growth. Small-business proprietors who sacrifice the growth of the firm for an easy life may well be shorn of their entrepreneurial identity: "Those who choose a model of 'small and stable business' (called trundlers) over a model of 'fast growth business' (called gazelles) are less likely to be recognized and accepted as entrepreneurs." (Lewis & Llewellyn, 2004:7). As Landström & Sexton (2000:441) put it: "Growth is the essence of entrepreneurship. It is growth that separate status quo or low growth firms from the fast-growth entrepreneurial firms." Enterprise is about pushing beyond the comfort zone of competence, into uncertainty:

> "Entrepreneurs – and entrepreneurial organizations – always operate at the edge of their competence, focusing more of their resources on what they do not yet know (e.g. investment in R & D) than on controlling what they already know." (Kanter, 1983:27).

Enterprise discourse encourages the esoteric, acting as the spirit that drives capitalism forward in unpredictable and innovative ways through incarnating itself in entrepreneurs. Again, this contrasts with strategy's more rationalist flavour.

Newness seems to be another key characteristic of enterprise discourse. It is the essence of the Schumpeterian view of enterprise as the driver of innovation. While newness can be exercised in older organisations, it is more associated with the early founding years of a company. For some, one of the key criteria of entrepreneurship is the finding of new organisations. Acs (2006:195) maintains that, in the subject of entrepreneurship, "… age is the dominant variable and not size". Gartner (2001), while acknowledging that a variety of different entrepreneurship phenomena are being studied by entrepreneurship scholars, prefers to concentrate on entrepreneurship as the study of firm creation.

In contrast to the large-organisation origins of strategy, the small-business person seems to be the ideological hero of the enterprise culture. This is clear from the celebration of small-business start-ups by important political figures (e.g, Young, 1992:33). Enterprise discourse is said to flow from "its heartland in small-business fantasies and motivational seminars" (Jones & Spicer, 2005a: 179). Curran (2006) traces the intimate interlinking of small-business and enterprise research in the United Kingdom. Peters (1993) urges, as his first building block for making organisations entrepreneurial, that every employee be a business person and leaves no doubt that smallness has a lot to be with being a true business person:

> "Think about your corner grocer. Think about a line worker, or even a middle manager, in a big, traditional firm. The former is a businessperson, no mistake. The latter 'fills a job slot'. What a difference!" (Peters, 1993:227)

Enterprise, too, is about the person, though there is some dispute about whether being an entrepreneur is about *being* a particular kind of person or about a person *doing* a particular kind of thing. Certainly, a lot of research has tried to identify the traits of the entrepreneurial personality. The need for achievement, a preference for risk, and self-confidence are some of the characteristics claimed to mark out the entrepreneurial personality (Cornelius et al 2006:381). Carland, Carland, & Ensley (2001), who argue that a solid link can still be made between entrepreneurial characteristics and venture *performance*, point out that, despite much work, no

consensus has emerged on the personality traits of those who *form* ventures. However, even those who advocate abandoning the search for the personal characteristics in any entrepreneurial personality, in favour of focusing on the entrepreneurial act of firm founding, admit:

> "The trait approach to entrepreneurship research is understandably persistent.
> Entrepreneurs often *do* seem like special people who achieve things that most of
> us do not achieve. These achievements, we think, must be based on some special
> inner quality. It is difficult *not* to think this way." (italics in original) (Gartner, 1988: 22)

Perhaps it is *performing* that makes the entrepreneurial character. Carr & Beaver (2002: 109) document the policy of the promoters of enterprise as one of "institutional reform [that] centres on the promotion of the small business within which enterprising attributes will flourish". Thus small business and self-employment seem to be the mythic forges of enterprise characteristics where the natural entrepreneur in all of us can be brought forth, and without which the natural potential of all of us will be thwarted.

Whether or not the features of enterprise make one good or bad seems to be in dispute in the literature. Some maintain that embracing the entrepreneur entails accepting the existence of a darker side (Kets de Vries, 1996). For some this dark side is the essence of the new entrepreneur who

> "… gets ahead because (1) men in power do not expect that things can be done legitimately;
> (2) these men know fear and guilt; and (3) they are often personally not very bright. It is often
> hard to say, with any sureness, whether the new entrepreneur lives on his own wits, or upon the
> lack of wits in others. As for anxiety, however, it is certain that, although he may be prodded by
> his own, he could get nowhere without its ample presence in his powerful clients." (Mills,
> 2002:95, orig. 1951)

Even those who see enterprise as a moral endeavour acknowledge that the common discourse constructs it otherwise:

> "In its representation of business, Hollywood is not only depicting individual business as
> morally flawed, it is implying that the pursuit of profit itself is loathsome and base. This is not
> the same for government. Political players are often portrayed as corrupt and unprincipled, but
> the system itself is rarely, if ever, challenged." (Lavoie & Chamlee-Wright, 2000: 3)

For English literature in general, Pollard (2000) comes to similar conclusions.

One reaction to the alleged immorality associated with enterprise and the pursuit of money has been to plead that, while enterprise is guilty of being inherently

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evil, it is a necessary evil for the greater good, a private vice that leads to public virtue. The leaders of 'liberation management' apparently need "a somewhat large (or larger) ego, unreasonable self-confidence, a streak of irrationality, a thick skin, and a touch of paranoia …" (Peters, 1993:591). Mandeville's 1714 verse still stands as a good statement of this argument:

> Without great Vices, is a vain
> Eutopia seated in the Brain.
> Fraud, Luxury, and Pride must live,
> Whilst we the Benefits receive.
> Hunger's a dreadful Plague, no doubt,
> Yet who digests or thrives without?
> Do we not owe the Growth of Wine
> To the dry, crooked, shabby Vine? (Mandeville, 2008 orig. 1714)

Declaring vice to be the necessary and natural accompaniment to wealth has not been a very satisfying way to talk about enterprise and ethics. It is subject to the easy-to-make but hard-to-counter accusation that declaring enterprise to be inherently bad is just too self-serving for those wishing not to exercise any moral judgment in being entrepreneurial, and a consolation to those who do not produce wealth that their lack of production is a sign of virtue.

An alternative response to the accusation that enterprise has a darker side is to argue that enterprise is ethical in itself. Adam Smith was an early exponent of this view and McCloskey (2006) probably its most sophisticated recent exponent. For Margaret Thatcher and her followers, "Enterprise stood for the values of individualism, personal achievement, ambition, striving for excellence, effort, hard work and the assumption of personal responsibility for actions" (Chell, 2007: 8). Enterprise requires, if not inculcates, "the virtues of responsibility, initiative, competitiveness and risk-taking, and industrious effort" (Young, 1992:33). If the enterprise spirit can not do this itself, then exponents of the enterprise culture are prepared to use state policy. As Carr (2003:14) points out, the pervasiveness of enterprise-culture policies means that for small businesses the

> "non take-up of an enterprise ethic is not always an option … particularly if they wish to access resources for their business from 'official' sources such as state agencies or banking institutions."

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Enterprise discourse ties in with a broader ethic "… of the enterprising self: work on yourself, improve the quality of your life, emancipate your true self, eliminate dependency, release your potential." (Rose, 1992:152-153). Indeed, advocates of the enterprise culture argue that the lack of enterprise is the cause of an ethical problem. For Hayek (1986, orig. 1944), the alternative to the individualism of the entrepreneur is to take the "road to serfdom" and totalitarianism. In enterprise rhetoric, enterprise characteristics are often constructed as natural attributes of humans – and so presumably God-given and good –that have only been spoiled by the interferences of unnatural culture and overregulation (Selden, 1991). This idea seems to be the thinking behind Margaret Thatcher's account of a nightmare that she used to have: "… that the British sense of enterprise and initiative would have been killed by socialism … But then it came. The face began to smile, the spirits began to lift, the pride returned" (as cited in Carr , 2000a:3). Attempts to free this 'natural' flow from 'distorting interferences' takes a lot of policy effort (Carr & Beaver, 2002; Armstrong, 2005).

2.3.3 The relationship between strategy discourse and enterprise discourse

There is an implied tension between the creative, revolutionary nature of enterprise and the staid, bureaucratic nature of management (see, for example, Kanter, 1983). Since strategic management is possibly "the most managerialist of the management specialties" (Levy et al., 2003:93) its relationship with enterprise is particularly controversial. Knights & Morgan (1991:260) clearly contrast enterprise and strategy discourse when they write: "… managers may cling to some sort of entrepreneurial ideology in which conformity to the 'top down' demands of a strategic plan are anathema."

On the other hand, enterprise and strategic discourses do seem to go together; Grey (2004:9) argues that, while management (including strategy) and enterprise are to some extent contradictory, they nevertheless serve complementary ideological functions: "… enterprise is the solution to the problems of management and management is a solution to the problems of enterprise."

Separate from these alternatives of seeing the discourses of strategy and enterprise at least as partial complements or substitutes are the views that either strategy should be seen as part of enterprise or enterprise as part of strategic

management. Carr (2000a:99) for example, sees enterprise as including both dimensions of creativity and control:

> "The first of these dimensions places an emphasis on intuition, spontaneity, creativity, dynamism, daring and risk-taking … The second dimension focuses on management and control … the relationship between these two dimensions of the entrepreneurial management discourse should not be understood in terms of 'either/or', rather it should be understood as a 'both/and' relationship."

On the other hand, maybe enterprise is merely a dimension of strategy and corporatism, as Armstrong (2005:217) suggests "… entrepreneurialism may not be so much an alternative to corporatism as an ideological smokescreen for a new and narrower version of it." While a discourse may be more effective than a smokescreen, Du Gay (2000: 173) would seem, on this matter, to agree:

> "Freed from the necessity of constant participation in the flow of commands on a routine basis, senior managers are encouraged to focus on the development of visions, missions and strategies whose day-to-day realization they are not expected to supervise directly. This is deemed more efficient and businesslike than a traditional bureaucracy because day-to-day supervision is deemed redundant, having been replaced by 'market' mechanisms whose very operation has the effect of making people 'entrepreneurs of their own conduct'."

Heracleous (2003) argues that strategy can include creativity through double-looping strategic thinking and since creativity is often seen as an element of enterprise maybe the strategic side of management can absorb enterprise.

There seems to be at least a cross-fertilisation between the fields of enterprise and strategy. Baden-Fuller (1995) called for a corporate entrepreneurship perspective to reinvigorate strategy research. Hitt & Ireland (2000) call for an integration of strategy and entrepreneurship research, while Amit, Brigham, & Markman (2000) argue that entrepreneurial management is needed as a strategic approach.

There is, therefore, a variety of views on the relationship between strategy and enterprise discourse. This research work will add to the empirical evidence on how these discourses interact.

2.3.4 Discourse-analytical studies focused on strategy and enterprise discourses

Above, I have examined a wide and diverse range of literature to synthesise what has been written about the discourses of strategy and enterprise. This analysis enables me to focus much more sharply on the discourse-analytical literature concerning strategy and enterprise. Table 2.1 below provides a structure to discuss this literature.

Table 2.1 A Categorisation of Discourse-Analytical Studies on Enterprise and Strategy.

Context of Study Discourse focused on	Societal & Media	Sectoral & Organisational	Small firms and small-firm owner-mangers
Strategy	Knights & Morgan (1990); Shaw (1990); Lilley (2001); Grandy & Mills (2004); Seidl (2007)	Knights & Morgan (1991); Knights & Morgan (1995);Rouleau & Séguin (1995); Barry & Elmes (1997);Hardy, Palmer & Phillips (2000);Hendry (2000); McAuley, Duberley & Cohen (2000);Eriksson & Lehtimäki (2001); Heracleous & Barrett (2001); Johansson (2003);Thomas (2003); Clegg, Carter & Kornberger (2004); Ezzamel & Hugh (2004);Vaara, Kleymann & Seristo, (2004);Jacobs & Heracleous (2005); Samra-Fredericks(2005); Abdallah (2006); Sillince & Mueller (2007); Seidl (2007);Phillips, Sewell, & Jaynes (2008)	Pitt (1998);Rigg (2005);Kohtamäki, Kraus, Kautonen, & Varamäki (2008)
Enterprise	Selden (1991); Koiranen (1995);Lavoie & Chamlee-Wright (2000); Ogbor (2000);Du Gay (2004); Smith & Anderson(2004);Nicholson & Anderson, (2005); Perren & Jennings (2005) Hjorth (2007)	Du Gay & Salaman (1992); Hjorth (2002); Jones & Spicer (2005a); Storey, Salaman, & Platman 2005);Martens, Jennings, & Jennings (2007);Du Gay(2008); McCabe (2008)	Mitchel (1997); Perren & Atkin (1997);Cohen & Musson (2000); Dodd (2002);Rae (2002); O'Connor (2002); O'Connor (2004);Foss (2004); Rae (2004);Warren (2004);Rae (2005); Downing, (2005); Down (2006); Down & Warren (2008)

Note: Given the dearth of discourse-analytical research on small firms and owner-managers I have been more flexible in including studies in this column on small firms or owner managers. For example, strictly speaking, Rigg (2005) focuses on discourses of managing, organising and learning, rather than strategy discourse *per se*.

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Table 2.1 above categorises discourse-analytical work on the enterprise and strategy discourses according to two dimensions. The first dimension (shown in the first column on the left-hand side) concerns whether the analytical focus is on strategy or enterprise discourse. The second dimension (shown at the top of the table) concerns the context of the study. This dimension is divided into three. First, there are studies that focus on the societal or media level of discourse. Secondly, in the context-of-study dimension, there are studies that focus on the sectoral or organisational level. Thirdly, there are studies that focus on discourses in the context of small firms and small-firm owner-managers.

Table 2.1 makes clear that there is a thriving discourse-analytical research community looking at strategy and enterprise discourse. It also shows that much less work has been done on the strategy or enterprise discourse of small firms and small-firm owner managers. Indeed, my table exaggerates the amount of work explicitly focused on the analysis of strategy and enterprise discourse in the small-firm context, as I have applied more flexible criteria for inclusion in this column than in the rest of the table. For example, Pitt (1998) does not claim to be engaged in discourse analysis but has been included here since his work treats the personal stories of entrepreneurs as texts through which to analyse their implicit discourse of strategy and enterprise. Similarly, others listed in the last column of Table 2.1 describe themselves as taking a narrative approach and do not explicitly declare their method to be a discourse-analytical one. I have also been flexible in including studies where the discourse declared as the object of study may have been labeled as 'organising' or 'learning' rather than enterprise or strategy. Again, I have been flexible in my inclusion of studies in the last column of Table 2.1 because, as Rigg (2005:58) puts it, "… in the small-firm sector in particular, there are still very few empirical discursive analyses of organisation and managing." This thesis hopes to address this shortfall in discourse analysis of strategy and enterprise discourses, studied well in other contexts, in the context of small-firm owner managers.

The limited number of discourse analytical studies of strategy and enterprise in the context of small-firm owner managers can be seen in the relatively small number of studies listed in the last column of Table 2.1 above. This is especially apparent when the breadth of what I am regarding as discourse analysis for inclusion in this

column is considered. To see how limited the amount of work, to which my thesis is adding, and to see how my thesis is different even from this limited work it is worth considering the studies in the last column of Table 2.1 in a little more detail.

Pitt (1998) comes close to this work in the sense that he focuses on entrepreneurial 'personal theories of action' in the context that "Entrepreneurial propensity … … makes a significant *strategic* impact on the firm…" (emphasis in original) Pitt (1998: 387). However, unlike my work, Pitt (1998) makes no attempt to trace connections between grand or macro discourse of either strategy or enterprise to the scripts of his entrepreneurs. Unlike Pitt (1998), Kohtamäki, Kraus, Kautonen, and Varamäki (2008) do take an explicitly discursive approach and do make links between the local discourses they study and Mintzberg's schools of strategy (Mintzberg, Ahlstrand and Lampel, 1998). Furthermore Kohtamäki et al (2008), like this work, provides knowledge on area where "…not much is currently known about how small business managers actually perceive strategy and strategy planning, and thus what strategy means to them in their everyday business." However, unlike this study, Kohtamäki et al (2008) do not link with more discursive approaches (as opposed to the review of the literature by Mintzberg et al 1998) to grand discourses of strategy nor does it link at all to discourse analyses of enterprise.

Mitchell (1997) is concerned with grand myths of enterprise but does not take an explicitly discourse analytical view of them and is not interested in strategy discourses. Though Mitchell (1997) is concerned with discourses in the sense of what entrepreneurs say in interviews, this is examined through the lens of oral history stories and script analysis rather than the kind of discourse analytical approach used here. Perren and Atkin (1997) are interested in the contrasting metaphors used by the owner-managers of small-firms that successfully achieve growth, with those used by the owner-managers of small-firms that do not grow. By focusing on a much narrower aspect of discourse – the metaphor - Perren and Atkin (1997) aimed to contribute to the understanding of the relationship between firm performance and discourse, whereas this thesis confines its attention to examining discourse and thus is able to say more about enterprise and strategy discourse .

In its attention to the more purely discursive my work here is more like that of Cohen and Musson (2000) than Perren and Atkin (1997). However, Cohen and Musson (2000) focus only on the enterprise discourse in their study whereas my work examines the operation of strategy discourse as well. Dodd (2002), in using

entrepreneurs' interviews in the media (as opposed to the researcher-involved interviews used here) again focuses only on metaphor (like Perren and Atkin, 1997). Dodd (2002) too, like Cohen and Musson (2000), focuses only on enterprise discourse neglecting strategy discourse. Rae's work (2002; 2004; 2005) like this thesis is concerned with entrepreneurs in the media sector, yet there are key differences between Rae's studies and the present one. Rae (2002: 54) presents his data by constructing a "short story [that] is used to place material from the participants' own accounts within a fictive context", whereas my research makes a great effort to understand the discourses within their own interactive context. Rae is focussed too on entrepreneurial learning and is keen to reveal the practical theories of the entrepreneurs concerned, whereas my work is concerned to see how both strategy and enterprise discourses are put creatively to work by entrepreneurs.

O'Connor (2002), takes a narrative approach to entrepreneurial discourse and focuses on identifying a number of narrative types that entrepreneurs use to create legitimacy (as does O'Connor, 2004). In common with many narrative approaches O'Connor's work is built as much on ethnographic fieldwork as it is on textual analysis. In contrast my work, while drawing on contextual knowledge, builds its interpretations from an analysis of the specific texts of particular interviews. Foss (2004) is, like my work here, more focused on specific texts but like O'Connor (2002, 2004) uses a narrative approach to interpret the life-stories she has gathered. While Warren (2004), like this thesis, is keen to connect local discourses with the macro discourse of enterprise Warren does not focus on any connections with strategy discourse. Downing's (2005) framework, though primarily a contribution to the entrepreneurship literature, does too link to many of the strategy concerns of this work but does so with a much more functional focus than my work. As a contribution to the entrepreneurship literature, Downing (2005) does not make much of the connections between the macro and local discourses of enterprise. His approach too draws more on the narrative approach to language than on the traditions of discourse analysis that this thesis shares with works like Cohen and Musson (2000) and Warren (2004).

Another study that takes a narrative approach is Down (2006). Down (2006) is also particularly focused on entrepreneurial ability. Both Down (2006) and Down and Warren (2008) pay particular attention to the use of the cliché. While Down (2006) and Down and Warren (2008) share with my work a concern to move beyond metaphor, my work in looking at both enterprise and strategy discourse focuses on

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the creative handling of tensions within the discourses rather than the use of only enterprise cliché .

This present work then contributes in a different way to the limited literature analysing discourses of management in small firms. These differences can be summarised in the following. My work here takes an explicitly discourse analytical approach in common with Cohen & Musson (2000), Rae (2002), Warren (2004), Rigg (2005) and Kohtamäki et al (2008) but that makes it different from concentrations on life-histories and narratives by other studies in the last column of Table 2.1. Rae (2002), unlike my work, is less concerned to make connections between macro or grand discourse and the local discourse but instead uses discourse analysis to uncover the 'practical theories of entrepreneurs. Cohen & Musson (2000) particularly, but also Warren (2004) and Rigg (2005) do show a concern of linking the local discourses studied with the macro discourse of enterprise but not of strategy. Kohtamäki et al (2008) do have focus on strategy discourse but neglect enterprise and do not link with studies of macro strategy discourses (e.g. Knights and Morgan, 1991). My thesis therefore makes a particular contribution in doing an explicitly discourse analytical study of this kind that links the discourses of particular small-firm owner-managers with the more macro discourses of both strategy and enterprise. As will be seen in the next chapter this contribution is made even more particular by showing a methodologically sensitivity to, and analytical use of, the interactional peculiarities of the researcher-involved dyadic interview.

2.4 Conclusions

This chapter has provided an understanding of the nature of the discourses of strategy and enterprise as they are understood in the literature. While some of the understandings of the literature are based on empirical work, much has been at the level of macro Discourses. In this chapter, it was seen that strategy discourse developed as a language in which the professional managers of large corporations could justify themselves to shareholders. Enterprise discourse developed more recently as a way to commercialise the public sector. There is a disconnect between these historical developments of enterprise and strategy discourses and their deployment within small enterprises. Major sites for the development of both enterprise and strategy discourses have been the United Kingdom and the United States. Thus small-firm proprietors in Ireland are valuable new source for an exploration of these discourses. An examination of this interesting dimension, and other aspects of this work's empirical context, are among matters dealt with in the next chapter.

CHAPTER 3: METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

The philosopher Otto Neurath is quoted (Quine, 1960: vii) as comparing researchers to sailors on the ocean who must rebuild their ships while afloat on the ocean: they must trust the soundness of one plank while working on another, with no chance to examine the ship on the firm foundation of land. Researchers, at least in the social constructionist tradition, must make the same sort of constructions without any guarantee of firm foundations. What can be done is to make as clear as possible the choices and assumptions relied on while doing the research. This is what I attempt to do in this chapter.

The chapter is structured as follows. Section 3.2 looks at discourse analysis as an approach to research and specifies the particular form of discourse analysis adopted in this work. The aims and objectives of this research are then stated and discussed in the following section. Section 3.4 discusses choices and assumptions made in the selection of empirical material. Strategies and tactics for analysing the empirical material are then described before the chapter closes with a conclusions section.

3.2 Choosing a discourse-analytical methodology

Burrell & Morgan (1979) provided for many a sufficient way to locate their work. Writing at a time when there was little space and less respect for the then blooming methodological diversity, what they were "… advocating in relation to developments within these paradigms amounts to a form of isolationism …" (Burrell & Morgan, 1979:397). To aid development of alternatives to the then dominant functionalism, Burrell & Morgan (1979) proposed their four-paradigms framework. This four paradigms framework provided a mapping of alternative traditions that a researcher could use to stand on the shoulders of previous work of the same tradition. Sticking with a single tradition avoided the confusion that might come from isolated attempts to escape the dominant paradigm. Such separate development may well have been a useful tactic for those scattered and diverse researchers who felt overwhelmed by the monolith of functionalism.

However, this isolationist strategy has had its critics. In particular, Burrell & Morgan's (1979) four-paradigms framework was seen as a part of a mentality that "… directly encourages a form of intellectual isolationism and protectionism which severely circumscribes the potential for creative theoretical development through the imaginative confrontation between contending approaches." (Reed, 1985: 205). Others have for similar reasons advocated a more pluralistic approach (Alvesson & Kärreman, 2000a; Watson, 1997). This kind of approach, where one seeks a "… fruitful dialogue which explores common ground and shared interpretations, without looking for, much less imposing, false integration or bland synthesis …"(Reed, 1992: 14-15), is chosen for this work rather than an isolationist strategy.

To some extent, specifying DA as the approach allows the reader to be aware of the flavour of the research philosophy of this work. After all, both critics and advocates have pointed out that DA is more than an isolated method (Potter, 2003; Armstrong, 2001a). Rather, in "discourse analysis, *theory* and *method* are intertwined" (italics in original) (Phillips & Jørgensen, 2002: 4). However, merely specifying the use of DA is not enough to specify satisfactorily the philosophical, theoretical or methodological position of a research project due to the diversity of DA approaches on such dimensions. Furthermore, discourse-analytical projects such as this one draw on a variety of DA sources as suits the particular circumstances of the study. This requires not

> "… a simple combination of approaches, but a strategy of drawing upon resources – notions, techniques, devices, and strategies from different perspectives as appropriate to the specific project at hand … if you like, a kind of made-to-order rather than off-the-rack discourse analysis, a bricolage, in recognition of the different concerns of researchers." (Wood & Kroger, 2000: 25)

Efforts at achieving watertight and protectionist logical foundations are unlikely to be completely successful, are certainly subject to diminishing returns and arguably do not always even produce desirable results (Hammersley, 2003a:765). However, what I want to do here is to clarify some of the choices in the *bricolage* that is adopted throughout this study. This must be done in order to avoid "… an eclecticism based on a mismatch of disparate approaches without serious assessment of their relations with each other" (Phillips & Jørgensen, 2002:4). This will pay dividends in clarifying some of the aims and assumptions of this work as well as locating it within the literature. This in turn will allow the reader to concentrate on

what the work is confining itself to doing and also to see contexts into which the work might fit.

In order to explain the research philosophy adopted for this thesis, I will next discuss both the unity and diversity of DA. There are many excellent overviews of DA from different perspectives (De Beaugrande, 1997; Grant, Hardy, Oswick & Putnam, 2004; Van Dijk, 1997; Potter, 1998; Jaworski & Coupland, 1999a; Alvesson & Kärreman, 2000b; Mills,1997; Iedema, 2007). It is not the intention here to try to compete with these but rather to allow the reader to see the main sources of methodology drawn on in this research. After that I will spell out the particular type of DA adopted in this work.

3.2.1 The unity and diversity of DA

The unity and distinctiveness of DA can be seen even while acknowledging the diversity of DA. Such an acknowledgement means seeing DA as incorporating such diverse approaches as the conversation analysis (CA) of Sacks (1995, orig. 1964-1972) and Schegloff (1999a), the critical discourse analysis (CDA) of Van Dijk (2001) or Fairclough (1995), the discourse analysis for social psychology (DASP) of Potter & Wetherell (1987), the discourse theory of Laclau & Mouffe (1985) and the discursive psychology of Harré & Gillet (1994). While these and other DA approaches differ on many issues, DA as a whole shares key differences from non-DA approaches.

A central feature of DA is that language is understood as more than just a transparent descriptor of reality, but rather the use of language is seen as acting upon and creating our reality. This is the case even where language is merely selecting, noticing and highlighting through description. Non-DA approaches adopt or assume a reference theory of language where a word or symbol is seen as a label for a separately knowable entity. For non-DA approaches that entity could be an objective thing or concept. Although DA does not necessarily deny any referential aspects to language (contrast the critical realist approach of Fairclough, 2005 with the more extensively constructionist approach of Laclau & Mouffe, 1985), what all versions of DA share is the view that there is an active aspect to language that, at least in part, constructs the world.

Another characteristic of DA is that it is focused on language's activities in practice as opposed to exploration of hypothetical uses of languages. Hypothetical exploration of language use has often been the focus of some philosophers, who, while they have been influential on DA, are engaged in a different activity. Ludwig Wittgenstein (1889-1951), in the second half of his career, focused on the language games of ordinary language rather than persisting in trying to find the ideal, perfectly referential language; in doing so, he tended to stick to generating his own examples of ordinary language. Another philosopher, John Austin (1911-1960), also pursued speech-act theory so as to understand the active nature of language. Grice (1998, orig. 1957) developed an understanding of how real languages aimed at co-operating to communicate meaning, rather than merely issuing logical descriptions. While interested in the activity of ordinary language, these philosophers used hypothetical statements of their own construction to study language use. In contrast, DA shuns hypothetical statements constructed by analysts and instead focuses on gathering empirical materials with which to study language used in practice. In this sense, work like that of speech-act theorists (Labov & Fanshel, 1977) moved towards DA in applying the ordinary-language philosophy to real language in use; some of the pragmatics work inspired by Grice could be considered part of DA, but only where it is addressing language actually found in use.

To illustrate the diversity of DA, a survey of studies representative of the range of DA types is presented here. I have organised this survey according to two aspects: discourse and analysis. Organising DA studies according to these two principles does disguise the fact that, often, what is considered discourse is intimately bound up with how you might proceed to analyse it. Drawing attention to the 'discourse' aspect as separate from the 'analysis' aspect might also facilitate the erroneous view, warned against for example by Iedema (2007), that 'analysis' is somehow not itself discourse but is located outside and above it in some superior, objective position. With these considerations in mind, in this section I examine some discourse types. Figure 3.1 below organises the various discourse studies that serve as examples of discourse types.

Figure 3.1 Discourse studies organised by type of discourse and analysis
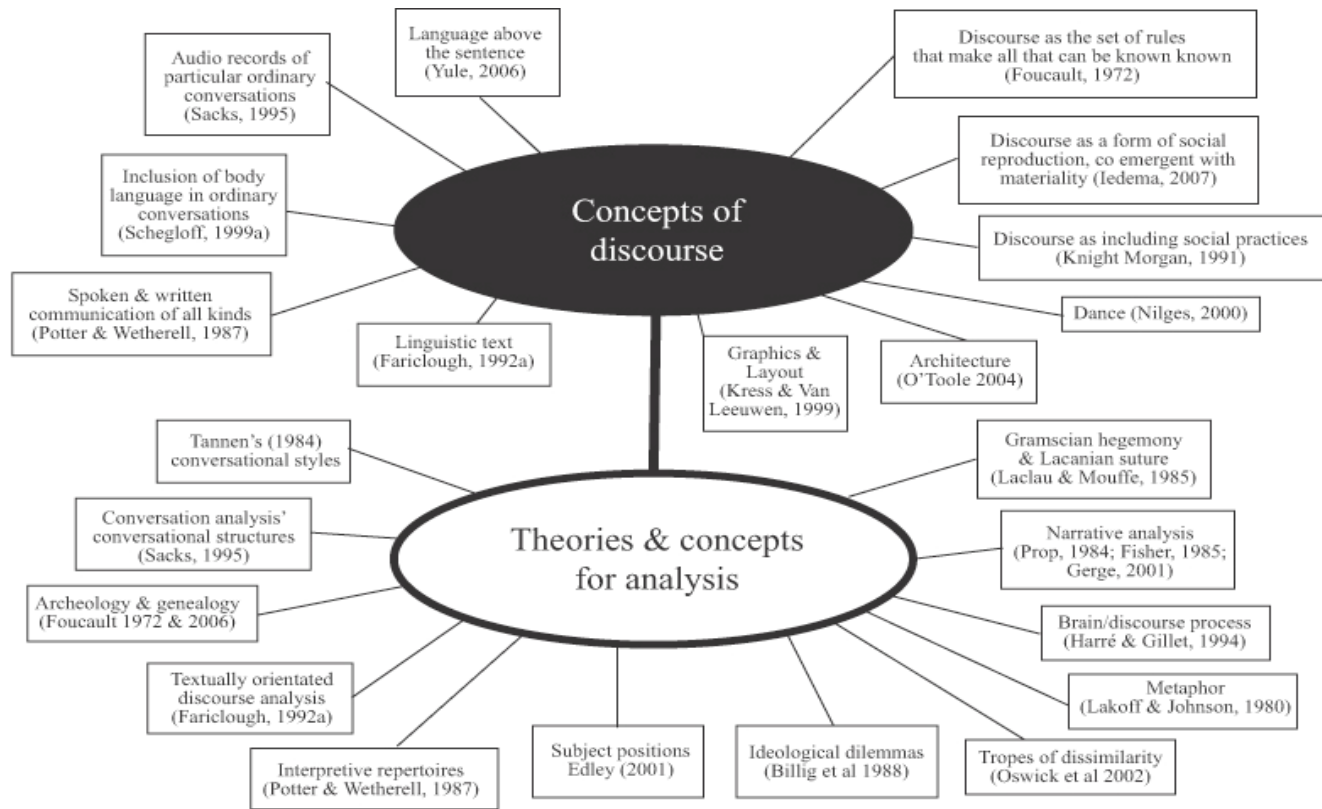
Source: Derived from the literature by the author

The top half of Figure 3.1 illustrates what is covered by the term 'discourse' in various DA studies. For Yule (2006:124), discourse is a linguistic unit of analysis involving any language use beyond the sentence. For CA, the discourse of interest is spoken conversation in naturalistic settings, the study of which was made possible by the technology of audio recordings (Sacks, 1995; org. 1964-1972) but extendable to the body language involved in natural conversations (Schegloff, 1999a). Potter & Wetherell (1987:7) define discourse as including "all forms of spoken interaction, formal and informal, and written texts of all kinds". Fairclough (1992a) too prefers to focus on specific linguistic, usually printed texts. Kress & Van Leeuwen (1999) focus on discourses of graphic communication such as newspaper layout. The meaning of discourse can be expanded to include non-linguistic semiotic systems such as architecture (O'Toole, 2004) or dance (Nilges, 2000). Knights & Morgan (1991:254) go beyond even this and view "…. discourse as shorthand for a whole set of power/knowledge relations which are written, spoken, communicated and embedded in social practices". Iedema (2007) shares such an encompassing view of discourse, as at times does Foucault (1972).

The other area of diversity in DA types, illustrated in the lower half of Figure 3.1, is the different concepts and theories from which the analysis can draw. Tannen (1984) analyses similar kinds of discourse by looking for the different conversational styles of the participants. CA following Sacks (1995, orig. 1964-1972), analyses conversational discourse with regard to "… the generic organizations for conversation …" (Schegloff, 1999a: 412). Foucault approaches discourses in a much more historical way through his methods of archaeology, – the examination of the conditions that make a discourse possible (Foucault, 1966:31) – and genealogy (Foucault, 2006; org. 1973:236) – the tracing of the contingencies of how a discourse has emerged and intertwined itself in the world. Fairclough (1992a) applies close textual analysis and concepts such as 'intertextuality' to critically examine how discourse constitutes representations, relations and identities in the context of non-discursive elements of society. Potter & Wetherell (1987) find it useful to identify interpretative repertoires – particular ways of speaking that, as they are creatively deployed, produce accounts. The idea of subject positions is used by Edley (2001) to look at how people use different, even contradictory discourses, to do identity work. Billig et al. (1988) draw on concepts of rhetoric and ideology to point to the

usefulness of analysing discourse in terms of dilemmas. Analysing discourse using tropes of dissimilarity, rather than those based on similarity such as metaphor, may be the way to open up new possibilities, argue Oswick et al (2002). This contrasts with the emphasis of Lakoff & Johnson (1980) on the centrality of metaphor, which they see as central to the human way of thinking. Harré & Gillet (1994:79) attempt to relate rules of discursive activity to a model of brain activity and thus provide a realist grounding for DA. For others, narrative is the fundamental way that human thought is organised; the narrative approach to analysing discourse is promoted by many, including Propp (1984), Fisher (1985) and Gergen (2001). In contrast, Laclau & Mouffe (1985) stress the endless struggle for hegemony between discourses, motivated by an unconscious and unavoidable Lacanian 'lack', best understood through the Lacanian concept of suture.

Whereas DA might be united in contrast to non-DA approaches, from the above it can be seen that there is much diversity even in the limited types of DA discussed. Whereas many aspects of the way I construct DA have been clarified through the accounts of DA already provided, I will now – building on the types discussed above – provide a set of guidelines as to the way DA is used in this work. The next section aims to provide this.

3.2.2 The particular type of DA adopted here

The way in which DA is used here follows five guiding principles that will be explained further below:

i) Literature-engaged

ii) Unbundled

iii) Context-constituting

iv) Interpretative

v) Detailed

This literature-engaged, unbundled, context-constituting, interpretative and detailed discourse analysis (LUCID-DA) is a description of the guiding principles of the DA used in this thesis, that have been found in works such as Gilbert & Mulkay (1984), Potter & Wetherell (1987), Wetherell (1998), McAuley, Duberley, & Cohen

(2000), Cohen & Musson (2000), Phillips & Jørgensen (2002), Tietze, Musson, & Cohen (2003), Cohen et al. (2004), and Cohen, Wilkinson & Finn (2005). By describing the features of LUCID-DA in more detail under the headings below, it should be easier to position my work within a more precise location of DA, and to specify the particular *bricolage* used throughout this work.

Literature-engaged

Describing this style of DA as literature-engaged stresses that LUCID-DA tries to engage with a variety of positions within the relevant theoretical literature. This may mean engaging with seemingly opposing camps. An early exemplar of this style describes the positioning of their analysis as serving "… as a possible bridge between the sociolinguistic and the sociostructural approaches to discourse" (Gilbert & Mulkay, 1984:17). In the same style Wetherell (1998) continues this tradition. This bridge-building is not a difference-denying or difference-avoiding eclectic recklessness adopted out of confusion or convenience but "… is well suited as a methodology for social constructionist discourse analysis partly because of constructionism's inherent *perspectivism*"   (italics in original)   (Phillips & Jørgensen, 2002:155).

Another sense in which LUCID-DA is literature-engaged is that it is prepared to explicitly use *a priori* theoretical works to help weave together a platform for interpreting discourse. Theories are not to be shunned as impure thoughts that can be resisted to leave the data speak for itself; rather, *a priori* theories are both inevitable and desirable. This is in contrast to a purist CA approach that claims to have an objective standpoint, free of *a priori* social theories, on which to base analysis that "… is not *external*, as in the classical imagery. It is *internal* to the object of analysis itself …" (italics in the original) (Schegloff, 1997: 185). Yet, as Oswick & Richards (2004) point out, willingness to learn from non-CA theorists has been a feature of many who maintain CA empirical concern with talk but who have escaped Schegloff's doctrinal purity. LUCID-DA shares with Fairclough's approach the willingness to use macrosociological theory combined with a careful analysis of particular discourses. However, LUCID-DA does not extend to Fairclough's determination to be engaged always in "showing how discourse is shaped by relations of power and ideologies" (Fairclough, 1992a:12). Gilbert & Mulkay (1984:16), for example, explicitly reject a cruder analysis of power in discourse: "We will not try to

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explain the nature of scientific discourse by presenting it as an outcome of the actions of dominant social groups" (Gilbert & Mulkay, 1984:16). On other occasions, LUCID-DA does adopt a much more conventionally critical position (e.g. Wetherell & Potter, 1992) but it does not automatically adopt a particular politically committed 'critical' position.

LUCID-DA is also literature-engaged in the sense that it sees the literature as being not just a resource for analysis but also a source from which the discourse-data under study may have drawn. In Giddens' phrase (1976:162), there is a 'double hermeneutic' at work. Thus, theoretical insights do not grant the researcher an omniscient one-way mirror into the lives of the 'natives' being studied; rather, the theories available to the researcher have been reflexively integrated into the analysis as they may well be available as discursive resources to those engaged in producing the discourse being studied. So, within LUCID-DA, the literature is often used to identify a limited number of discourses generally circulating in society (e.g. discourses about strategy) to focus the analysis of data (Phillips & Jørgensen, 2002:161-162). Identifying beforehand such macro-discourses gives focus to a study and makes explicit the theoretical background of the researcher as regards his/her expectations of what discourses might be found. It allows the researcher to concentrate on studying the detailed 'hows' of both mundane and creative uses of these discourses, including identifying "… where there is a struggle between different discourses, and which common-sense assumptions are shared by all the prevailing discourses" (Phillips & Jørgensen, 2002:142). If the macro discourses have been investigated by other researchers, this allows more fruitful interactions with those researchers. Such fruitfulness will, it is hoped, result from the literature review of prior work on strategy and enterprise discourses provided earlier in this thesis.

Unbundled

To remain rigorous, it is vital to be open to communication with other perspectives with as wide a theoretical range as possible. Claims of theoretical purity or ultimate incommensurability ought not to be used as an excuse to dismiss the criticisms, puzzles and questions put forth by others. For LUCID-DA, "… absolutism in thought and action is rejected (there can be no infinite justice), rather, we must try to understand the complexities of meaning systems, and their interconnectedness" (Tietze et al., 2003:174). This does not necessarily mean integration with, agreement

with, or even mutual appreciation of, all other perspectives. It does, however, mean an openness to communication with other perspectives that will hopefully clarify, critique, sharpen, and test the findings of this work. Such openness requires that the elements of the work be clear and, to the degree that is possible, 'unbundled', allowing others (or indeed ourselves on other occasions) to examine the work from a different perspective.

LUCID-DA's unbundling also means that work can not only be re-examined but also reused. Samra-Fredericks (2005:804) *overlays,* for example, some of her earlier ethno-methodological work with more critical insights, including those from the Habermasian tradition: "Importantly, though, the stance adopted here is that of supplementation and *not* integration" (italics in original) (Samra-Fredericks, 2005:806). By 'unbundling' our work, LUCID-DA allows the benefits of specialisation in a particular type of DA to be spread by trade throughout the academy and beyond. Of course, this entails a risk that our work may be used for purposes we never envisaged and perhaps would strongly disapprove of. This is a danger for any discourse analyst, as Fairclough's (1992a:239-240) discussion of discourse technologisation shows. Ethically, LUCID-DA can only hope that its efforts to facilitate use of its work by unbundling will improve the debate through its offering of a "*different* account of reality from those which are otherwise available" (italics in original) (Phillips & Jørgensen, 2002: 210). Faith that the process of debate will produce a better ethical outcome than a sectarian embedding of insight can be accused of being politically naïve, but it is a necessary leap for LUCID-DA's openness and commitment to scientific dialogue.

Context-constituting

Merely selecting a particular bit of discourse data for analysis, out of the unbounded chain of discourse in which each bit of discourse naturally sits, is to impose views of what one believes is important. For this reason, Wetherell (1998: 402-403) and other LUCID discourse analysts reject Schegloff's (1997) view that the only context to which analysts should pay attention is the context that can be made explicit through analysis of the selected bit of discourse itself. Thus LUCID-DA offers more than a quick gloss on the context in which the discourse to be analysed takes place. Rather, theoretical literature, understandings of the empirical context, and the interpretative skills of the researcher, are all marshalled to gain sensitivity to the context in which

the discourse to be analysed is located. LUCID-DA must take responsibility for constituting the context of the discourses it analyses. It does this by using a variety of theories and to a variety of depths. One of the problems with being context-sensitive in this way it is that is hard to decide where to stop, as Wood & Kroger (2000:128) point out. However, Wetherell's (1998: 403) view is that it is possible "… to say something, and something furthermore which is scholarly, complete, and insightful …" without saying everything that can be said about a bit of discourse data.

There is another sense in which LUCID-DA is context-constituting. This is the sense in which DA itself and the researcher are a part of the context being studied. This refers not only to the degree to which the empirical material involved is partially created by the researcher but also to the fact that the researcher is part of society from which the material studied is drawn. LUCID-DA then hopes to contribute "by representing a qualified (that is, scientific) and *different* account of reality from those which are otherwise available" (italics in original) (Phillips & Jørgensen, 2002: 210). The context-constituting aspect of LUCID-DA also involves engagement with the literature and an acknowledgement of LUCID-DA's interpretative nature (as discussed below).

LUCID-DA recognises that DA, to apply Downes' (1984:232) observation, is incorrigibly interpretative . Unlike the impression one often gets from CA, in LUCID-DA there "… is no mechanical procedure for producing findings from an archive of transcript" (Potter & Wetherell, 1987:168). This is because we are dealing with the use of living language, where meanings are constructed in highly contingent, dynamic ways and where analysts' membership of the language community being studied makes them part of that construction. As members of their language communities, analysts have an ability to build meanings that in ways are likely to remain tacit – drawing on shared and often silent understandings of experience and context. This not only puts such LUCID-DA "within the subjectivist, interpretative tradition of social science" (McAuley et al., 2000:94) but also means that "the reality _we_ [as researchers] present is a construction of reality" (italics in original) (McAuley et al., 2000:95). This means that LUCID-DA takes a position whose values are "… embedded in the attempt to understand the very connectedness of different points of reference, or meaning systems" (Tietze et al., 2003:174). The importance of LUCID-

DA being engaged with literature and being able to unbundle its analysis is heightened, given its interpretativist stance.

LUCID-DA is detailed in two senses. First, it is detailed in its transcription method for spoken data, using some form of notation similar to the method described in Appendix A. While pauses and intonation details may not be noted to the same degree of detail as in CA, the 'ums', 'ahs', repetitions and grammatical errors are left in, both to allow transparent access for the reader to the data and because such features of speech are used in the analysis. In this sense, LUCID-DA may be less detailed for a particular segment of interaction than CA, but provides more detail than other versions of DA (e.g. Hardy et al., 2000). Secondly, LUCID-DA is detailed in the sense that it involves extended stretches of discourse so that one is presented with detailed information on particular interactions rather than researcher-selected snatches from many interactions. For example, Gilbert & Mulkay's book (1984:40-41) concentrated on

> "… material from just two interviews and one published paper by each interviewee …. [and proceeds] by means of a comparatively detailed examination of two papers, rather than by means of quantitative analysis of large numbers of texts, because it seems to us that in this way we can demonstrate most forcibly the capacity of particular scientists to produce radically different versions of given actions."

In this sense, LUCID-DA provides more detail of an interaction than CA usually does because it gives more interactional context than the small snatches of talk typically presented in CA work. It could be argued that LUCID-DA's long stretches of transcriptions are provided inevitably at the expense of more ethnographic detail and/or analysis of a broader range of materials, with which the work of other discourse analysts such as Heracleous (2006) is more fully furnished. The balance struck in LUCID-DA has the advantage of making the work more transparent and ensuring that the precise processes within a particular specimen of discourse are more fully explored.

LUCID-DA, as described above, serves to specify guiding principles inherent in certain DA works within a variety of discourse-analytical approaches and also serves to clarify the nature of the *bricolage* assembled here in order to address the research aim and questions to which I now turn my attention.

3.3 Research aim and questions

The aim of this research is to examine ***how*** enterprise and strategy discourses are used by the owner-managers of small firms. This aim can be further elaborated into the following questions:

> 1) How are the grand discourses of enterprise and strategy, as described in the literature, relevant to the talk of owner-managers of small firms?
>
> 2) How, if at all, does the way owner-managers talk of strategy and enterprise vary?
>
> 3) How will the discourses of enterprise and strategy be used in relation to each other?

The review of the literature showed that studies of how strategy and enterprise discourses are used in small firms has, in comparison to study of their use in larger-scale contexts, been relatively neglected. In examining the origins of strategic discourses, it was clear that the separation of ownership and control was a key condition for the emergence of strategy discourse. Small firms thus offer a context where the original condition for the emergence of strategic discourse is less likely to be present. The question of how strategy discourse is used by the owner-managers of small firms is therefore included in the aim of this research. My literature review also argued that, although enterprise has drifted far away from its mythical origins in the discussion of firm formation, the small and young firm remains central to enterprise discourse. The question of how enterprise discourse – now enriched and expanded by its travels in all sorts of contexts – is used by the owner-managers of small firms (the mythic homeland of enterprise) is therefore included in the aim of this research. The aim of examining how enterprise and strategy discourses are used by the owner-managers of small firms is a very open one and so, in order to guide the reader a little more, some aspects of the overall research aim have been elaborated into more specific questions.

The first question that elaborates the central aim of this research asks how are the grand discourses of enterprise and strategy, as described in the literature, relevant to the talk of owner-managers of small firms. In Chapter 2 of this work the discourses of both enterprise and strategy and their previous analyses were reviewed, showing various elements of both discourses potentially available as resources to those who might use them. In posing this first question elaborating the research aim, this work

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hopes to explicate the relationship of small-firm owner-managers' talk with the elements of the, more macro, discourses as reviewed.

The second question that elaborates the central aim of this research asks how, if at all, does the way owner-managers talk of strategy and enterprise vary? Perhaps the owner-managers' talk will faithfully reflect the grand discourses of enterprise and strategy as described in the literature. It is also possible that the owner-managers in this study will do something with the discourses of enterprise and strategy that is consistent among them but different from the 'macro' view of those discourses. It is also possible that there will be even more variety in the use of strategy and enterprise discourse.

The third question that elaborates the central aim of this research asks how the discourses of strategy and enterprise will be used in relation to each other. *A priori* it seems possible that they overlap harmoniously in a coherent and consistent ideology. It is also possible that one might drive out the other, with perhaps one of the discourses seen as in error, as irrelevant or merely as a straw man with which the owner-managers show the superiority of the other. It is possible that one discourse might be used to incorporate the other. There are numerous possibilities and this research aims to carefully examine the discourse material chosen so as to add to knowledge on this issue.

The aim and the questions elaborated above are particularly suited to DA. They are not issues suitable for

> "a factors-and-outcomes logic that … goes along with questions of the kind: What is the influence of X on Y (of health beliefs on diet, of family breakdown on education failure, and so on)" (Potter, 2003:786).

Nor is it the main aim of the primary research here to try to establish the existence of a particular macro-discourse. Although finding a discourse analytically useful, in an empirical context, can provide a kind of confirmatory evidence of its existence, the usefulness and existence of enterprise and strategy are already well-argued for in the literature. The main objectives of this research, as described above,

> "are more like: What is an X? How is X done? How is X managed in the context of Y? The logic of these questions is conversational and rhetorical; they emphasize action and construction. They do not mix easily with questions involving factors and outcomes." (Potter 2003:786)."

3.4 Choices in selecting the empirical material

I am focusing on how small-firm owner-managers use the discourses of strategy and enterprise to talk about their businesses. In analysing this, there are a number of sampling options open and it is these options and my reasoning for my choice that this section addresses.

Sampling or selection of empirical material in a study like this one is very different from the sampling or selection process appropriate where research questions seek, for example, to establish the existence of a correlation between factors, provide an indication of the average strength of that correlation or the distribution of types across population. Nevertheless, there is an enduring and appropriate concern that the researcher in DA – like any other empirical study – might be engaged in merely selecting data to suit an *a priori* position. For research to be convincing, the researcher must be constrained by the data: the research must learn from the empirical, rather than merely filter it selectively. On the other hand, the researcher ought to choose the sample so that it is relevant to the theoretical concerns of the work. Balancing these two concerns appropriately is important.

Data selection within DA can be usefully separated into two phases that I here call 'corpus creation' and 'within-corpus selection'. 'Corpus creation' refers to the choice of the collection and/or the generation of the discourses that can be called on as topic in the analysis. By 'within-corpus selection' is meant the particular bits of the corpus that are focused on in analysis. For example, Vaara (2002) created a massive corpus of data: 126 individuals were interviewed (some more than once), producing 144 interviews of two or three hours each. Any of this material could have been studied as topic. However, in what I call within-corpus selection, Vaara (2002) reduced this massive corpus into something more manageable by looking only at what were identified as 'success or failure sequences'. This secondary selection stage was justified because the research was focused on the discursive construction of post-merger success or failure. Gathering a large corpus makes it more likely that more material relevant to the focus of the research is obtained. However, it means that the 'within-corpus selection' process must be more 'heroic' in the sense of being led more by the *a priori* concepts of the researcher. Another disadvantage with strong within-corpus selection is the danger that the discourse selected is decontextualised in a way that does excessive violence to its meaning.

In this thesis, corpus creation is quite strongly based on theoretical and other *a priori* concerns of the research. This is balanced by the fact that 'within-corpus selection' researcher selection was much more constrained by the decision to analyse the entirety of each interview. The constitution of the corpus that forms the discourse material from the chosen empirical site (owner-managers of young small-business magazines in Ireland) will be discussed below in the next subsection.

3.4.1 Corpus creation

To look at corpus creation, it is useful to examine the variety of sources that have been used in DA of business. Table 3.1 below illustrates some of this range. The table is organised roughly according to the level of research involvement in the creation of the discourse analysed. The table also raises some other important dimensions of the kind of data used: text or talk, private or public. It should be noted, too, that the boundaries between the various types of data could be disputed: for example, it could be argued that in the transcription of any 'naturally occurring' data there is much researcher involvement (Mishler, 2003). A further complication is that many researchers combine many discourse forms to analyse: for example, Merilainen et al. (2004), while using mostly dyadic interviews, also include interviews where two researchers act as interviewers. A discussion of Table 3.1 will help to clarify the choices available to this research.

Table 3.1 Kinds of Discourse Sources in Studies of Strategy & Enterprise

Discourse Analysed	Description & Examples
Fictional discourse	The discourse is created by the analyst from conceived possibilities and recollected fragments from various empirical sites but without any traceability attempted (e.g. Watson, 2003:1317)
Analyst-storied site-based discourse	The analyst uses various empirical resources to piece together a discourse that represents the discourse of the site (e.g. Hardy et al., 2000)
Research involved dyadic interviews	The interviews, though researcher is involved, are treated as the topic of the analysis rather than as a resource (e.g. Palmer & Dunford, 2002)
Other research-provoked discourse	These discourses are again treated as a topic and could include focus groups (Elliot, Jones, Benfield, & Barlow, 1994) , researcher requested diaries (Jones, 1983 provides an example in life-history research), electronic discussions involving the researcher (Lichtenstein, 2002)
'Naturally occurring' private discourse	Audio-recorded meetings that would have happened without the researcher (Menz, 1999), internal company minutes and reports (Heracleous, Loizos & Barrett, 2001), computer system structures and contents (Doolin, 2003)
Public discourses	Media reports, interviews, editorials (e.g. Koller, 2005). Organisational reports, press-releases & statements (e.g. Ezzamel & Hugh, 2004) Political speeches and documents (Fairclough, 1991) Academic textbooks (Hackley, 2003) Academic articles (Grandy & Mills, 2004)

Source: Author's survey of literature

The first row of Table 3.1 deals with cases where the discourse analysed is fictional. This kind of invented talk was frequently analysed by philosophers of language such as Wittgenstein (1998; orig. 1953). Within organisational studies, Watson has argued that it is useful for organisational researchers to write 'ethnographic fiction science' in which

"a whole archive of personally remembered and recorded events and episodes, and a mass of literature inspired concepts and theories ... [is taken and woven] into a story which helps the

writer and reader alike make sense of aspects of managerial processes and organizational research work." (Watson, 2000b:498).

This tapestry of ethnographic fiction science can include snatches of discourse used to gain insight into organisational issues. While ethnographic fiction science is not a common source of discourse analysed in organisation studies, it represents an extreme of acknowledgement of the writer's role in constructing the material for analysis.

The second row of Table 3.1 deals with analyst-storied site-based discourse. Here the analyst uses various empirical resources to piece together a discourse that represents the discourse of the site, so that the "discourse under study is the reported or constructed dialogue rather than actual dialogue recorded during, for instance a meeting ..." (McGowan, 2002:35). Rigg's DA of managing in small business used a variety of discourse sources encompassing "… a range of discursive practices, including logos, written signs, building layout, interactions within meetings, names of meetings and job roles, informal interactions, body language, conversations, as well as narrative accounts given to me in formal interviews" (Rigg, 2005:64). The resulting constructed discourse may be constructed as an ethnographic report on the discourses in the case or cases studied. The discourses may be presented only in key-word or summary form rather than as representations of actual discourse. The validity of these discourses relies more heavily on the interpretation of the researcher than on transcripts of the discourses. This style reflects the concern with studying the effects of the discourse along with the discourse, rather than with just understanding the discourse itself. Thus Hardy et al. (2000) show how the discourse typified by them as 'localization' was used as a strategic resource in a non-governmental organisation operating in Palestine. Even if there is representation of actual discourse, the aim of the type of research in row two of Table 3.1 is to "… weave together direct field observation, interviews and systematic collection of textual data to [form] a collage – a mixture of production and reproduction that every reading and writing necessarily entails" (Ng & De Cock, 2002: 27). In a sense, this type of DA uses ethnographic methods (including perhaps collections of discourse) as a resource to construct a crafted discourse that then acts as the topic of the analysis. These works' self-descriptions as DA are justified since discourses and other materials are used only as resources to craft – usually typified – discourses which are then the discourse used as the topic for their analyses.

The third row of Table 3.1 involves DA arising from dyadic interviews conducted by the analyst. Here the focus is on the interview discourse as the topic itself rather than its use as a resource for access to another discourse, for example, a wider non-recorded organisational discourse. This distinction is not perfect in all cases; the discourse studied is of course constructed by the analyst since, even in transcribing data, there is construction and because the researcher will always be using interpretative resources in drawing lessons from the data. However, the differentiation is reasonably robust, with the interviews of Palmer & Dunford (2002) being clearly used as the topic, whereas, in the work of Hardy et al. (2000), interviews are used as a resource to construct the discourse treated as topic.

The topic versus resource distinction allows a consideration of what kinds of discourse are created in the analyst-involved dyadic interviews of Table 3.1's third row. Mishler (1986) traced how research interviews have often been set up and understood in a way that treats interviewees as responding to standardised stimuli that should elicit standardised behavioural responses rather than treating interviews as linguistic interactions. Clearly, such a concern with the linguistic element of interviews holds a strong force within DA, though Mishler's call for empowerment of the interviewee has been more contentious. Indeed, further critique of interviews such as those of Atkinson & Silverman (1997) showed that the interview is far from being as straightforward as it may first appear. More recently, the issue of using interviews and other 'non-naturally' occurring data for DA has begun to be treated with greater sophistication and pragmatism (for further discussion see O'Rourke & Pitt, 2007).

The fourth row of Table 3.1 deals with other (i.e. non-dyadic, non-researcher-involved interviews) researcher-provoked data. Here the discourse treated as a topic is gleaned from a discourse provoked by the researcher, ranging from focus groups led by the researchers (Elliot et al., 1994) to electronic discussion groups involving the researcher (Lichtenstein, 2002). An advantage of this kind of researcher-provoked data – if it involves a number of non-researcher interactants – is that it provides the analyst with evidences of how each of the interactants interprets the discourse of each other, while preserving the intimate knowledge that the researcher can get from being involved in the data-generation process.

The fifth row of Table 3.1 is labelled 'naturally occurring' private discourse. Here are records of interactions that would have happened without the presence of the

researcher. In the specific context of strategic discourse, Samra-Fredericks (2003) has argued in favour of using this type of 'real-time' or natural interaction of strategists. In addition to Samra-Fredericks, there have been other studies of this kind within organisational studies (Boden, 1994; Woodilla, 1998; Iedema, Degeling, Braithwaite, & White, 2004). However, the idea of a pure 'naturally occurring' interaction is problematic. All interactions and their recording have 'researcher' effects that raise the same kind of concerns that the 'interview society' raises for interview (Atkinson & Silverman ,1997). For all forms of interaction, participants are now aware, in an era of reality TV shows,that they are starring in the recording devices that are placed in such 'natural' interactions. These interviewer and 'interviewer society' effects can be used as analytical resources (like Speer & Hutchby's 2003 treatment of recording devices) rather than seen as intolerable contaminates of some imagined natural purity (for further discussion see O'Rourke & Pitt, 2007).

A less intrusive means of gathering 'naturally occurring' data is to look at the discourse in information technology, for example, a hospital's case management information (Doolin, 2003), a project management software system (Räisänen & Linde, 2004) or a company's email exchanges (Lichtenstein, 2002; Vaara, Kleymann, & Seristo, 2004). These forms, too, have their complications and limitations. In the discourse of a particular information system (its structure, its categories, etc.), one sees the finished product of a particular discourse rather than its active construction. The conventions of email, text messaging and other relatively recent technologies also create their own contexts and conventions that must be understood for a complete understanding of their discourses. Such technologies can also create a reluctance to produce discourse on sensitive issues as one never knows where an email or similar communication might end up.

The sixth row of Table 3.1 deals with what I have called public discourses. They are in some respects the ultimate in 'naturally occurring' data for they would likely take place and generally be the same regardless of a particular discourse analyst's presence. Public discourse may be virtually free from any analyst-effects but not, of course, free of audience-effect, so public discourse is in that sense no more 'natural' than (private) researcher-involved interview discourse and is many ways less like the 'ordinary' conversation so beloved in CA. The public discourses of Table 3.1's sixth row may be specific to an organisation or sector: perhaps its press

releases (Ezzamel & Hugh, 2004; Vaara et al., 2004) , its annual reports (Hardy et al., 2000) or its advertisements (Gunnarsson, 2000), its coverage in the media (Geppert, 2003), or its published strategy (Eriksson & Lehtimäki, 2001) (Heracleous, Loizos & Barrett, 2001). Public discourse can also concern how organisational issues are covered in the media in a more general way. For example, the media coverage of company mergers has been looked at by a number of discourse analysts (Hellgren et al., 2002; Koller, 2005; Kuronen, Tienari, & Vaara, 2005). There has also been discourse-analytical studies of how enterprise is treated in political speeches (e.g. Fairclough, 1991). Academic discourse is another type of public discourse that has been subjected to DA: Caldwell (2005) analyses academic literature on organisational change and agency; Grandy & Mills (2004) examine the strategy literature to take a radical reflexive look at strategy as a discourse; Thomas (2003) carries out a DA of Porter's concept of competitive advantage, while Hackley (2003) looks at the discourse of marketing texts. An advantage to selecting public discourse is that its relevance can be argued from its public nature – after all, if one is studying the discourse of a newspaper read by most managing directors, then one can reasonably argue that the discourse is of importance for corporations. A further advance of public discourse is, of course, its ease of availability. With reference to the current research, several publicly available discourses were considered. However, these were not chosen because, *inter alia,* it was felt that the audience effects would be less useful for achieving the research objectives than the analyst or interviewer effects of a private interaction.

Having surveyed and considered the alternatives, I chose to do interviews as the most suitable method for generating data for this work (this choice is discussed further below).

3.4.2 Choosing to do interviews

Above, in discussing the third row of Table 3.1, some of the issues regarding the use of interviews in DA were raised. As was noted, a more pragmatic stance to the interview is now emerging among discourse analysts (e.g. Ten Have, 2002) . Such pragmatism gains credence by the fact that it echoes with earlier views that in some cases fuelled the problematisation of the interview: "... discursive mediation should not be viewed as a source of contamination but rather as a crucial source of insights into both interviewing processes and the social worlds they seek to document"

(Briggs, 2003:496) (referring to his 1986 book). An additional preliminary point to note is that many fine DA studies (Knights & Morgan, 1995; Hardy et al., 2000; McAuley et al., 2000; Vaara, 2002), though taking different approaches to DA, have used interviews in their empirical studies of strategic or organisational discourses. Specifically with regard to this research, there are three reasons to use the interview: the difficulty of capturing in a non-provoked way the targeted discourses; the discrete nature of the interview as a complete and predictable interaction, and the usefulness of understandings of the interview in provoking the desired type of discourses. These three reasons for using interviews will now be discussed in more detail.

The first reason for using interviews is that strategic and entrepreneurial discourse may be hard to find as 'naturally occurring' discourses. This is the case for at least two reasons. Pressure of work and the silencing of strategic and enterprise talk make it difficult to collect as naturally occurring data, particularly in small and recently founded firms. Mintzberg (1973:31) shows that managers' activity is "characterised by brevity, variety and fragmentation"; strategic and enterprise talk is similarly likely to be fragmented and hard to collect. Pressure of work displaces particularly strategic discourse with more workaday talk: "While most companies are proficient in carrying out operational conversations, they lack the mastery of strategic conversations" (Von Krogh & Roos, 1996:221). Organisational power can silence certain types of strategic talk. Bourdieu wrote (as translated and cited by Slembrouck) of 'situated silencing' ('*la censure*') to refer to when speakers are "condemned to silence in official situations where important political, social and cultural issues are at stake" (Slembrouck, 2004:96). McGowan's (2002:191) empirical analysis supports this finding: "... frequently discursive strategies serve to silence the private in the public sphere ..." Thus aspects of strategy and enterprise talk that intermesh with the personal might be hard to find in everyday, 'naturally occurring' talk. If one could audio-record all the owner-managers all of the time when they talk with their confidants, mentors, spouses and friends *and* if one could then confidently select the strategic and enterprise talk from other talk, then the relevant talk could be naturally collected. However, this is hardly practicable in the case of the first condition, and epistemologically problematic in the case of the second (involving as it would very heroic within-corpus selection). On the other hand, an interview can provoke such discourse so that it can be more conveniently collected.

The second reason to use the interview in this research is that an interview in one sense is a complete interaction, a single event that is discrete and bounded in time. If an interviewee wishes to say a number of things, all of which depend on each other, the interviewee has a reasonable idea of the time available to balance out the intended discourse. In one-to-one interviews, interviewees have a control over the context in which discourse is produced; their meanings are not going to be so dependent on the turns of other conversational members. Discourse can thus emerge in a one-to-one interview that might emerge only rarely and in hard-to-achieve conditions in the wild.

The third reason for using the interview is that, both methodologically and in the life-world we, as researchers and researched, know it well. Fielding's (2003b) four volumes of selected journal articles (no books and no electronic sources were even considered for inclusion), in both its existence and the difficulty its author had in culling its contents to a 'mere' 92 articles, is just one witness to the thoroughness of the methodological consideration of the interview. The Atkinson & Silverman (1997) critique of the interview was in part based on the idea that the interview form is so familiar in the life-world that, they claimed, we live in an 'interview society'. It has been argued above that the effect of such interview consciousness on the type of discourse produced for the interview is, in these reality-TV times, equalled by similar effects in any recorded interaction. The advantage of the interview is that its familiarity to interviewees aids the control they have of it as a communicative event.

There are of course different types of interviews. A variety of research interview types will now be considered and it will be argued that a particular type is best suited to the purposes of this research.

3.4.3 Different types of research interview

Many types of research interviews are identified in the literature (e.g. Fielding, 2003a). This is seen by some as an unhealthy obsession and preoccupation, reflecting an uncritical acceptance of the interview along with the importance of the interview to social science (Nunkoosing, 2005). Nevertheless, given the decision in this work to choose interviews, such obsession is not only excusable but required. DA turns our attention to the function or aim of a discourse and thus, for the analysis in this work, an understanding of what is being achieved in the interview *as interview* is required.

In this section, some of the literature on research interviews from the researcher's viewpoint will be examined. Below, in subsection 3.4.5, the 'vernacular' understandings of the interview that might be held by the interviewee will be considered. Both researcher and vernacular views of the interview will act as stimulants, rather than exhaustive categories for interpretations of the interview data.

A key aspect of what an interview does as a discourse is to construct what might be termed the roles, the 'subject positions' or subjectivities of the interview participants. As the proponents of the active interview argue, "… there is always a working model of the subject lurking behind the persons assigned the roles of interviewer and respondent" (Gubrium & Holstein, 2003:30). Thus, a useful way of looking at the variety in research interviews is to focus on that key aspect. Table 3.2 below tries to elucidate these interview roles. To get some purchase on the issue, Table 3.2 adopts the interviewer-interviewee terminology. It should be noted, however, that the grammar of the terms 'interviewer' and 'interviewee' presupposes that the former is implicated as more powerful and active (Mishler, 1986).

Table 3.2 Some Research Conceptions of the Interview

Research interview type	Interviewer positioned as:	Interviewee positioned as:	Interview aims to:	Ideal context
The experimental interview	Stimulus administrator and observer	Respondent - mechanism in black box	Expose mechanism in respondent	Controlled and neutral laboratory
The information-gathering interview	Reporter	Informant-container of information	Obtain information on variables of interest to interviewer	Atmosphere conducive to unbiased and truthful flow of information
The action interview	Co-worker with theoretical strength	Co-worker with practical strength	Solve a problem while exposing theory	The real world of practical problems
The narrative interview.	Listener as opposed to questioner	Creator of meaning and story.	Capture the story of the interview so that its integrity can be communicated in researcher's publication	Atmosphere conducive to the flow of the interviewee's story
The active interview	Various activator positions.	Various activated positions.	Construct an improvised performance of an interview.	The interview society

Source: From a survey of the literature by the author

The first type of interview listed in Table 3.2 is labeled the 'experimental interview'. Here the interviewer is seen as the active one, controlling the stimulus that elicits some sort of response in the interviewee. One can imagine that a behaviourist of the 1950s would be quite comfortable with this kind of description of an interview. However, elements of this type can also be seen in many more recent approaches to the interview, for example, Ericsson & Smith (1991).

The 'information gathering' interview is a very broad category of interview. It includes standardised survey interviews designed to get at variables from the number of bedrooms in houses (as in national census questionnaires), to surveys of attitudes and values (e.g. Mac Gréil, 1996). This category also includes all types of 'forensic' interviews, from the cognitive interviews where theories of memory are used to enhance the recall of informants (Geiselman, Fisher, MacKinnon, & Holland, 2003; 1986) to the 'creative interview' (Douglas, 1985) where interview skills are used interactively and artfully to allow the full expression of the truth by the interviewee. It may at first glance seem odd to put creative interviews in the same box as standardised interviews, but the commonality stressed by doing so is that the interview is seen as holder of a truth that can be got from the interviewee, even if this extraction requires much skill and creativity. While this model is more apparent in the standardised questionnaire, it can be seen too in the work of one of the least standardised interviewers; as Terkel (1974: XXV) remarks of some of his famous interviews: "In short, it was conversation. In time, the sluice gates of dammed hurts and dreams were opened."

The 'action interview' is more pragmatic and is aimed at addressing some problem that is at least of some concern to the interviewee and not just the interviewer. The action interview can aim at helping a manager to develop a strategy (Eden, Jones, & Sims, 1979: Eden & Ackermann, 1998; Doyle & Sims, 2002). The advocating interview can be seen as a kind of action interview for our purposes as it aims to address the problems of the oppressed in bringing attention and political resources to their plight. In the action interview, the interviewee is more active in the interview than is envisaged in either the experimental or information-gathering interview, and the interviewee's interests are seen as an important matter for the research to address.

'Narrative interviews' place great emphasis on the centrality of the interviewee's rather than the interviewer's conceptions: "If we want to hear stories rather than reports then our task as interviewers is to *invite* others to tell their stories, to encourage them to take responsibility for the meaning of their talk." (italics in original) (Chase, 1995:3). Stories are seen as central to humanity: "They are not merely for entertainment. They are the meaning of our life." (Sims, 2003:1200). Sims also argues that narrative provides a holistic view of what is happening, and that "any

more atomistic or propositional form" of research does not (Sims 2003:1210). Where the narrative is considered as a complete story – with a plot; a beginning, middle and an end – it does indeed give a sense of a completeness that other research methods do not. In seeking such structured stories, narrative interviewing shapes the discourse in a particular way, by putting the interviewee in the role of a storyteller. Asking for stories does impose a position on the interview discourse for "Telling stories that lack coherence is contrary to modernity. Yet in the postmodern condition, stories are harder to tell because experience itself is so fragmented and full of chaos that fixing meaning or imagining coherence is fictive" (Boje, 2001: 7). When it comes to analysis, a narrative approach will also guide which bits of an interview are stressed. In a narrative analysis of stories told in a newspaper company, we are correctly warned that "… it is important to make the point that the patterns that are woven by … analysis reflect thematic continuities that the storytellers may, or may not, themselves be conscious of" (O'Leary, 2003:686). Of course, all interview interactions and analyses shape interview discourse; this is the only way they can be analytical. It is just that, in the narrative interview, the particular shaping is that of the story structure.

On the last row of Table 3.2 is the 'active interview'. In contrast to the views of the interviewee in the experimental and information-gathering interviews, here the "… active interview eschews the image of the vessel waiting to be tapped in favour of the notion that the subject's interpretative capabilities must be activated, stimulated and cultivated" (Holstein & Gubrium, 1997:122). In contrast to the act*ion* interview, the act*ive* interview sees the interview as action in itself:

> "As a drama of sorts, its narrative is scripted in that it has a topic or topics, distinguishable roles, and a format for conversation. But it also has a developing plot, in which topics, roles, and format are fashioned in the give-and-take of the interview." (Holstein & Gubrium, 1995: 17).

Some have stressed the active construction of identity in particular; "… during the rather distinctive activity that we call the research interview, both participants and researchers are active agents whose identities are constituted in that process" (Lee & Roth, 2003:2). The data produced is not so much collected as negotiated (Fontana, Andrea & Frey, 2000). Though it shares much with the narrative interview (e.g. the stress on how meaning is constructed in the interview), the active interview does not confine the position of the interviewee to that of storyteller. The active interview allows for the activity of both interviewer and interviewee because:

> "Interviewing is no longer reserved for social researchers or investigative reporters, but has become the very stuff of life as members of society spend much of their time asking questions, being asked questions themselves, or watching TV shows about people being asked questions and answering them in turn. They all seem to have routine knowledge of the rules of interviewing, with no need for instruction." (Fontana, 2003: 51)

In short, the active interview uses the 'interview society' as a resource to build the interaction. Within this interaction, both interviewee and interviewer can adopt different positions, have agendas and draw upon a range of discursive resources.

Having contrasted the active interview with the other forms of interview, the active interview will be further examined below as it is the form of interview chosen for this research.

3.4.4 Choosing the active interview

There were two primary reasons that the active interview was chosen as the basic model for the interview in this research. First, the active interview takes advantage of the interview's potential to provoke discursive activity that might be hard to capture elsewhere in such an economical manner. Above it was argued that strategic and enterprise discourse is particularly hard to capture.

> "Active interviews can be used to gain purchase on interpretive practice relating to matters that may not be casually topical. By inciting narrative production, the interviewer may provoke interpretative developments that might emerge too rarely to be effectively captured 'in their natural habitat', so to speak." (Holstein & Gubrium, 1995: 18).

This ability of the active interview will be become even clearer as the guidelines for the conduct of the active interviews are discussed below.

The second main reason for choosing *active* interviewing is that it takes a reflexive, interview-society-aware stance towards the interview and harnesses the 'unnaturalness' of the interview. The active interview takes the interview as a constructed interaction, building on the basic insights of ethno-methodology for such

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interactions. The active interview specifically applies "… to interviewing the perspective that the interview is a social production between interviewer and respondent … rather than as a discrete, neutral set of questions and ensuing responses, detached from both the interviewer's and respondent's culturally informed agency" (Fontana, 2003: 56). This makes the active interview particularly suited to a DA approach.

3.4.5 Guidelines for the interviews

The basic model of the active interview is provided by Holstein & Gubrium (1995, 1997). In any particular application, the basic model needs enhancement for "As a meaning making occasion, the active interview is guided by the interviewer and his or her research agenda" (Holstein & Gubrium, 1995:76). Ultimately, the " active interview is a kind of limited 'improvisational' performance" (Holstein & Gubrium, 1995: 17). Very fixed procedures would therefore be unwise. However, for these interviews I did make a number of explicit and specific preparations, drawing on the general approach of the active interview, my own ethics and the particular set of guiding principles (expressed as LUCID-DA) that I have adopted for this research. These preparations are now discussed.

Whereas thinking of 'incitements' might seem odd in planning interviews, its use here is to signal that, in the practice and analysis of active interviews, the researcher must take account of his/her activity in the interview. On the one hand, thinking of each of my contributions to the interview as incitements cautions against allowing my discourses to overly dominate the interview. Thinking of my participation in the interview as a series of incitements also alerts me in my role as analyst to the 'interview effects' which are an inherent and potentially analytically useful part of the interview. At many points in the interaction the most appropriate incitement to promote the discursive practice of the interviewee is for the interviewer to be quiet. Often it was best for me to limit my contributions to encouraging 'hems' and 'ums'. Another useful incitement was to ask very open questions. For example, the question I generally asked in opening the interview was: 'How did you get here?', leaving the interviewer to define what 'here' I was referring to (though of course the phrase unavoidably implies a journey metaphor). At times, this openness in questioning was best maintained by being deliberately hesitant in answering questions put by the interviewees or not quite completing questions put to them. Another tactic

was that in general I tried to give mostly the 'preferred response' to each contribution by the interviewee, in the sense of the less face-threatening (Cameron, 2001: 94) rather than in just the narrow CA meaning of that term. This meant, for a lot of the time, signalling that I understood and was attentive to what the interviewee was saying. At other times the 'preferred response' seemed to be a display of knowledge about the industry, assuring the interviewer that I was listening carefully. Where I felt my own reaction to statements was being asked for, I did give these reactions, but I was anxious to communicate in doing so my desire to understand the situation as talked of by the interviewees.

While an active interview does involve attentive listening, it may also involve more assertive interaction by the researcher. This may be unintentional or intentional, useful or not useful, or a mixture. Without any activity by the interviewer, the interview would likely seem stilted and awkward; thus the "interviewer must therefore be prepared to furnish precedence, incitement, restraint, and perspective as the interview proceeds, not avoid them" (Holstein & Gubrium, 1995:76). At times, therefore, in this research I asked for contrastive experiences of what had just been talked about. For example, if the interviewee referred to something being a success, I tried to ask about a failure. Where there were hesitations and confusions, these were explored. Another interview tactic I used was to talk again about an issue that had already been covered in an earlier part of the interview. This was designed so that I could follow the advice that the   "… active interviewer conscientiously, but cautiously, promotes multivocality" (Holstein & Gubrium, 1995: 77). This, too, was a reason for occasionally asking questions beginning with phrases such 'As a journalist/woman/entrepreneur did you ….?' or: 'Given your background in …?' Where the interviewees seemed to call on me for an opinion or contribution based on one of the roles I was playing, I was happy to oblige, as would be expected in an ordinary cooperative conversation.

I tried at all times to remain authentic in my interactions. While in some ways 'authenticity' is itself a concept that might be usefully deconstructed, it remained a guiding principle for me in these interviews and in their analysis. This was because, first, I felt ethically much more comfortable adopting such a position. Secondly, I felt that much of the interactive work (body language, timing of interactions, etc.) in an interview is done unconsciously and could be achieved more effectively by being

'spontaneous'. While a commitment to such authenticity is not explicitly required by DA, it is not antithetical to it either. There does *not* need to be 'bad faith' in a discourse to make it amenable to DA: "... one of the themes of discursive analysis is that discourse is *pervasively* rhetorical, not just abnormally or blameworthily so" (italics in original) (Edwards, 1997:120). Nor does authentic interaction with interviewees mean a lack of a critical capability, for:

> "The capacity to swing between empathy and understanding on the one hand and critical questioning, reflection, conceptualisation and theoretical abstraction on the other, is the hallmark of good research (more than in literature or journalism for example)." (Alvesson & Sköldberg, 2000:219).

What I did not wish to do was to play the appreciative learner in interviews, and the condemning critic in analysis. Apart from the unfairness to interviewees, this would undermine the exploration of discourses at the very heart of the aims of this research. Rather, authenticity and its associated values allow me as a *discourse* analyst to critically – in the broadest sense of 'critical' – to engage with how discourse operates and is used – without seeking an external, one-way-mirror superiority to the interviewees.

Being 'authentic' captured another related concern I had about playing the role of interviewer, and how it related to my other roles in life. These identities include that of a lecturer, a husband, an academic, a management educator, a politically engaged citizen, a disinterested scientist – and yet, as Nunkoosing (2005: 704) puts it:

> "The research interview is not a neutral product of the academy. Like all products of the academy, the interview serves the hegemonic purpose of the culture in which it is produced. In this sense, there is often a political element to the interview, its interpretations, and the texts that are derived from it."

A useful and authentic position for me to adopt in the interview was, at times, that of an appreciative learner. The adoption of such a position has its critics:

> "In its attempt to engage the interviewee as a teacher, the interview runs the risk of playing its part in the postmodern style of totalitarianism, whereby the citizen is kept in a state of helpless, educated awareness, which Zizek (1989) has called the 'ideology of cynicism' (p. 28)." (Nunkoosing, 2005: 703-704).

However, being willing to learn from the talk of practitioners does not necessarily set them up as those who must have all the answers to their problems. It must be remembered, before the idea of roles or subject positions are seen as completely in the hands of the researcher, that the roles played by both ends of the dyad do interact. My general position was one that attempted to convey my admiration of interviewees' accomplishments while provoking them to draw on as many strategic discursive

resources as possible. Authenticity then aligns with the context-constituting nature of the LUCID-DA elaborated above.

Briggs, in his sociolinguistic appraisal of the interview (Briggs, 1986: 113), was early in pointing to the importance of background knowledge to understanding the discursive nature of the interview. The importance of such knowledge is also stressed in the active interview:

> "Drawing on mutually familiar events, experiences or outlooks not only secures rapport or 'communion' (as Douglas, 1985, might say) but fixes the conversation on particular horizons of meaning or narrative connections, encouraging the respondent to elaborate." (Holstein & Gubrium, 1995: 76-77).

This necessary background knowledge was built by a variety of methods: consultations with people in the sector, reading business news about the sector, deepening my understanding of the context through reading theoretical literature on it, checking documents in the companies office, reading the websites and publications of the companies in which the interviewees were involved, and obtaining where possible the business plans of the company or any internal documents that were available for the firms concerned or similar ones. These materials were not topics for DA themselves but were rather resources upon which the conduct and analysis of the interviews could draw.

Another kind of knowledge that was necessary, if the insight that interviews are discursive events was to be built on, was a sensitivity to how the participants might orientate themselves towards to the interview as interaction, for

> "... interviews are saturated by images of the social dynamics of the interview itself, projections of the social context in which it takes place, the role and power dynamics of interviewer and respondent, and their respective agendas." (Briggs, , 2003:498).

These understandings of the interview itself are further examined in the subsection below.

3.4.6 Vernacular understandings of the interview

In Table 3.2 above, the researcher's conceptions of the interview were explored. In the case of an active interview, it is important to remember that the interviewer and the interviewee are both considered active. This means it is a good idea to have in mind the interviewee's conceptions of the interview. Of course, these 'vernacular' understandings do not exist in a completely separate world from that of the researcher;

any construction of the 'vernacular' views of the interview should be used to expand sensitivity to possible concepts of the interview rather than restrict them or to pretend that the researcher and the vernacular are entirely separate and do not interpenetrate. Nevertheless, Table 3.3 below explores some possible interview types that might sensitise the analysis to possible interviewee conceptions of the interview.

Table 3.3 Vernacular understandings of the interview

Interview Type	Interviewer positioned as:	Interviewee positioned as:	Interview seen as achieving:	Examples
Roman Catholic confession	Holder of God's power of forgiveness	Repentant sinner	Absolution / Duties of community member	As described in Joyce's *Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man* (1964: 147)
Divulging Interview	Sensationalist	Exhibitionist	Fame	Interviews on *The Jerry Springer Show*
Health-care Interview	Patient or client	Caring expert	Treatment	Medical interview, psychotherapist interview
Appraisal interview	Holder of opportunities	Seeker of opportunity	Attainment of opportunity	Job interviews
Great Man interview	Representative of those who want to learn	Wiseman / mentor / teacher/ guru Great man	Secrets of success/ insights/ wisdom	Television interviews with successful entrepreneurs
Sales pitch	Buyer	Seller	Profitable exchange	Visits from publisher's representative selling texts
Investigatory interview	Truth-finder	Suspect	The truth, especially in the form of a slip, an unintended revelation	Investigatory journalism, police interview, a public inquiry
Report interview	Reporter	Informant	Printable quotes	Media interview with eyewitness of train crash

The first type of interview considered (in the first row of Table 3.3) is labelled 'Roman Catholic confession'. This category of interview illustrates the dangers of thinking too sharply about the separation of researcher and 'vernacular' understandings of the interview; some argue that 'the technology of the confessional' is essential to 'interview society' (Atkinson & Silverman, 1997:315; O'Rourke & Pitt, 2007) and therefore essential to understanding the research interview. More prosaically, it is important to recognise the probable familiarity and potential importance of the Roman Catholic confession to the participants in this research. The interviewees all had deep connections with Irish society; their businesses were based in Ireland and they have spent large parts of their lives in Ireland. Though some spent some of their childhood abroad and may have been born outside the country, there was much connection with Irish culture in general.[1] Given its unusual currency in the Irish context of these interviews, it is worth briefly exploring the meanings a confessional view of the interview might generate. The interview element of the confession involves a confessing of all serious sins to the priest who may ask for elaboration of the details of the sin or the state of mind of the person at the time. Roman Catholic confession carries with it a sense of obligation and duty.[2] Confession is an interview situation where a moral expert can be consulted with, so that "the individual submits his conduct to the priest for an assessment of its morality" (Inglis, 1987: 29). The stress on the disciplining of sexuality in confession has been noted as

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[1] Ireland and Irishness is of course not all about Roman Catholic confession but it is, or at least was until recently, a pervasive part of Irish life. Over 88% of the population in the Republic of Ireland classified themselves as Roman Catholics in the 2002 census (CSO, 2004); and this represents a decline from about 92% in 1991 and 94% in 1971 (CSO, 2004: derived from Table 1). Surveys show that, though confession as a practice has been in sharp decline in Ireland, as late as 1989/1990, 55% of Roman Catholics in Ireland went to confession several times a year or more, with only 11% saying they never went to confession (Mac Gréil, 1996:167-171). Roman Catholic confession is also a frequent theme in Irish culture, from the writing of James Joyce, for example (Joyce, 1964: 147; orig. 1916) to the more contemporary hit song of the *Saw Doctors*: "All the thoughts and dreams I had of her would take six months in confession" (Cunniffe, Carton, Moran, & Stevens, 1990). Regardless of the practices or religious affiliation of the individuals participating in the interview, Roman Catholic confession is likely to be a culturally available model of the interview for them.

[2] The current catechism of the Roman Catholic church states:

"According to the Church's command, 'after having attained the age of discretion, each of the faithful is bound by an obligation faithfully to confess serious sins at least once a year.' [This quote is traced in the catechism's endnotes to various sources including the Council of Trent.] Anyone who is aware of having committed a mortal sin must not receive Holy Communion, even if he experiences deep contrition, without having first received sacramental absolution …." (John Paul II, 1992: Paragraph 1457)

important for the development of the modern individual in general (Foucault, 1978) and for the Irish in particular (Inglis, 1987: 149). The priest's moral expertise comes from knowledge of his church's teaching, which, through its claims on apostolic lineage, collective wisdom and divinely inspired tradition, can correct the errors to be expected from an individual's moral judgment. Of course whether or not, and how these 'confession models' of the interview might be used in the interviews will primarily be a matter for analysis, but it is appropriate that both I and readers are sensitised to such possible readings of the interview interactions.

The interview type in the second row of Table 3.3 is less peculiar in its contemporary relevance as it is a common form in television worldwide. Although the 'divulging interview' may have some of the confession's search for catharsis, the essence of this type of interview is the presence of the public. Given general familiarity with this form, other than noting it as a possible model, any further consideration of it can be left – if it arises – to the analysis phase of this research.

The 'health care' interview (third row of Table 3.3) has been the subject of much study (e.g. Ainsworth-Vaughan, 2001). Again, if any further consideration of it is required, it can be dealt with in the data-analysis chapter.

The fourth row of Table 3.3 deals with what is titled 'The appraisal interview'. A common example of this kind of interview is the job interview. While it is unlikely that any of the interviewees in this research saw the researcher as a potential employer, it is not impossible that entrepreneurs might appraise any interviewer as a possible good person to do some sort of business with. As a lecturer, this researcher also finds it hard not to appraise practitioners as possible guest lecturers.

Although sexist in its title, 'The Great Man interview' (fifth row of Table 3.3) captures some of the less critical interviews that one reads, particularly in business and sectoral magazines. It is therefore a form with which these interviewees – all from publishing – might well have been familiar.

'The sales-pitch interview' (sixth row of Table 3.3), again, is a type that some of the interviewees might be familiar with as some have backgrounds in advertising sales. Even those who do not have such a background will, through their general lives as business people and consumers, have access to this model of the interview.

The 'investigatory interview' (row seven of Table 3.3) is another model of the interview familiar to those involved in publishing, and also anybody in present-day Ireland where there is now much attention paid to the plethora of public inquiries into the corruptions of the 1980s. It is hoped that this kind of interview model does not invoke a defensive silence, though it might well influence the style of exchange in the interview.

'The report interview' (last row of Table 3.3) would be familiar to people in the publishing industry; in such an interview, a journalist provides an interesting summary of information from an informant, ideally with a few interesting quotes (Cotter, 2001).

Perhaps none of these ways of viewing the interview will show itself to be a relevant model to the interviewees. Furthermore, there may well be interview practices that may be much more relevant to the interviews than those named in Table 3.3. The table should therefore be treated as a sensitising resource rather than an exhaustive list.

3.5 Analytical method

As Potter & Wetherell (1987:168) point out, in DA there is "no mechanical procedure for producing findings from an archive of transcript". This is because we are dealing with the use of living language, where meanings are constructed in highly contingent, dynamic ways and where analysts' membership of the language community being studied makes them part of that construction. This means that discourse analysts are engaging in interpretative work not amenable to fixed mechanical procedures

Interpretative work can be made more transparent by the analyst reflecting on the approach taken. This is what I am going to do in this section of the chapter by looking at the analytical strategies and tactics I am using in this work. In this context, an analytical strategy is held to mean a guiding principle that I was alert to throughout the analysis. By 'analytical tactic' I mean a 'trick' that, depending on the circumstance and the nature of the puzzle I was working with, I would judge appropriate to deal with a particular contingency.

3.5.1 Analytical strategies

From an examination of the DA, strategy and enterprise literatures, I identify four analytical strategies appropriate to pursuing my research objectives:

1. Analysing the language in the corpus as active

2. Treating the interviews holistically

3. Reading the discourse corpus in a self-reflexive, critical way

4. Being familiar with the detail and context of the discourse corpus

Below I examine each of these analytical strategies in turn.

The first analytical strategy listed above, that of analysing the language in the corpus as active, is basic to the DA approach. DA does not view language as a neutral medium through which an unbiased view of an objective world is attainable, but sees it as actively shaping and constructing the world in a particular way. Therefore DA examines how a particular piece of language functions to construct the world in a particular way. A key question to keep in mind, therefore, in analysing discourse is what function can this piece of language or feature of the text be read as aiming to achieve?

An important and early strategic decision was to treat the interviews holistically. I did not begin the analysis by cutting the interviews into smaller sections, on the basis that those extracts shared some researcher-decided commonality. Rather, I choose to analyse the data one interview at a time. One set of reasons for this choice was because, as interactions, complete interviews form a meaningful whole. Briggs (1986:102-103) points to the importance of this for analysis: "One of the major findings that emerged from an analysis of my own communicative blunders is that *the communicative structure of the entire interview affects the meaning of each utterance*" (italics in original). Further discussion of the importance of holistic analysis of interviews is found in O'Rourke & Pitt (2007). A second set of reasons for choosing to treat the interviews holistically concerns the nature of what this research aims to find out: how are enterprise and strategy discourses used by the owner-managers of small firms? The literature on strategy and enterprise suggests that these discourses are by their nature holistic. So for me to filter out parts of an integrated

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interview based on *a priori* or quickly-arrived-at categories would be particularly unwise, given my analytical choice of focusing on strategic and enterprise discourses.

The third analytical strategy (listed above) is to engage in reading the discourse corpus in a self-reflexive, critical way. I view DA as being as intrinsically interpretative as the 'I' in the LUCID-DA acronym indicates. DA is a constructive process itself and, as the discourse analyst, I, along with my reactions and understandings, are needed to do that construction. My reactions are prompts to analysis, though they should not be taken as the, or even my, final word. As Wood and Kroger advise, when doing DA you should

> "... consider your reaction (does the text raise hackles? make you bristle? make you smile?) and try to identify the features of the text, the devices that are employed that would produce your reading... That an utterance raises your hackles does not necessarily mean it should be interpreted as performing a negative function ... The goal here and throughout the analysis is to identify the meaning to and for the participants." (Wood & Kroger, 2000:91-92)

The fourth analytical strategy (listed above) is to be familiar with the detail and context of the discourse corpus. This fourth analytical strategy links with the LUCID-DA guiding principles as familiarity with this kind of detail is denoted by the first 'D' of LUCID-DA. There is a tendency when trying to understand a text to try to rush to gets its main points, its general drift or its gist. However, since DA is concerned with the different functions of different bits of texts, the discourse analyst needs to guard against looking for just the main point, ignoring the variation in the text as mere confusion or distraction. Rather , "the discourse analyst is concerned with the detail of passages of discourse, however fragmentary and contradictory, and with what is actually said or written, not some general idea that seems to be intended ..." (Potter and Wetherell 1987:168). Without familiarity with the detail of the text, analysts may fail to go beyond their own impressionistic reactions to it.

3.5.2 Analytical tactics

Whereas the four analytical strategies listed above are essential to apply when examining all of the material, there is an array of analytical tactics, any one of which may be drawn on, as one puzzles over a piece of text, according to what is judged the most appropriate for that contingency. As DA has produced and continues to produce many analytical resources for analysing the action of a text, part of the analytical method involves a continual effort

"... to become acquainted with the ways in which various features of discourse are described in the discourse analytical and conversation analytical literatures. Therefore if analysts are able to identify these [discursive] features, they can be mindful of the functions that these features usually perform" (Coyle, 2000: 258).

Clearly, the breadth and depth of such literature means that any presentation of it is going to be partial. Nevertheless, it is possible to present, as has been done in Table 3.4, an array of analytical tactics. These tactics are further discussed below.

Table 3.4 An Array of Analytical Tactics

Using variation	Watching grammar	Awareness of inter-actional asymmetries
Trying alternatives	Looking for absences & silences	Sensing stake & stake inoculation
Paying attention to vocabulary	Analysing text structure & cohesion	Noting crisis & cruces

Sources: Derived from the literature

The first analytical tactic listed in Table 3.4 uses variation in the interview to help identify the action or function of the particular bits of the interview that vary. For some methods of qualitative data analysis, variation in the data is seen as a weakness. This makes sense if language – the qualitative data – is used as a route to something objective and invariant outside the language. Descriptions – unless perfectly reconcilable – of some invariant object imply that *as descriptions* at least one of them has failed in some way. Some methods of research use some form of triangulation (e.g. reinterviewing informants) in an effort to make sure that, regardless of viewpoint, a particular description is true. DA is very different from such an approach. The point in DA is to see what the language is doing in each 'description'. As different pieces of language aim to achieve different things, variation in language can act as a guide to its functions (Potter & Wetherell, 1994:55). Suppose an

interviewee describes herself as a risk-taker in one part of the interview and as cautious in another part. This inconsistency might be troubling if the interview was being analysed to get at the interviewee's personality traits. However, for DA it would be a signal that two different things were being achieved by these clashing claims.

The next analytical tactic (in the first column of Table 3.4) of 'trying alternatives' is related to the last tactic of using variation, but here the variation is introduced by the researcher into the data, rather than found naturally in it. A key principle in DA is that a text should be read as functioning to construct a particular representation, identity or version of a relationship. If there were only one possible construction of these entities, DA would be pointless; it is the existence of alternative versions of reality that makes doing DA worthwhile. DA looks at texts as if they are accounting for a particular version of reality that the text aims to make more plausible than other accounts. Furthermore,

> "It is not only that descriptions could have been otherwise; usually there is a fairly specific 'otherwise' that is at issue. That is to say, descriptions are selected and assembled with regard to *actual* alternatives, and sometimes specific counter-descriptions." (italics in original) (Edwards, 1997: 8)

An interesting way to look for such alternatives is for the analyst to shuffle and substitute or swap the elements of the text in the particular bit of discourse under examination. This will reveal what functions the order of or elements in the text are performing. Wood and Kroger (2000:93) urge us to

> "Play with the text. Ask how it would read if a particular item (word, phrase, etc) were omitted, phrased differently (i.e. consider substitution), or combined with some other item … How would the text read if the sequence of two items were reversed …"

Suppose there is a statement that 'Four soldiers died in today's battle'. Playing with the text, we might try an alternative description such as: 'Today they murdered four young people.' This second statement, arrived by playing with alternatives, shows how the first statement's construction was much more distanced from the event and concealed the human agency involved. This 'shuffle and substitute' technique can be used at the level of individual words, sentence clauses, lines with a turn or turns within an overall conversation. In principle one could endlessly play with text in this way and the use of this tactic has to be subject to the judgement of the analyst.

The third tactic in Table 3.4 is 'paying attention to vocabulary'. The appearance and frequency of some words might guide use of the tactic – for example, paying attention to particular metaphors used. For example, if a discourse uses words

such as struggle, attack and siege with great frequency, it is not unreasonable to suggest that some issue is being constructed as a war. Certain characteristics of vocabulary use in English may suggest greater formality, learning and power. Fowler (1985) suggests that, if a discourse has many words with the same or similar descriptive meanings (over-lexicalisation), it is a discourse with greater institutional power than an under-lexicaliced discourse. Texts with more abstract than concrete words, with more morphologically complex than simply structured words, and more words with foreign origins may also be considered more powerful. Whether one agrees with what Fowler sees as the significance of these differences in vocabulary or not, attention to these and other aspects of the vocabulary of a text does raise an opportunity to ask what function that choice might serve.

Grammar is another feature of text listed as worthy of attention in Table 3.4. Here "grammar deals with words combined into clauses and sentences" (Fairclough, 1992a: 75). For example, the text may be compiled in a passive or active voice, and the use of these different voices can signal different things. A passive voice in academic writing, for instance, makes individual academics fall into the background, as if they are irrelevant to the text which is thus presented as disinterested and objective.

The next analytical tactic (Table 3.4) is the rather strange one of 'looking for absences and silences'. Wood and Kroger (2000:92) urge the analyst to look out for 'what is not there', advice that on initial reading seems to have a rather mystical flavour. However they give some concrete hints on this that take account of the lessons of CA and Gricean pragmatics (Grice, 1998; 1957). Conversation analysts have conducted much research, *inter alia*, on the turn-taking in verbal interactions, and have accumulated much knowledge on turn-taking that "refers to the resources which are brought to bear on the allocation of turns and their construction, and the practices for deploying those resources …" (Schegloff, 1999b: 562). The insights about turn-taking are extensive – (see Schegloff, 1999a) and form a general background resource for analysis here. Of particular relevance to the search for absence and silences from CA's study of turn-taking concerns 'repair'. 'Repair' is where those talking to each other attempt to set right some difficulty that has occurred, for example a misunderstanding or damage to an identity being constructed by the discourse. Edwards gives a flavour of how awareness of repair can be used:

"Given the turn-by-turn possibility of repair, its *absence* signals that participants are treating their talk as, by default, continuously coherent. So intersubjectivity is approachable as something orientated-to by participants, and researched by analysts, *as a practical matter*, handled to whatever degree is required (and no more) as part of talk's sequential organization, rather than being an actual and specifiable state of mind, of shared ideas, or of mutual beliefs about beliefs …" (italics in original) (Edwards, 1997: 101)

Similarly, some Gricean pragmatics can be used to find silences. Grice put forward the co-operative principle of conversation: to facilitate a conversation, people would generally be as *informative* as possible about information that was *relevant* to the conversation and try to do so in as *clear* and *truthful* a manner as possible (for further discussion see Jaworski & Coupland, 1999b or Baghramian, 1998). The features (italicised in the last sentence) of a conversation that Grice put forward might be challenged on various grounds, such as cultural bias, but they do provide a way to look for relevant silences; for example, if a previously unmentioned 'fact' arises unexpectedly in a particular conversation, perhaps the analyst can read a 'silent' stress of that fact's relevance.

The next analytical tactic (Table 3.4) is 'analysing text structure & cohesion'. Both structure and cohesion refer to how textual elements are linked, but the terms refer to different scales: "... cohesion deals with how clauses and sentences are linked together, and text structure deals with large scale organizational properties of texts" (Fairclough, 1992a: 75). So cohesion is the more micro perspective and can be defined as where "one is looking at how clauses are linked together to form larger units in texts" (Fairclough, 1992a: 75). Such linking can occur through using pronouns, repetition of the same or linked words, or conjunctive words or phrases such as 'and', 'while, 'whereas', 'in contrast to'. Text structure is more macro than cohesion and refers to "... what elements or episodes are combined in what ways and what order to constitute, for example, a crime report in a newspaper, or a job interview" (Fairclough, 1992a: 77-78).

Awareness of interactional asymmetries is the next analytical tactic urged (Table 3.4). Observing interactional asymmetries or their absence can give insight into what is happening in an interaction, as has been demonstrated by a number of CA studies (e.g. O'Halloran, 2005). Interaction can be controlled by one party to an interaction – e.g. a lawyer cross-examining a witness where the formal rules of the court permit answers from the witness only when he/she is questioned by the lawyer (and only on issues raised by the lawyer). Generally, such interactional control is less

formal and often more fluid. For example, in the interviews conducted for this research, I as the interviewer had the right to ask questions, and the interviewees by virtue of their agreement to do the interviews were under some obligation to respond to my questions. However, people do not need to follow what might be expected from them as passive interviewees. Observing what happens with interactional control, then, may provide insight into what is being achieved in the interaction.

Next on the list in Table 3.4 is the tactic of sensing stakes and stake inoculation as another feature of discourse. As Potter points out, "People treat each other as entities with desires, motives, institutional allegiances and so on, as having a stake in their actions. Referencing stake is one principal way of discounting the significance of an action or reworking its nature." (Potter, 1997:153) So, for example, it is commonplace for denial of some misdemeanour by a government minister to be undermined or inoculated against by opposition politicians by saying "Ah, she would say that, wouldn't she?"

The last analytical tactic advocated in Table 3.4 is 'noting crisis & cruces'. Pauses and hesitations in speech are often seen as significant and are sometimes read as indicating some trouble or difficulty for the speaker (e.g. Baker, 1997). Fairclough sees these crises and cruces as particularly fruitful bits of discourse to analyse:

> "One [discourse sample] selection strategy which has much to recommend it is to focus on what I earlier called 'cruces' and 'moments of crisis'. These are moments in the discourse where there is evidence that things are going wrong: a misunderstanding which requires participants to 'repair', a communicative problem, for example through asking for or offering repetitions, or through one participant correcting another; exceptional disfluencies (hesitations, repetitions) in the production of a text; silences; sudden shifts of style." (Fairclough 1992: 230)

3.6 Conclusions

This chapter has covered much ground, dealing with both the philosophical background and the practical methods used in this research. This, it is hoped, allows the reader to locate the approach to research of this work in the vast range of approaches. It also provides resources that will enable appropriate decisions to be made in presenting what was done with the empirical data that form the centre of this thesis. It is to this analytical process that the next chapter turns.

CHAPTER 4: ANALYSING THE INTERVIEW CONTEXTS

4.1 Introduction

The constructionist perspective of DA implies that data selection and description are key parts of constructing an analysis, so this chapter begins the analysis by describing and selecting the data for presentation.

An analysis of the relevant macroeconomic and policy contexts for strategy and enterprise discourse is provided by the next section of this chapter. Next there is an analysis of the sectoral context of this study. DA can be described as a hyper-empirical method (Alvesson & Kärreman, 2000a: 146) that tends to expand rather than reduce the data it analyses. Yet selection of data must reduce it enough to allow any analysis of discourse to be readable. The steps in reducing the data gathered to manageable proportion for discussion in this work are detailed in section 4.4 that also deepens the understanding of the interviews' contexts. This is followed by an introduction of the three interviews chosen for presentation. Section 4.6 then provides a conclusion to the chapter.

4.2 Analysing the macroeconomic and policy contexts

Strategy and enterprise in Ireland is influenced by both global and European Union developments. However, it would be incorrect to assume that Irish discourse is merely a 'local adoption' of the more general global and EU discussions. Indeed, to some extent, state policy development has flowed the other way: for example, Ireland has been disproportionately influential on the EU's enterprise policy. This has been for a variety of reasons. First, high Irish economic growth rates have coincided with the development of the EU's enterprise policy, thus giving the impression that Ireland can serve as a model for EU economic policy. Also, Ireland has to some extent been seen as an acceptable mixture of Anglo-American (highly trading, low-taxation) and European (social-partnership collective bargaining) economic models. The influences are neither unidirectional nor simple, but I will take up here the general strategy and enterprise understandings discussed in the literature review by moving first to the more particular EU level and then becoming even more particular by focusing on specific Irish developments.

4.2.1 European Union strategy and enterprise policy

Since at least 1973, when Ireland became a member of the European Economic Community, European policy has had a major impact on Irish public discourse, particularly issues concerned with strategy and enterprise. Striking examples of this can be seen in the National Development Plan: 1994-1999 and the National Development Plan: 2000-2006. Here was a massive strategic investment in Ireland; the plans involved spending plans for nearly €80 billion (Leddin & Walsh, 2003:91). The EU funded these plans, with the EU structural funds injecting an average of about 1.7% of GDP each year in the 1989-1999 period. The percentage got smaller after that, due to high growth in Ireland and to decreasing transfers (Hegarty, 2003:2). Perhaps even more importantly, the EU's involvement was associated with an increase in the strategic-planning competence of the Irish public sector (Hegarty, 2003:13). The European Commission laid down the criteria for the development of the plan and the Irish, with their long experience of dealing with distant bureaucracies, became *aficionados* of the European planning process.

The significant influence of the EU on Irish strategy and planning makes it worthwhile to make some observations on EU discourse in this area. Perhaps because of the diversity of national industrial and enterprise policies across the EU, the EU has historically had an industrial policy that has stressed the removal of barriers to competition rather than a more interventionist approach (Andresso & Jacobson, 2005). At this level, EU policy can be seen as a promoter of the free-market enterprise culture. However, European social policy and labour rights (e.g. European worker director rules) have acted to put social constraints on the 1980s Anglo-American free-market model. Furthermore, while lacking the political or legal competence to be *dirigiste*, the EU has provided – through reports, policy statements, inter-state study exchanges and debates – a large source of discourse on these matters. To a large extent this kind of debate reflects the theoretical views on strategy and planning discussed earlier in the literature review. However, the use of enterprise in EU strategy and planning has a specificity in EU discourse that is worth further discussion.

The use of the word 'enterprise' in official portfolios of the Commission of the European Communities (CEC) is indicative of the rise of enterprise discourse within the EU. It can be traced as far back as 1994 when the "Enterprise policy, small

business and distributive trades" (CEC, 1994:9) portfolio was introduced to in the fourth Delors Commission. Then this portfolio was just one of four areas of responsibility of one of the ordinary commissioners. The word enterprise disappeared from the portfolio titles of the Santer Commission (1995-1999) (CEC, 1995) but returned with greater prominence in the Prodi Commission (1999-2004); an entire commissioner was dedicated solely to "Enterprise and Information Society" (CEC, 2004c). The Commission of Barroso (2004-) has elevated enterprise to the portfolio of "Enterprise and Industry" (CEC, 2004b). Further this commisoner is held by no ordinary commissioner but a German vice-president with an expanded directorate-general (CEC, 2005). Clearly, the word 'enterprise' has being receiving greater prominence in the EU.

EU enterprise policy amounts to more than bland, inoffensive words of enthusiasm – the words at least are decisive, as can be seen in statements such as the following:

> "A healthy 'churning' rate of company creation and destruction improves efficient resource allocation in an economy by increasing competitive pressure. To release entrepreneurial potential, the European Union must take serious steps to make Europe more attractive for business activity. It is also clear that Europeans must change their attitudes towards entrepreneurship. This means actively promoting entrepreneurial values and addressing the fear of risk-taking among the widest possible audience of potential entrepreneurs." (CEC, 2004a:15).

Whether the costs of such 'healthy churning' have been fully weighed is not so clear, but what the CEC is clear on is that "Europeans must change their attitudes"; European enterprise policy is about culture and individual psychology (Aligica & State, 2005: 250). Indeed the CEC's Enterprise & Industry Directorate General (CECEIDG) has even ventured into the classroom with its best-practice advice on 'Helping to create an entrepreneurial culture' (CECEIDG, 2004). The EU Commission, in stepping up its efforts "to increase the appreciation of entrepreneurs in society", takes quite a socially oriented approach; it will "promote greater awareness of a career as an entrepreneur, foster entrepreneurial mindsets including the promotion of *responsible* entrepreneurship practices." (CEC, 2005:5) (emphasis added).

The CEC has declared: "The guiding principle for authorities must therefore be to 'think small first' – regulations that are appropriate for smaller companies will generally also be appropriate for larger ones." (CEC, 2004a:15). In this statement the CEC has adopted the fondness for the small firm. Smallness has been pointed to as a

key characteristic of enterprise discourse by writers such as Jones & Spicer (2005). In all of this, the policy of the Council of the European Union (CEU) as agreed in the Lisbon agenda is being followed: "The competitiveness and dynamism of businesses are directly dependent on a regulatory climate conducive to investment, innovation, and entrepreneurship." (CEU, 2000: paragraph 14) While some have felt that EU policy on entrepreneurship "… continues to be somewhat shrouded in a veil of ambiguity" (Aligica & State, 2005:250), from the foregoing discussion we can see that the promotion of 'enterprise culture' – of the kind written about by Keat (1991), Carr, (1998) or Gray (1998) – has been adopted by the EU.

While recognising that EU enterprise culture has been essentially part of the same phenomena exemplified in Britain since the government of Prime Minister Thatcher, some peculiarities of the EU discourse are worth noting. The term 'competitiveness' very frequently occurs in EU documents CEC (2005). To anglophone ears, this sounds very much in line with the enterprise culture of the United Kingdom, evoking the cut and thrust of competitive market rivalry between firms. However, a close inspection of measures of competitiveness (e.g. CEC, 2005: Table5-30) reveals that EU competitiveness refers more to what might be termed 'international comparative efficiency'. Thus, in EU terms 'competitiveness' has no particularly entrepreneurial flavour and could be equally at home in a 'planned economy' as an 'enterprise discourse'.

Another issue in EU enterprise policy is a policy concern to stress the growth of particular sectors, which clearly is more statist than a pure 'let the market decide' approach, characteristic of what has been described as transparent neo-liberal discourse (Phelan, 2007). Within the EU institutions there appears to some confusion as to which sectors might be favoured. Writing at a more enthusiastic time for information technology, the CEU (representing the national political heads of the EU) seemed to favour a strengthening of the services sector, noting for example that "Content industries create added value by exploiting and networking European cultural diversity" (CEU, 2000: paragraph 9). On the other hand, the CECEIDG (part of the EU's administrative side) has come to a more traditional stress on manufacturing:

"The Enterprise DG has therefore developed a new Industrial Policy (adopted by the Commission in December 2002), which will focus on the improvement of the framework-

conditions for developing entrepreneurial activities. This new policy can be summarised in 5 central messages:

1) Industry is at the core of our policy concerns. Despite the rise of the service sector, industry continues to play a central role as an engine of growth. Continued growth of productivity in the manufacturing sector has been at the root of the sustained increase in wealth, and has led to a growing demand for services." (CEC, 2004a:9)

EU enterprise policy is more statist, too, in trying to integrate enterprise discourse into a broader church of ideologues than in the United Kingdom. For example, the Lisbon statement argued that social-welfare systems were an asset in the entrepreneurial process of economic adjustment:

"The Union possesses a generally well-educated workforce as well as social protection systems able to provide, beyond their intrinsic value, the stable framework required for managing the structural changes involved in moving towards a knowledge-based society." (CEU, 2000: paragraph 3)

Furthermore, the CEC promises that it " will strengthen its support for activities to reduce the burden of risk intrinsically linked to entrepreneurship" (CEC, 2005:5). Such unnatural interferences with the market economy are a far cry from the ideological antipathy to the 'dependency culture' of the welfare state characteristic of British Conservatives in the 1980s or Reaganomics. EU enterprise policy has its peculiarities.

At times, EU enterprise policy seems to be more open to supporting small-business enterprises even if they are not destined for fast growth:

"SMEs are very different in nature: some seek rapid growth and bigger markets; others are only active in local or regional markets. As this diversity has to be reflected in policy-making, the new approach embraces initiatives and actions to unlock the full potential of all types of enterprises ranging from start-ups and high growth 'gazelles' to traditional enterprises, including craft sector, micro-enterprises, social economy enterprises and family SMEs." (CEC, 2005:4)

The justification of public-policy support for what might be termed 'trundlers' is partly based on

"…a comprehensive view of SMEs' role in society that highlights their importance as an important factor of economic and social cohesion at local and regional level. Moreover, most SMEs are committed to corporate social responsibility, which allows them to improve their performance and competitiveness while having a positive impact on the local community and the environment." (CEC, 2005:4)

This new EU view of the socially responsible entrepreneur contrasts perhaps with a more opportunistic view of the entrepreneur that might have been prevalent in state bureaucracies up to this point.

Despite the differences between the EU's version and other versions of enterprise, the discourse serves to homogenize policy objectives. Indeed some have

argued that the peculiar tensions and incoherencies of EU enterprise policy powerfully achieve this homogenization of EU and other enterprise policy objectives:

> "To sum up, the comparison with the USA offers a functional device for identifying various policy areas to be targeted. Lacking a unique or coherent vision or policy model, this simple approach is a workable substitute. Its limits are set by a certain intrinsic lack of imagination and by the reactive nature of the policy design implied. However, this catch-up, 'follow-the leader' type of approach has a strong motivational element." (Aligica & State, 2005: 253)

4.2.2 Irish policy developments

Irish state policy developments, since political independence in 1921, concerning strategy and enterprise I divide into four policy phases. The phases as defined and described here are just one possible construction among many. Nevertheless, they do not differ greatly from the common understanding of the stages of Ireland's economic development (e.g. Haughton, 2000; Leddin & Walsh, 2003) but try to constitute them in way that illustrates important developments for strategy and enterprise discourse in Ireland. The first phase – well-recognised as the state-building phase – lasts from 1922-1931 and coincides with recovery from the First World War, the Irish war of independence and the civil war. The second phase, which I here call 'Ourselves Alone', involves significant economic isolation and depression, lasting from 1932 to 1957. The third phase, labelled by me as the phase of 'Strategising for an Open Economy', began in 1958 and involved both an opening up of the economy and some confidence in strategic planning. My fourth phase begins, less definitely, in 1973 and, perhaps because we are still in it, appears to be much more complex and full of turns and reversals. I regard this current phase as the 'Globalisation of Irish Enterprise' period.

In the state-building phase from 1922 to 1931, the newly independent government adopted a very liberal attitude to economic development. It was quickly made clear that the Irish revolution was not like the Russian. Though engaging in some protection of indigenous industry, the new state concentrated, in the main, on providing an environment suitable for a largely agricultural economy with significant exports to the United Kingdom. This meant fiscal conservatism and a generally *laissez-faire* attitude. State building and survival was the priority rather than grander economic plans or strategy. The one exception to this was in the area of what were called 'state enterprises'. In the Dáil (parliamentary) debates of the time, one member

supported a government plan for a state electricity enterprise with the following words:

> "Deputy Thrift asks can we be absolutely certain that it will be a commercial success. I ask myself, is that the test that is applied by a great nation going to war? Countries have taken the great risk of declaring war without knowing that they were going to win; they had courage in themselves, in their own capacity and their own resources, and they counted upon winning through. This policy of caution that is recommended to us is very good in small commercial enterprises, but as the experts have warned us, this is not to be viewed as merely a commercial enterprise." (Magennis, 1925)

The clear expression that the state could and should be a greater risk-taker rather than a 'merely small commercial enterprise' is in clear contrast with later views of enterprise. Furthermore, it is clear that the model of a small enterprise is not seen as the ideal model for all organisational activity in the way in which it is within more recent enterprise culture.

From 1932 on, there was a sharp change in government policy, with a striving towards economic self-sufficiency. To some extent this economic policy was necessitated by a nationalist political policy that was trying to overcome restrictions to Irish political independence flowing from the 1922 settlement with the United Kingdom. The resulting trade dispute (more romantically termed the 'economic war') would have forced a move towards autarchy. However, it is also important to recognise that this period reflects a harking back to the policy of historic Sinn Féin. Sinn Féin initially had a very significant economic element to its policy. Indeed, the rugged self-sufficiency of the phrase Sinn Féin (an Irish Gaelic expression translated as 'ourselves' or 'ourselves alone') chimes with modern enterprise culture's self-reliance, though with a less individualistic tone. As well as its protectionist theme, this phase of Irish economic policy also involved the increased development of the state enterprise sector that had begun earlier, showing again a collectivist flavour to the enterprise culture in the Ireland of the time. During the 1932-1957 period, there was much in the way of a vision of cultured and spiritual 'frugal comfort' of a repopulated Ireland. However, until 1958 there was hostility to the planning, the popularity of which was growing in other western democracies. Geiger (2000), for example, provides a good discussion of this in the context of Ireland's lack of enthusiasm for the Marshall plan, while Lee (1989:227-234) shows the hostility to economic planning even during the 'emergency' of World War II.

The third phase, that I call 'Strategising for an Open Economy', can probably be traced to the aftermath of World War II, though 1958 is commonly identified as the

date when Irish economic policy turned outwards. This was also an acceptance of the benefits of strategy in the form of planning, following mainland Europe's planned reconstruction in the post-1945 period. Ireland's final embrace of planning was signalled by the publication of the *First Programme for Economic Expansion* (1958). Such a programmatic or strategic-planning approach to policy continued in the *Second Programme 1964-1970* and the 1969 *Third Programme for Economic & Social Development 1969-1972*. From 1958, protectionist measures were dismantled, a stress was put on the need for exports to lead growth, and encouragement of multinational enterprises replaced the policy of creating state enterprises. The Industrial Development Authority (IDA) focused its efforts – and had much success – in attracting multinational investment to Ireland. By 1973, Ireland had joined the EU and it has now become one of the most open economies in the world.

The fourth phase of development of strategy and enterprise in Ireland brings us from 1973 to 2008 and might be usefully labelled the 'Globalisation of Irish Enterprise'. It incorporates diverse conditions of tentative and short-lived recovery from the oil crisis, a boom driven by state spending, a period of deep depression and state foreign indebtedness, a period of recovery and spectacular economic growth, during which Ireland has been referred to as the 'Celtic Tiger', followed now by a period of slowdown. Despite the diversity of this fourth phase, there is a unity in it that consists of an increasing complementation of the internationalisation policy with an encouragement of what was initially referred to as 'indigenous industry' (Telesis, 1982) and then increasingly 'enterprise'. Also throughout the era, Ireland like most of the rest of the world moved from a strong faith in a programmatic approach to policy to more 'strategic thinking' and enterprise, than 'strategic planning', approaches. Additionally, Ireland moved from a UK-type decentralised industrial-relations systems to a more centralised and less conflictual approach known as the 'social partnership' model.

While Ireland's conversion to planning had been much slower than the rest of the world, disillusionment with planning was at least as rapid in Ireland as elsewhere in the face of the new world of uncertainties created by the first oil crisis. The 1975 budget speech of the Minister of Finance has been much quoted in this regard:

"Of all the tasks which could engage my attention, the least realistic would be the publication of a medium or long-term economic plan based upon irrelevancies in the past, hunches as to the present and clairvoyance as to the future." (Ryan, 1975)

There was what might be regarded as one more involvement with old-style government planning in the form of a very ambitious debt-financed plan for rapid development between 1977 and 1980. While it initially boosted the economy, this experience of planning was generally regarded as a disaster due to the depression and debt-burden that followed. From these experiences, a hostility to old-style government planning developed in Ireland. However there were two counter-tendencies. One was the kind of planning promoted by Europe (discussed above). The other was the more native emergence of the social-partnership approach.

Social partnership and its increasing importance in the 'globalisation of Irish enterprise' phase means that in Ireland the antipathy to programmatic planning has not become equated with complete hostility to any form of collectivism. The partnership or corporatist model of governance also has a long history in Ireland; it dates back to the influence of the Roman Catholic pontiff's encyclical promoting the approach in the 1930s (for a discussion see Lee, 1989: Chapter 4) and the composition of the upper house of parliament in the 1937 constitution. However, the shift to this social-partnership model could be more concretely traced back to 1973 with the establishment of the National Economic and Social Council (NESC). This social partnership assumes a certain amount of strategy, if not strategic planning. NESC was to provide a forum where policy matters could be discussed and investigated under the direction of different sectoral interests which were to become known as the social partners. The social partners consist of government, trade unionists, employers organisations, voluntary organisations and farmers' representatives. The various NESC reports provided a kind of intellectual consensus through which partners might agree to policy measures. The first partnership deal containing a commitment to fixed wage increases, the Programme for National Recovery, was negotiated in 1987 and lasted until it was replaced with a similar deal in 1991. The partnership approach not only negotiates wage increases centrally but also addresses non-pay issues such as taxation levels and measures to help the disadvantaged. While being criticised as too corporatist, inflexible to market changes, undermining of both trade-union independence and parliamentary control of economic policy, social partnership has been seen as part of Ireland's recent economic success and looks likely to remain at the heart of the Irish policy mix for some time.

The shift towards encouraging indigenous rather than just multinational firms can be traced back to 1973 (O'Farrell, 1986: 13), with the initial policy stress on creating linkages between the multinational firms and indigenous enterprises. A report published by NESC (Telesis, 1982) indicated that the policy of greater support for 'indigenous' industry was a consensus one. While Telesis did not explicitly emphasise the term enterprise, Carr (1998) traces to it the origins of a key component (selectivity) of Ireland's enterprise-culture policy. Despite strategic thinking moving in the direction of more support for indigenous industry, policy implementation was still open – at least up to the early 1990s – to the charge of neglecting small firms and Irish entrepreneurs. In the late 1980s, the IDA (the principal state agency of the time), in the polite words of an official report, "created an institutional gap regarding support for micro-enterprise" (Fitzpatricks Associates, 2004:9) by closing down its Small Industry Programme, its only instrument aimed at small enterprises. It is hard to imagine Margaret Thatcher's government of the time allowing such an 'institutional gap' to occur in the United Kingdom. While this institutional gap has been since filled,[3] the very existence of this *lacuna* clearly shows that enterprise discourse at least was different in Ireland.

An even more explicit move than the landmark Telesis (1982) report towards enterprise culture was apparent in the equally significant Culliton report:

> "The contribution of productive enterprise to our social and economic objectives should be an issue of primary importance at all educational levels to de-emphasis the bias towards the liberal arts and the professions." (Culliton, 1992:52)

The term enterprise became even more entrenched when, in 1993, a key government department changed its title from 'Industry and Commerce' to 'Enterprise and Employment'. The context of this move is worth remarking on as it reflects some of

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[3] The institutional gap in support for micro-enterprises of the late 1980s has been filled by a number of agencies (Fitzpatricks Associates, 2004). In 1993 County Enterprise Boards (CEB) were set up. These are independent companies limited by guarantee with boards composed of local government politicians, trade-union representatives, employers representatives and other social partners. These now cater for 35 local regions across Ireland, overlapping somewhat with other services developed by other agencies. EI also provides support for micro-enterprise but these are very selective, supporting only those selected as High Potential Start-ups likely to be engaged in exporting. In contrast, CEB are prepared to back local firms falling outside these criteria. Rural development programmes like LEADER (funded by the EU) and LEADER-Ireland (LEADER programmes no longer funded from the EU but now funded nationally) aid small firms engaged in rural development. Under Ireland's social-partnership agreements, a number of 'Partnership companies' were sent up. These companies target enterprise development in a number of disadvantaged areas. As institutional arrangements develop and as EU funding to Ireland decreases or even disappears, CEB and EI come to the forefront in the promotion of micro-enterprises and the enterprise culture (DOET&E, 2003:10).

the particularities of the way the term 'enterprise' was deployed in Ireland. The change in the title was made under a Labour Party (a party of the European Socialist group in the EU parliament) minister. Furthermore, this move was seen partly as a left-wing attempt to undermine the dominant and conservative Department of Finance. Thus, whereas enterprise discourse has been seen as a project of right-wing Thatcherism which has been adopted by a collaborating New Labour in the United Kingdom, in Ireland its appropriation by Labour was seen as less of a break from traditional left policy. In 1994 a major shake-up of the government agencies helping business, the agency aimed at indigenous industry was named *Forbairt* (an Irish Gaelic word meaning 'development' or 'progress', distinct from the Gaelic *fiontar* that is much closer to 'enterprise'); perhaps the choice of *Forbairt* might have represented a less than whole-hearted adopted of the private-enterprise culture at the time. *Forbairt* was renamed Enterprise Ireland in 1998 under the Progressive Democrats (PDs) minister, Mary Harney (the PDs were aligned with the liberals in the European parliament though generally perceived as Ireland's free-market party). Of note too is the fact that the state agency dealing with foreign investors has retained its well-recognised brand (the Industrial Development Authority) in its new title 'IDA Ireland'. Here the word 'enterprise' was directed at indigenous or domestic rather than multinational business. Under the same right-leaning minister, Mary Harney, the Department of Enterprise and Employment was retitled in 1997 as the Department of Enterprise, Trade and Employment (DOET&E). The insertion of the word 'trade' reflected the stamp of a new minister in a new administration but also a concern not to neglect the international aspects of business by concentrating too much on the more indigenous-oriented word 'enterprise'.

An enterprise discourse is now firmly established in Irish policy, as evidenced by the titles of the following major reports on what used to be termed 'industrial policy':

'Shaping our future - a strategy for enterprise in Ireland in the 21st century' (Forfás, 1996)

'Enterprise 2010 : a new strategy for the promotion of enterprise in Ireland in the 21st century' (Forfás, 2000)

'Towards an Entrepreneurial Society: Ireland's Response to the Green Paper "Entrepreneurship in Europe" (DOET&E, 2003)

Although a 2004 report (Enterprise Strategy Group, 2004) did not manage to get the terms 'enterprise' or 'entrepreneurial' into the title of the work – 'Ahead of the Curve – Ireland's Place in the Global Economy – its pages are replete with the language of enterprise.

In the titles and content of official reports, we can also see the prominence of the word strategy, which replaced 'planning'. 'Planning' lost its dominance in the early 1970s. This replacement of planning with both strategy and enterprise in public debate can be seen in J Joseph Lee's *Ireland, 1912-1985: Politics and Society*, the highly influential history bestseller published in 1989. This text represents quite an embrace in Irish policy discourse of both enterprise culture and strategy and is worth quoting at some length:

> "Telesis and the IDA fundamentally agreed that native businessmen of the necessary quality simply were not, for whatever reason, available. Sixty years after independence, fifty years after blanket protection, twenty years after the Committee of Industrial Organisation, fifteen years after the Anglo-Irish Free Trade Agreement, eight years after entering the EEC, a native entrepreneurial cadre of the requisite quality had failed to emerge." (Lee, 1989:535-536)

And again:

> "Smaller states must rely heavily on the quality of their strategic thinking to counter their vulnerability to international influences. Without superior strategic thinking, they will be buffered rudderless, like a cork on a wave. It is virtually impossible for a small country to 'plan' in a rigorous sense. That is all the more reason for striving to devise a strategy that will help one respond coherently, rather than epileptically, to changing circumstances." (Lee, 1989:631)

As we have seen, there was a nationalistic flavour to the term 'enterprise' historically in Ireland and, more recently, enterprise has been used as a synonym for indigenous, as opposed to multinational enterprises, though the enterprise sector has also served as a term to cover both indigenous and foreign-owned firms. Enterprise culture in Ireland has not been without its critics (e.g. Kirby et al., 2002: 10-13). In particular, there has long been a feeling that the Irish version of enterprise culture might be more associated with protectionism and rent-seeking than with the vigorous and creative international version of enterprise (e.g. O'Hearn, 2001).

4.2.3 Enterprise and strategy in late 'Celtic Tiger' era Ireland

All the interviews that generated the core of the data for this research were conducted during the fourth phase of the development of state strategy and enterprise, described above as the globalisation of Irish enterprise. As this phase has lasted 35 years so far, it is helpful to specify the macroeconomic environment more precisely. The interviews were all conducted during the 'Celtic Tiger' phase of extraordinary income

growth in Ireland that I here define as 1987-2007[4], when real growth was never below 2% and soared in some years to above 10% (Leddin & Walsh , 2003; McCoy, Duffy, Bergin, & Cullen, 2003, 2004; McCoy, Duffy, Bergin, Garrett, & McCarthy, 2005; Barrett, Kearney, McCarthy, & Doyle, 2006; Barrett, Kearney, & O'Brien, 2007, 2008).

The period in which the interviews can further be specified as belonging to what I term the *late* Celtic Tiger period (2000-2007). The start of this period was marked by the collapse in the share price of internet-based companies in March 2000. This was particularly bad news for Ireland as it heralded a contraction of the information-technology sector on which Ireland is highly dependent. In September 2001, the bombing of the World Trade Center in New York shocked the world, but Ireland in particular, with its heavy economic dependence on trade with and foreign investment from the USA. While there was some recovery from these developments during the period and Ireland's economy remained a tiger in terms of real growth rates, the economic times had changed (Barry, 2006:7). There was a less confident feel in the air, for, as it was later put by the National Competitiveness Council (NCC):

> "From 2000 on, Ireland's national competitiveness declined. During the past few years, domestic growth has driven the economy and to some degree overshadowed evidence of our weakening international competitiveness... the nature of Ireland's economic growth has changed dramatically in recent years, from export-led growth to a situation now where domestic sectors are driving the Irish economy. In particular, consumption and construction, supported by high levels of overseas borrowing, are driving our performance." (NCC, 2007: 2-3)

This situation was certainly appreciated by the general business community at the time the core interviews for this research took place.

In focusing in this subsection on the characteristics of this more precise period of the late Celtic Tiger, we can keep in mind that a particular period will have available to it not only the discourses developed during it but may also have some access to the 'archive' of resources preserved from previous phases. Kirby, Gibbons, & Cronin(2002: 13) point to

> "… the emergence of informational capitalism and Ireland's semi-peripheral integration into it bring to the fore a cultural discourse prioritising individualism, entrepreneurship, mobility, flexibility, innovation, competitiveness both as personal attributes to be cultivated by the individual (and which educational institutions are expected to play a central role in facilitating)

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[4] Various writers date the Celtic Tiger period differently. For example, Leddin & Walsh (2003) confine the term to 1994-2001 whereas Hougthon (2005) sees it as a much longer-lasting phenomenon. What is agreed is that throughout the period 1987-2007 Irish growth rates were high; thus I use these dates to define the term.

and as dominant social values. These displace earlier discourses prioritising national development, national identity, family, self-sacrifice, self-sufficiency and nationalism."

However, there were still elements of more collectivist and nationalistic economics discourses available from the past. That such discursive resources remained relevant is evidenced by a recent controversy in the pages of a national newspaper. The controversy started with an attack on the lack of 'real' enterprise in Ireland.

> "Then, stylising the position slightly, just as social and cultural norms were becoming somewhat more welcoming to the emergence of an entrepreneurial class, it transpired that the prevailing model of enterprise was one of cunning and stroke-play. The more diligent employers and producers were seen as plodders. The heroes were those who pulled strokes, i.e., made money for little effort or risk, usually on the basis of cronyism and inside information. Risk-taking was for the race-track, not for business. Profit was not the return on risk but rather the pay-off for being in the know." (Casey, 2006)

A reply to Casey in the same newspaper by the Minister for Enterprise, Trade and Employment bristles with nationalistic feeling and pride (notice the four occurrences of the word 'Irish') common in this era of rapid Irish economic growth:

> "The 223 entrepreneurs behind the 75 new businesses come from a variety of backgrounds. Nearly 45 per cent of them were Irish entrepreneurs leaving existing Irish businesses to start new businesses. Iona Technologies, which emerged from Trinity College Dublin as a maker of compatible software for a diverse range of different computers, is the best example of this, spawning almost 30 other independent businesses over the years. That is Irish business, spawning new Irish businesses." (Martin, 2006)

How these various resources for talking about enterprise and strategy might be used by owner-managers is something on which further analysis in this work will hopefully throw some light.`

4.3 Strategy and enterprise discourse in the business magazine sector

To analyse in detail the talk of owner-managers in Ireland, it was necessary to narrow down that rather large population. Whereas a strategy of looking at a number of different sectors might have added greater opportunities for comparison, the numbers necessarily involved in this kind of work meant that such an advantage was outweighed by the need to understand in detail the context in order to address the objective of explaining *how* strategy and enterprise discourses are used.

Business magazines were found to be a most suitable sector in which to study the strategy and enterprise discourses of small firm owner-managers. The reasons for this suitability are now discussed.

4.3.1 Irish magazine publishing as a strategically challenging activity

For magazine publishers, the major uncertainties and disturbances in the Irish economy in the late Celtic Tiger period were a particular strategic challenge. The advertising revenue they rely on would appear to be highly dependent on the overall state of the economy (Molinari & Turino, 2006: 10). Picard (2001) reports that macroeconomic effects seem to be much greater for magazines and newspapers, than they are for radio and television. While the Irish economy continued to grow, the variability in growth rates and the uncertainty about continuing growth would therefore have particularly challenged magazine publishers. Additionally, the uncertainty over the future of internet commerce was particularly important for magazines.

The high degree of technology change also meant strategic challenges in the magazine sector. In the mid-1980s, the arrival of desk-top publishing (DTP) transformed the publishing business. As Cox & Mowatt (2008: 507) point out , with DTP "… the craft-based origination processes were effectively collapsed into an activity or series of activities that for the first time could be undertaken within the magazine editorial office". DTP technology continues to improve and lower in cost, acting as a continuing strategic force on the sector. The internet and the widening availability of broadband access to it has also has had implications for magazines. Guidone (2000) notes how the internet has stressed the community created and served by a magazine. Cox & Mowatt (2008: 507) have highlighted not only the role of the internet in magazine production but also stressed the implication for current and future distribution of magazines.

The magazine producer is also faced with a particularly complex supply chain. Like most media products, magazines generally sell to two markets; selling gratifications to media consumers who pay at least in terms of attention and selling access to that attention to advertisers (Picard, 1989). The tension, between these two markets, demands a holistic integration of the organisation's decisions and is, therefore, a strategic issue. Furthermore, the technological changes (discussed above) have combined with this complex supply chain to cause more disruption, with the general effect of increasing the influence of readers (Overdorf & Barragree, 2001). These technological developments have been associated with great change in and the

diversified nature of the organisation of magazine production highlighted by Ekinsmyth (2002).

4.3.2 The entrepreneurial nature of firms within the magazine sector

The smallness of organisations, as the literature review demonstrated, is seen as a key part of being entrepreneurial; for many, the increase in firm size marks a transition from entrepreneurial to managerial capitalism. Despite a variety of forces pushing the magazine industry towards consolidation (for further details, see Appendix B) there has been historically a shift downward in organisation size in those suppliers providing specialised titles such as Irish business magazines (Dimmick, 2003:10). This tension – whereby consolidation, often on a global scale, has been coupled with an increasing number of small firms – has been noted in different magazine markets, including the UK consumer magazine market (Cox & Mowatt, 2008: 504).

Theoretical explanations for this phenomenon, include the work on the cumulative size of specialised or niche titles which collectively outsell the 'best sellers', coupled with the falling minimum efficient size and absolute cost of desk-top publishing. Brynjolfsson, Hu, & Smith (2003) and Anderson (2004) both advance this 'long tail' argument. Whatever the explanations, Irish business magazines do certainly fulfil this 'smallness' criterion; the average number of copies sold is only 8,700 per title (excluding those included as sections of daily newspapers) and the largest title circulation is a mere 14,000 (derived from PPA-Ireland, 2005, 2006). These small-circulation titles are produced by a large number of small companies; at least 19 different firms were involved in the sector between 2000 and 2006 (see table in Appendix B).

Another frequent feature of being entrepreneurial is the newness of organisation. The magazine sector provides the conditions required for the founding of new firms. The barriers to entry for new suppliers in the magazine market are now quite low (CEC, 2005c:96). This is due to changes in technology and a deintegration of the supply chain allowing many elements of the supply chain to be outsourced in quite small amounts (Cox & Mowatt, 2008: 508). Production technology changes in the form of increasingly cheaper and more capable DTP computer hardware and software have meant a minimum, or near minimum efficient size in content creation

and magazine design can easily be reached by a one or two person operation. Changes in printing technologies too mean that shorter print runs are no longer at a major, if any, cost disadvantages. In Ireland printers had the added incentive to invest in such digital printing technology to take advantage of the large computer localisation sector that had a demand for small print runs of computer manuals for minority European and Asian languages. It is still true that mainstream paper magazine distribution does remain something of a barrier to entry for the newcomer with just two main distributors in Ireland Easons and Newspread. Additionally retailers have been focusing on high circulation magazines. However new producers, particularly of business magazine have been creative in overcoming these barriers through the use of the internet as a distribution system and through using various business organisations that distribute their products.

Innovation is associated with newness as a feature of being entrepreneurial. Innovation is indeed prevalent in the magazine sector. In a sense, this innovation is a requirement of the sector as each issue of a magazine needs to be new. However, even more innovation is required and demonstrated in the sector:

> "The magazine industry has demonstrated considerable creativity and adaptiblity; this is one of its core strengths. Magazine publishers have been able to identify emerging markets and create new titles for them, as well to adapt existing titles to changing markets through content, design and commercial development." (CEC 2005c:73)

Innovation is not even confined to new products; rather the magazine sector is noted for the great changes in its work practices and 'industrial' organisation (Ekinsmyth 2002;Cox & Mowatt, 2008). Indeed, Storey et al (2005:1033) found such changes in the media sector meant it was "… an ideal context in which to explore the extent to which, and the ways in which, ideological and structural pressures encourage workers to accept the logic and imperatives of enterprise."

4.3.3 Business magazines as a key repository of discursive resources for business

Magazines play a key role in circulating discourses generally in society. As Haveman, (2004:24) puts it, "Magazines promote discourses — principles, symbols, and ideas — that social groups use to deal with social problems." Feminist researchers over the last 30 years have particularly used this attribute of magazines that "… necessarily provide a space for, and contribute to (societal and individual) discourses of femininity, masculinity, and sexuality …" (Farvid & Braun, 2006: 297). Van Trier's

(2005) tracing of the history of how Douglas's Social Credit philosophy spread through *The New Age* magazine, despite its dismissal by mainstream economists, gives evidence for this role of magazines in circulating discourses.

The role of business magazines, in particular, as a source of business discourse is well recognised. Mitchell (1998) analysed the content of an Australian management magazine as an indicator of the changes in management discourse, while Watson & Bargiela-Chiappini (1998:300) in their British and Italian study found that the business magazine "... provides its managerial readers with narratives and discursive resources which they can drawn upon to make sense of their own work situation and to come to terms with it..." In examining features of management ergolect, Fox (1999: 264) saw fit to include substantial amounts of business magazine material in his corpus. Koller (2005) too found it appropriate to examine the discourses concerning mergers and acquisitions in a study of metaphor. In examining the business-magazine sector in the Netherlands, Van der Wurff (2005:143) points out that business magazines are seen as important sources of knowledge for a firm's decision-makers. Perhaps Mazzarella (2003:58) captures the effectiveness of magazines as discursive resources for managers best when, after carrying out research interviews and perusing a

> "… business magazine on the commuter train, I would often find my precious interview material duplicated in one current article or another. As an ethnographic observer, hungry for an 'insider' perspective, it was particularly unnerving suddenly to perceive myself as the last in a long line of journalists." (Mazzarella, 2003:58)

The centrality of magazines in circulating business discourses means that, by the nature of their sector, those involved in producing business magazines have easy access, if not inevitably frequent exposure, to the discourses of business. This makes interviewing them particularly relevant to understanding the use of strategy and enterprise discourses.

4.4 A suitable source of discourse in the magazine sector

A useful breakdown of the business magazine sector for the purpose of this research is as follows:[5]

1) Consumer magazines focused on business

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[5] A fuller discussion of magazine categorisation can be found in Appendix B.

2) Specialised (sectoral, professional and local) business magazines

3) General business magazines.

Clearly, this research is more interested in publishers of the last two categories than in consumer magazines focused on business. The division between specialised and general business magazines is often more one of degree. For example, the magazine *Marketing: Ireland's Marketing Monthly* could be classed as a specialised magazine but is clearly less so than the Dublin-based *Finance* magazine as the latter is often written in quite technical language whereas the former can be and is read by a more general business readership. *Electrical News* too might be regarded as a sector-specific publication and this is probably the function it fulfils for its international audience, though within its Irish home base it can probably be regarded as addressing a wider readership. The definition of local, too, might be problematic as it is not unreasonable to regard magazines addressed only to an Irish readership as local; however, they are clearly more general than those addressed to specific subnational regions and cities.

Table 4.1 below provides a very inclusive list of Irish publishers that supply what might be regarded as general business titles.

Table 4.1 Irish General Business Magazine Publishers 2000-2006

Company	Title
Accountancy Ireland	*Accountancy Ireland*
Accountancy Plus	*Accountancy Plus*
Ashville Media	*Business Ireland*
Best Practice Media Europe Ltd	*Best Practice*
Digital Media Intelligence	*The Investor*
ElectricNews.Net Ltd	*Electric News*
Enterprise Ireland	*Technology Ireland*
Exact Media/IMAJ Ltd	*The Business Funding Handbook & Directory* *Irish Marketing Journal*
Jetwood Limited	*Marketing: Ireland's Marketing Monthly*
Mediateam Ltd	*Smart Company*
Moranna Ltd	*Business & Finance*
Morrissey Media	*Irish Entrepreneur*
Nalac Ltd	*Business Plus*
Whitespace Ltd	*Silicon Republic* *Knowledge Ireland* *Irish Director*
Dillon Publications Ltd	*Decision Magazine*
Firsthand Publishing Ltd	*Running Your Business*
WMB Publishing Ltd	*Women Mean Business*
Ocean Publishing	*Irish Exporter*
Mercury Media	*Marketing news*

Sources: Derived from PPA-Ireland (2005), www.ppa.ie (consulted various occasions, last on 30th April 2007), www.adworld.ie (consulted various occasions, last on 30th April 2007), www.medialive.ie (consulted various occasions, last on 30th April 2007).

Various investigations into these 19 general business magazine publishers were carried out, including informal conversations with former employees or suppliers, inspection of their publications and websites, examination of the documents held about the companies at the CRO (Companies Registration Office) and reading of media reports on these organisations. These 19 companies were then evaluated, using the criteria of length of time the publisher was involved with particular titles and the relevance of their publications to a broad management readership in Ireland. This evaluation led to six companies being selected for further analysis. Descriptions of these six must be limited in the text of this thesis to protect the anonymity of the

interviewees; however, Table 4.2 below provides some detail about these six

companies and how the data concerning them was collected.

Table 4.2 The Six Recently Founded General Business Magazine Publishers

Firm Number	Age of firm at time of interview (years)	Audio-recorded research-provoked material	Other data studied as resource
1	2	Interview with founder	Publications, website, company accounts, chats with business colleagues
2	1..5	Interviews with the three founders and second interview with one	Publications, website, company accounts, business plans, chats with business colleagues, chats with employees, chats with a number of the directors, chats with former directors and employees
3	1	Two interviews with founder/managing director; one over 3 hours and highly informal, one more formal interview of about 1 hour. An interview with the company's 2nd largely inactive director.	Publications, website, company accounts, chats with business colleagues, numerous chats with the main founder, business plans, company accounts.
4	4	An interview with the founder/managing director and one with the main business partner.	Publications, website, company accounts, chats with business colleagues, company accounts, publications, websites
5	3	An interview with the founder/managing director.	Websites, chats with colleagues, company accounts, publications, websites
6	2	An interview with the founder/managing director, interview with other main and active director	Websites, chats with colleagues, company accounts, publications, websites

Sources: Interviews, documents from CRO, notes taken soon after the interviews, industry sources, press coverage.

Audio recordings[6] of 13 interactions were conducted with key individuals in

these six companies. Of these I decided to select only the first formal research-

provoked interviews. Only formal interviews were used as I felt they gave a greater

opportunity for the interviewee to control the overall impression created. Only the

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[6] These digitised audio recordings were made using a variety of devices (micro-cassette, standard cassette, minidisk, but primarily an iRiver iHP-140 digital recorder) using a variety of modes (primarily the 'wav' recording format) and microphones (primarily a Sony ECM-R300 condenser microphone). Such variety is partly explained by the use of a back-up recording device in interviews but also reflects improvements in techniques over time.

first formal interviews were selected for analysis because, where a second formal interview was carried out, it did not seem, on examination, to add much to the potential for analysis that would throw light on the concerns of this research, and there was already a richness of material to draw on in analysis. The material selected as the topic for a detailed DA directly for this thesis was then reduced to a substantial but manageable 11 initial formal interviews. The average length of these was an hour and 10 minutes; the longest was a little over an hour and half and the shortest just a little over three-quarters of an hour. This material that was subject to detailed DA constituted nearly 14 hours of audio material. The other materials, however, were frequently consulted in preparing the interviews and conducting the analysis.

The audio recordings were repeatedly listened to, and transcribed with care in order to provide the level of transcript detail and faithfulness shown in the analysis chapter. This level of detail in transcription was much greater than that involved in other forms of qualitative research and even some more general DA work, though not as great as might be found in the CA variety of DA. The idea of accuracy in transcription might suggest that DA is uncovering some buried city of discourse. However, as Coyle points out, "... the archaeological model of discourse analysis is inappropriate because any discourse analysis involves interpretation by the analyst and is constructed from the analyst's reading of the text" (Coyle, 2000:267). For example, in these interviews 'th' tends to be pronounced as 't' or 'd' as is typical of Hiberno-English. The 'accuracy' view of transcription would suggest that the transcripts should reflect this. However such variation is not hugely relevant to the theoretical objectives of the research and would have a heavy cost in both producing and reading the analysis. Furthermore such a phonetic transcription for Irish speakers of English would contrast with the conventional non-phonetic transcription of English English-language speakers, yet most English speakers of English depart in various ways from 'received pronunciation' (RP) of the language. Furthermore RP English does not have phonetically faithful spelling, so perhaps accurate transcription of RP speakers might require non-standard spelling. Nevertheless, the transcription method used does give the reader access to some 'low-inference descriptors' – "…terms that are as concrete as possible, including verbatim accounts of what people say, rather than researchers' reconstructions of the general sense of what a person said, which would allow researcher's personal perspectives to influence the reporting." (Seale,

1999: 148). It may be more meaningful to describe something as a wink than a blink, but recording a blink is more transparent. Hopefully the thickness of the descriptions in this work will be all the more persuasive from the transparency provided.

Transcriptions of the audio recordings were made in a variety of ways initially, but all transcripts were in the end enhanced by the use of Transana (Fassnacht & Woods, 2003). Transana is an open-source software program designed for the transcription, analysis and organisation of audio and video data (see http://www.transana.org for more detail). Transana was chosen because of the transparency of the way it handles data; it gives a greater feeling of control over what is happening to the data, rather than a mere mechanical carrying out of tasks necessary for the program's structure, without being fully aware of the theoretical implications of using this structure. The transcription symbols used were principally drawn and in some cases adapted from the Jeffersonian Transcription Notation (Atkinson & Heritage, 1984) as described in Appendix A. Generally these symbols are in common use in DA and CA, including in the Transana program (Fassnacht & Woods, 2003).

Whereas 11 interviews provides a reasonable amount of data for me, acting as the discourse analyst, to handle in the course of this major research project, for presentation purposes it would be most unreasonable to expect any reader to endure that amount of data. Some form of within-corpus reduction was required. It was tempting to extract data from the interviews that illustrated some particular aspect of the discourse being used. I did initially try this – looking at the use of metaphors for strategy across three interviews with directors of the same company (O'Rourke, 2004). While this was fruitful to some extent it did have grave disadvantages. First, the selection of the particular aspects of discourse would shift the analysis from being literature-informed (as described when discussing LUCID-DA above) to being much more literature-determined. Secondly, the more complete the data that could be given on particular interactions, the better it would be for the kind of openness aimed at by the unbundled attribute of LUCID-DA. Thirdly, LUCID-DA aims to be detailed in the sense of preferring detailed, extended stretches of discourse rather than researcher-selected snatches from many specimens. Fourthly, DA methodology takes account of the interactional nature of discourse; thus the interdependence of the interview as a complete interaction indicated that taking complete interviews, rather than

decontextualised and uprooted snatches from different interviews, was the best approach.

For the purposes of this thesis, I therefore decided to reduce the number of interviews to three. Three was selected for a number of reasons. First, it is probably at the upper limit of readability that allows the reader to play their role in validating the data that is expected in this kind of micro-orientated hyper-empirical analysis (Potter, Jonathan & Wetherell, 1987;Wooffitt, 2005). Secondly, similar quantities of data are typically presented in works of this broad tradition (Gilbert & Mulkay, 1984; Speed, 2003). Thirdly, having three interviews allows the reader to see similarities and differences in the interviews as two can often be seen as more similar along a dimension, while the third can be seen as more different. A further benefit of limiting the number of interviews to three is that, as explained above, I thereby constrain myself from choosing data to suit my interpretation.

The reasoning for selecting the particular three chosen from the 11 initial formal is now discussed.

First, I reduced the 11 initial formal interviews to just six by confining the interviews presented to just interviews with the 'lead entrepreneur' (Ensley, Carland, & Carland, 2000) of each firm. This was for a number of reasons. When conducting an initial reading of all the interviews, I found that there was in the case of each firm clearly one individual who, from the interview data, most 'owned' the firm. All the 'lead entrepreneurs' had been founders, were the biggest shareholders in the company, were the CEO of the organisations concerned and (using other interviews as a resource) were spoken of as the leader or the boss. Since enterprise discourse would be a key subject of analysis, the prominence given by enterprise discourse to the main individual meant that those cast in this role became most interesting. (This is not to deny that there are non-individualised approaches to entrepreneurship but merely to acknowledge that the idea of the individual entrepreneur dominates the literature.) This reduced the 11 interviews down to six.

Reducing the number of interviews from the six with the lead entrepreneurs to the three actually presented was quite complex and relies more opaquely on my judgement than previous reductions did. In line with the LUCID-DA guiding principle of unbundling, I felt obliged to shine as strong a light as possible on the kind of

judgements I was conscious of in making this final reduction to three interviews. For this reason and to give the reader a sense of the data, Table 4.3 below provides a basis for discussing the criteria in this reduction from six to three interviews. The criteria of Table 4.3 are not used in any sense to suggest that a sample of three will provide any statistical basis for generalising about the relationship between the criteria and the characteristics of discourses. This research is about *how* discourses are used, not about any factors and outcomes questions. Rather, the characteristics featuring in Table 4.3 to some extent make transparent to the reader the judgment made in selecting the three of the interviews to present. Their selection is intended to illustrate the variety of discourse use and the range of theoretical coherence I was able to bring to the interviews as a whole.

Table 4.3 divides the interviews into two columns based on the gender of the interviewee. Two of the six interviews were with women and four with men. The literature suggests that there may well be differences in the way men and women talk about business. Samartseva & Fomina (2002), for example, in their study of over 600 managers of small and medium businesses, report clear differences in the management style of men and women. Similarly, Heilbrunn (2004) found difference by gender in perceptions of difficulties, in her study of over 450 entrepreneurs. Hoping to present as much variety to the reader as possible makes it desirable to have both female and male interviewees among those presented.

Table 4.3 Considerations in further reducing interviews to be presented

Row number	Consideration	Number of interviews with females having characteristic:	Number of interviews with males having characteristic:
1	Second-level is interviewee's highest educational attainment	0	1
2	Third-level is interviewee's highest educational attainment	1	1
3	Postgraduate level is interviewee's highest educational attainment	1	2
4	Interviewee has liberal arts education	1	2
5	Interviewee has artistic education	1	0
6	Interviewee has engineering/science education	0	1
7	Interviewee has sales background	1	2
8	Interviewee has journalism background	1	2
9	Interviewee is novice entrepreneur	2	2
10	Interviewee is portfolio entrepreneur	0	1
11	Interviewee is serial entrepreneur	0	2
12	Interviewee has significant general management experience	0	4
13	Interview in interviewee's office	0	2
14	Interview in interviewer's office	0	2
15	Interview at neutral venue	2	0
16	Initial interview was first main interaction with interviewee about their business	2	2
17	Interactionally uncomfortable	0	2
18	High difficulty in analysing	2	2

Source: Format inspired by Stake (2000) and Silverman (2001); criteria suggested by the literature; information from the empirical material used as a resource.

The first to sixth rows of Table 4.3 feature the educational characteristics of the interviewees that might give rise to variety in discourses. Hitt & Tyler (1991:341) show some differences in managerial decisions depending on level of education, while the findings of Lee & Tsang (2001:596-597) suggest that those with a higher level of education might be more disposed to complex planning than more simple venturing approaches. The kind of variety in this attribute is illustrated in the first three attributes listed in the rows of Table 4.3. Hitt & Tyler (1991:341) also show that type of education is perhaps an even more important influence on managerial decisions than level of education and so the next three rows illustrate the variety in types of education of the interviews, using the same type of broad categorisation used by Hitt & Barr (1989).

Background experience may well be a source of variety in the discourse of business people. Bowman & Daniels (1995:165) find that type of functional

orientation experience influences the nature of strategic decisions, as did Hitt & Tyler (1991:341). Looking at the characteristics of the lead entrepreneurs being examined here, they seem to divide into having two types of functional experience: those with a sales experience (row 7) and those with a background in journalism (row 8). Those with a background in production might be more inclined toward illustrating Stanworth & Curran's (1976) artisan entrepreneurial identity, while those with a sales background might be expected to show more of their classical, profit-focused entrepreneur identity. Uses of business discourse may well vary by prior experience of starting a business. Westhead & Wright (1998), through reviewing the literature, develop a typology of habitual entrepreneurs and empirically find difference in attitudes between those types. Table 4.3 adopts the Westhead & Wright (1998: 176-177) typology in categorising our six interviewees into:

- novice (those new to starting a business)

- serial (those who have sold the first business they've started but later own another business)

- portfolio entrepreneurs (those who have retained their original business but also own other businesses)

These are dealt with from row 9 to row 11. Where an interviewee is being interviewed mainly in relation to their original business (and here those are all recently formed) it is possible for them to be regarded as both a novice and portfolio entrepreneur. Again, those portfolio and serial entrepreneurs might be more likely to use Stanworth & Curran's (1976) classical entrepreneurial identity.

The managerial experience of an entrepreneur is considered in the literature (e.g. Jo & Lee, 1996) to be an influence (though far from a straightforward one) on the practice, and so perhaps on the discourse of the entrepreneur. Strategic decisions are also found to be affected by management experience (Frederickson, 1985). For these reasons I thought it useful to indicate in row 12 of Table 4.3 how the lead entrepreneurs differed in terms of having significant general management experience or not. General management rather than function-specific management was chosen as all the lead entrepreneurs possessed some function-specific management experience. Furthermore, I felt that general management experience might influence the

interviewees towards a use of Stanworth & Curran's (1976) third entrepreneurial identity: the managerial.

The next rows in Table 4.3 switch to the characteristics of the interaction itself – rather than characteristics of the interviewee – that might affect the nature of discourse use in the interviews. The first of these is the location or setting of the interview – the element dealt with in the first of the factors of the SPEAKING (Hymes, 1974) model of speech events. The interviews varied according to where they were held: in the interviewee's office, my (the interviewer's) office, or a 'neutral' venue. This variation is shown in rows 13, 14 and 15 of Table 4.3.

Row 16 is concerned with how self-contained I felt the initial formal interview was. By 'self-contained' I mean the extent to which the interviewee and I had talked together about the business beforehand. Some of the interviewees had chatted to me extensively about their business before I interviewed them formally for this project. In the case of others, though we may have known of each other or even met each other and talked briefly of business on a prior occasion, the first formal interview was our first substantial interaction about the business. Whereas prior interaction about the business might have helped the flow of the interview, from the point of view of choosing which interview to present I preferred the transparency in analysis given by those interviews that were the first major interaction. For example, the interview with Liam (a pseudonym) – not one of the three presented – was preceded by many chats with him and the interview was expected to be followed (and indeed was followed) by much interaction with him. While such interaction with Liam was very useful for building up resources from which I could draw in interpreting the interviews, it also means the performance of the interview with Liam may be less self-contained than the interviews that were done with less prior interaction and less certainty of future interaction.

Row 17 of Table 4.3 illustrates that some interviews felt uncomfortable to me to conduct. I felt that this attribute of the interaction captured something of the interview's psychological setting or 'scene' (Hymes, 1974) and that it might also provide an indication of occasions where my contribution to the interaction was particularly interesting, in an analogous way to the interest that Fairclough (1992a:230) recommends us to have where there are 'cruces' in the talk. The valuing

of transparency would suggest that such uncomfortable interactions might be particularly chosen for presentation.

The last row of Table 4.3 deals with another very subjective characteristic of each interaction – that is, an indication of the number of interviews that I, post-analysis, found to have a high difficulty in analysing. Each interview was struggled with for quite a long time. There were times when a particular reading of it seemed to make perfect sense – until a niggling passage proved to collapse that reading like a house of cards. So perhaps any ranking of difficulty is to be suspected. However, since discourse analysts are urged to look for the interactions that are most difficult to fit into their analyses (Potter, 1996:138; Silverman, 2001:107), I thought it appropriate at the level of the entire interview to identify what seemed to be the ones that were most analytically awkward overall. This identification clearly suggests, other things being equal, these interviews as ones to present.

4.5 Introducing the three interviews chosen for presentation

Keeping in mind the considerations discussed in the last section, three interviews were selected for presentation. These were the interviews with Paul of ECA, Una of Troncom and Eoin of Diverse Media (pseudonyms are used for reasons of confidentiality). All three first formal interviews were the first major interactions I had with them concerning their business. All three interviewees were lead entrepreneurs and all three interviews were conducted between June and December 2004. Other brief comments on the three interviewees are given in Table 4.4 below.

Table 4.4 The three interviews presented

Interview description	Interviewees' & company aliases and brief description
An interactionally uncomfortable and particularly difficult-to-analyse interview. This interview of nearly an hour and a half was in his office where his colleagues could easily overhear the louder interactions and could be easily called on to consult.	Paul, CEO of ECA. Lowest education level of interviewees, background in sales, serial entrepreneur with extensive general management experience, whose background might suggest great use of a classical entrepreneurial identity.
Interactionally comfortable but difficult-to-analyse interview. This interview of about an hour and twenty minutes took place in a taxi and a pub but interviewee made choices to keep the interview from being heard by third parties.	Una, CEO of BizCom. The only woman in the selected 3 interviews, she also was the youngest of the three and had a high level of education. Background in creative arts and journalism meant that she was likely to draw on the artisan entrepreneurial identity.
Interactionally comfortable and least difficult of the three to analyse. This interview of just over an hour took place in my office where privacy was high.	Eoin, CEO of DiverseMedia. Background in journalism and general management; had a liberal arts and professional education. Portfolio entrepreneur, whose experience might bias him towards either a managerial or artisan entrepreneurial identity.

Sources: Interviews, documents from CRO, notes taken soon after the interviews, industry sources, press coverage.

More analysis of the three interviews featured in Table 4.4 above will be presented in the next three chapters. For all three interviews, I had amassed considerable interpretative resources. I had examined the details of the companies in which the interviewees had held directorships, in the files of the CRO. I had studied

media coverage of the interviewees' work; googled their names and examined the documents thus found on the internet; examined their electronic and paper publications; informally chatted with ex-employees and colleagues; interviewed colleagues and become generally familiar with the sector. Despite this preparation I had very loose 'interview guides'; the preparation I engaged in was more so that I could understand and interact easily with the interviewees, rather than to put particular propositions to them. The 'interview guide' – or more accurately the hint sheet – I used for the interview with Paul (illustrated in Appendix C) is typical of the loose hint sheets I used in the interviews overall.

4.6 Conclusion

This chapter has begun the analytical journey by constituting and analysing the context. This allowed a sufficient description and reduction of the data so that it can be the topic of a detailed DA.This was a vital part of the analysis. For while, for example, the selection of the 11 initial formal interviews with the recently formed firms could be construed as pre-analytical sampling, it has been included here as part of the analysis since it was partly dependent on initial analysis and furthermore sensitises the more detailed and expansive analysis to follow. Similarly, the selection of the three interviews to present not only relied on quite detailed analysis of the other interviews but also raised considerations that can be taken up again in the chapters that follow. These provide a detailed and holistic analysis of the three interviews selected.

CHAPTER 5 ANALYSING THE INTERVIEW WITH PAUL

5.1 Introduction

In this chapter I provide a detailed analysis of the first of the three interviews selected for presentation. The presentation of this interview will allow us to see the strategy and enterprise discourses in action. From this some answers to the core questions of this research will emerge. How will the various features of strategy and enterprise discourse be deployed in the talk? How will these two discourses interact? Will they be harmonised into one discourse? Will they be used completely separately?

The interview analysed here is with 'Paul'. The next section of this chapter gives a brief overview of the interview, including a breakdown of it into three parts for further analysis. The third, fourth and fifth sections of this chapter then analyse these three parts of the interview in turn. At the end of these sections, cumulative abstractions of how the discourses of strategy and enterprise are deployed are given in graphic form in Figures 5.2, 5.3 and 5.4. The final section provides a commentary on the operation of the discourses throughout the interview.

5.2 Overview of interview

Paul (a pseudonym) is the owner-manager of a small publishing firm, here called ECA. Paul has founded and sold a number of businesses. We had met each other socially a number of times but we were not well acquainted. The email sent to Paul asking for the interview referred to my interest in "the thinking of practicing managers", particularly in "the messy and challenging situations of small firms", and declared that the research project involved "unstructured interviews with directors of small to medium-sized enterprises".

The interview took place in a quiet area of Paul's open-plan office, where our voices when lowered could not be overheard but at normal levels probably could be. Paul could call on his employees easily when he wished to. We were out of view of the rest of the office though anybody entering or leaving the building had to pass through us. This location was Paul's choice and he seemed relaxed and comfortable with the choice. I was aware that my voice would have to be lowered during sensitive exchanges but was also comfortable with the location. The interview took 87 minutes in total. My overall impression was that Paul was very 'full-on' with me in the sense

of revealing many personal details and seeking to make sure the interview was getting places and achieving its goals. The reasons for this overall impression can be seen in the extracts analysed below. These extracts constitute over two-fifths of the total recorded interview. Figure 5.1 below illustrates the placing of these 22 extracts (in blue) and the segments of the interview omitted (in red). Reasons, (such as my judgment that sufficient analysis of the relevant phenomena has been done elsewhere), for the exclusion from display of the analysis of particular segments is discussed throughout this chapter as these omissions arise. Awkward passages – in terms of my own embarrassment or those not fitting my expectations – were, as is clear from the extracts presented below, among those most likely to to be selected for display. This was done to counter a natural bias to neglect such passages and because they might point to cruces that Fairclough (1992: 230) has highlighted as so important in the interaction.

Figure 5.1 An overview of the interview between Paul and Brendan
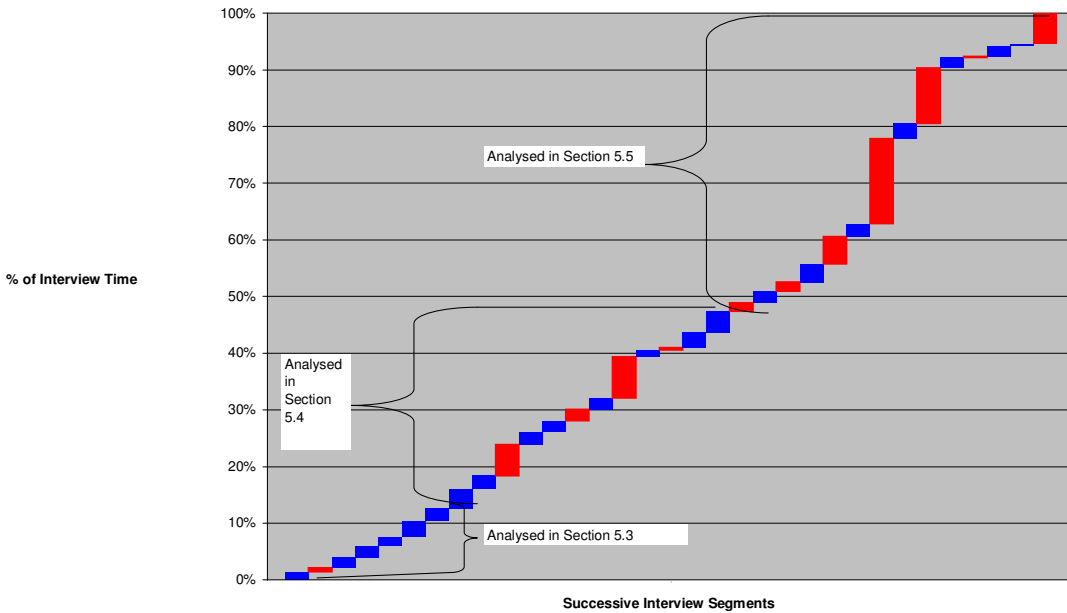
Legend   ■ Extract shown i.e. a segment analysed later in this chapter
   ■ Omission i.e. a segment of which analysis is not shown

Source: Derived from transcript of the 87-minute interview between 'Paul' and Brendan

5.3 Introducing Paul as interviewee, entrepreneur and strategist

In this section, six extracts from the beginning of the interview are analysed. These extracts show how Paul skillfully and concisely builds his identity as an interviewee, a strategist and an entrepreneur.

Extract PB 1 from Paul-Brendan interview

1   Brendan: Fine ya. That's great iriver
2   Paul: >Oh this one!<
3   Brendan: 40 gig It is the cheap, the mean version of the iPod, ha ha
4   Paul: Ya, We've actually a review in for it for next one
5   Brendan: I must say I've found it very good. Very, very happy. It's got the external mike which the
6   Paul: [(inaudible)
7   Brendan: laughs] for this kind of thing [anyway.
8   Paul: go on]
9   Brendan: So yeah em, so how did you get here? Is my usual start, so.
10   Paul: I'm twenty years in media.
11   Brendan: Okay
12   Paul: And I fell into it by accident twenty years ago, when I was asked to do a survey on Irish magazines, on behalf of ((well-known research company)).
13   Brendan: Oh ((well-known research company)).
14   Paul: Yeah on ((street name)), yes. So I was in there for three months. So I was running around like an eejit, asking magazine publishers all sorts of weird questions and then some poor unfortunate offered me a job.
15   Brendan: Laugh. And who was that with?
16   Paul: ((name of a sectoral magazine)).
17   Brendan: Oh right ( ) [very much sectoral
18   Paul: So I] went from there to, eh I worked for a couple of years then in Dublin. I went very quickly from selling advertising to actually publishing the whole thing myself at the age of about twenty-two. …

Source: Transcript from the start of the interview to 1 minute 13.9 seconds of audio record of 87-minute interview between 'Paul' and Brendan.

Extract PB 1 above shows the opening of the interaction. As we can see, the conversation is initially orientated to my digital recording device. At the time this (an iRiver H340) was a relatively new kind of device which combined substantial storage (40 gigabytes) with the ability to record audio and other data in a small and stylishly designed palm-sized unit. (The iRiver brand was a well-respected brand with greater functionality than the then best-selling alternative – a version of the Apple iPod.) During turns one to nine, there is much overlap between turns, and a light-hearted

tone to the exchanges. When I indicate that I am starting the interview proper by saying "So yeah em, so how did you get here?' is my usual start," the tone changes, with the speech being slower and more formal. Paul is ready with his story, immediately positioning himself as a man of experience in the sector concerned: "I'm twenty years in media" (Turn 10). In these exchanges, we see that the interview is being constructed by the participants as an 'occasion', compared to the more casual encounter of the initial turns.

The *interview society* (Atkinson & Silverman, 1997) means that the interviewee recognises the interview as an occasion of extended interaction – an integrated whole. Paul orients to the interview as an integrated whole, which allows him to make one remark in the context of another. In Turns 12-14 (see Extract PB 1) Paul makes some self-deprecating remarks referring to himself as being like an "eejit" (idiot), showing the kind of modesty that might be expected of a good interviewee. These remarks taken out of context might portray Paul as a victim of bad luck but he has already told us that he has 20 years' experience and that he worked for a well-regarded research company. Furthermore, the self-deprecating remarks are followed immediately with Turns 15-18 (Extract PB 1) where Paul tells of his rapid promotion within the firm in which he had been employed all those years ago. It would have been a very different thing if Paul had been risking the self-portrait of Turns 12-14 in an interaction that he didn't know was going to go on for some time.

The interview also demands use of the 'technology of the confessional' (Foucault, 1978:60; O'Rourke & Pitt, 2007) that imply the interviewee must strive to be authentic. Admitting to having fallen haphazardly into the industry (Turn 12) and to having been an idiot (Turn 14) builds a sense of authenticity.[7] We can see that Paul is not only performing as a good general interviewee but is also responding to my particular research interests. My interests had been revealed to Paul as being "the thinking of practicing managers", particularly "the messy and challenging situations of small firms" (from the email sent to Paul asking for the interview). Paul's account of being "twenty years in media" (Turn 10) and of "running around like an" idiot (Turn 14)

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[7] When I use phrases such as 'building a sense of authenticity', 'performing a certain role' or 'achieving a certain identity', I mean to imply no pretence or affectation on the part of the person engaging in such an activity but am merely adopting DA's analytical perspective that discourse is usefully viewed as pervasively persuasive.

gives a balance of expertise and dedication. Paul gives himself an identity as having a holist role within the firm as he goes "very quickly from selling advertising to actually publishing the whole thing myself at the age of about twenty-two" (Turn 18). This holistic overview of the firm is something that literature review suggested is central to both strategy (Lilley, 2001:75) and enterprise (Kanter, 1983: 27) discourse. Another attribute that the literature showed is common to both enterprise and strategy discourse is the masterful role assigned to both strategist (Clegg, Carter, & Kornberger, 2004: 26) and entrepreneur (Nicholson & Anderson, 2005: 161). Turn 18 also achieves this masterful identity for Paul. In the overall context of the interview, Turns 12-14 could be interpreted too as acting in the manner of what rhetoric calls a procatalepsis or what American political commentators call a prebuttal: an anticipation of a counter-argument to Paul's overall tale of being masterfully in charge of his destiny.

There is a short gap of about 14 seconds between Extracts PB 1 and PB 2 during which Paul mentions a lot of the specifics of his career. These 14 seconds are not shown as I judged that their details added nothing to the analysis and their absence helps ensure anonymity.

Extract PB 2 from Paul-Brendan interview

24   Paul: Right. And when best to, I think, you know everybody has loads of ideas. I think, it's part of human nature to have lots and lots of ideas but it's understanding how to get those ideas into sort of meaningful

25   Brendan: Mmm

26   Paul: you know, application. And you know, particularly when you're presenting it to somebody that you're trying get money out of

27   Brendan: Mm, actually timing was something

28   Paul: Yeah, yeah.

29   Brendan: I saw on your web site, by the way.

30   Paul: Yeah, yeah.

31   Brendan: It's an important issue for you.

32   Paul: Yeah. Yeah it is yeah. Em, came back to Dublin, when the Gulf War was on. What was that ninety one? Em. Ran ((name of a professional magazine)), which we'd bought. We'd bought ((name of a professional magazine)) magazine when I worked in London so I'd been writing for them for about a year. I did that and then, the in January nineteen ninety two and I decided to stay and do my own thing. So I started my first publishing company in nineteen ninety two. And I ran that for five years and then sold it.

((Six turns clarifying the names of businesses are excluded to ensure anonymity))

38   Paul: Let's just say that. Em, but it ((the second business Paul founded)) was real entrepreneur stuff. I mean KellyMag wasn't real entrepreneur stuff. It was, its was em KellyMag, was a publishing company, so you know whatever opportunity you came across in life eh or in business, the solution was always going to be a magazine

39   Brendan: Right. (Laugh)

40   Paul: Right. Regardless of if I'd be put in charge of a sweet shop

41   Brendan: Right, right

42   Paul: the solution would have been a magazine.

43   Brendan: Right, right. (Laugh)

44   Paul: Chocolate monthly.

45   Brendan: Ok (laugh).

Source: Transcript from 1 minute 53.1 to 3 minutes 27.2 seconds of the audio record of an 87-minute interview between 'Paul' and Brendan.

In Extract PB 2, Paul builds his identity as a business person. He also stresses the need for application that he opposes to the more creative aspect of being in business: "… I think, you know everybody has loads of ideas. I think, it's part of human nature to have lots and lots of ideas but it's understanding how to get those ideas into sort of meaningful ((Brendan: Mmm)) you know, application…" (Turns 24-26) So, clearly, creativity in ideas is not enough – rather the ability to apply that in 'meaningful application'. Notice the way that the entrepreneurial attribute of creativity is contrasted with 'application' which is more associated with strategy; a key part of that meaningful application is in "presenting it to somebody that you're trying get money out of" (Turn 26). This element is reminiscent of the explicability and accountability evident

in strategic discourses (e.g. Knights & Morgan, 1991:263), whereas accountability is almost antithetical to enterprise discourse (e.g. Hendry, 2004:55).

From Turns 27 to 32, I attempt to probe the issue of 'timing' that was raised in an earlier turn, but Paul seems anxious to continue his story. In Turn 32 he explains how, while running a Dublin-based professional magazine for his London employer (again warranting his management competence), "in January nineteen ninety two and I decided to stay and do my own thing. So I started my first publishing company in nineteen ninety two." (Turn 32) The first thing to note here is that, after the very strategic, rather than entrepreneurial, Turns 24-26, Paul has now turned quickly to being entrepreneurial – not only starting his first publishing firm (Turn 32) but, by Turn 38, being engaged in "real entrepreneur stuff".   A fairly specific date of "January nineteen ninety two" is given for his act of deciding to "do my own thing" (Turn 32). This language is very definite and gives Paul an active masterful role. This contrasts sharply with the earlier language (Turns 13-15) giving an account of how 'he fell into the industry' (as opposed to deciding to do so) when some "poor unfortunate" offered him a job (rather than he himself being the active person in the decision) and where he worked for the rather imprecise (as opposed to the identified month) 'couple' of years. In Hiberno-English, couple is dominantly understood as "a few (not just two)" (Dolan, 2007); thus this interpretation of 'couple' as an imprecise number is more justifiable than in standard English where 'couple' can occasionally have the same meaning of a few but more dominantly means precisely two. Turn 32 finishes with the active and definite statement: "And I ran that for five years and then sold it". Again Paul's business competence as an entrepreneur is warranted, in this case by the ultimate test of the market, since after running the business for five years he was able to find a buyer for it.

Just six turns clarifying the names of the businesses follow (omitted here to ensure anonymity), before some more work on defining Paul as a competent entrepreneur is done. Turn 38 begins by describing the second business he started as "real entrepreneur stuff". This emphasis on real enterprise is explained by contrasting this business with his earlier, more formulaic venture: "KellyMag wasn't real entrepreneur stuff. It was, its was em Kelly media, was a publishing company, so you know whatever opportunity you came across in life eh or in business, the solution was always going to be a magazine" Turn 38. The less entrepreneurial business seems to be characterised

as applying the same solution to every situation; as Paul puts it: "Regardless of if I'd be put in charge of a sweet shop … … the solution would have been a magazine … … Chocolate monthly" (Turns 40-44).

In Extract PB 2 above, then, we have in close proximity a calculative deployment of strategy discourse (the meaningful application in "presenting it to somebody that you're trying get money out of" of Turn 26), and an explicit defining of the "real entrepreneurial stuff" (Turn 38) as more creative. This switching between the discourses of enterprise and strategy seems to be a feature of the way Paul uses them. This becomes clearer during the rest of the interview as strategy talk arises to bring enterprise talk back to earth, after which the enterprise talk can arise once more.

Extract PB3 follows immediately from Extract PB2, with Paul continuing to talk about the first company he founded for himself. Interestingly, this simple, not 'really' entrepreneurial (Turn 38, Extract PB2) approach of Paul's first venture (KellyMag) seems to be concerned more exclusively with making money: "So em the model was very simple, it was basically, look you know, em can we get enough ad revenue to pay for this?"(Turn 46). Now, after some experience, there are more aims than money: "And whereas earlier in my career I wasn't too concerned about things like editorial credibility, I am now. And em, but earlier, it was just about making money. Now making money is certainly very high on my list… but it's not, it's not, it's not the ultimate thing" (Turns 46-48). There is an implication here that the 'real entrepreneurial stuff' is ultimately more than about making money: being really entrepreneurial is not merely calculating the financial profit but realising that other things matter.

Extract PB 3 from Paul-Brendan interview

46   Paul: So em the model ((for KellyMag)) was very simple, it was basically, look you know, em can we get enough ad revenue to pay for this? And whereas earlier in my career I wasn't too concerned about things like editorial credibility, I am now. And em, but earlier, it was just about making money. Now making money is certainly very high on my list

47   Brendan: yea

48   Paul: but it's not, it's not, it's not the ultimate thing.

49   Brendan: And just to bring you back to the old ((previous employer)).

50   Paul: Yeah.

51   Brendan: Which lots of people pass through.

52   Paul: Yeah.

53   Brendan: It really interesting sort of place.

54   Paul: Yeah.

55   Brendan: Em, had you come there from school or college? Or what was the

56   Paul: The dole queue really.

57   Brendan: Right.

58   Paul: You know, okay I was never on the dole.

59   Brendan: Yeah.

60   Paul: But I mean I wasn't working.

61   Brendan: Right

62   Paul: So I been a van driver before that and I'd worked for my dad and em that was basically about it.

63   Brendan: Okay. Had your Dad been an entrepreneur or?

64   Paul: Yeah, Yeah.

65   Brendan: So

66   Paul: I'm very like him.

67   Brendan: Right.

68   Paul: Very like him. Dad's a big risk taker.

69   Brendan: Okay.

70   Paul: And em his, em know, his whole career was up & down, up & down, up & down

71   Brendan: Right [so

72   Paul: I]

73   Brendan: prepared to live with it.

74   Paul: Yeah, absolutely. I think difference would be that, em, em, whereas eh, my Dad moved around a lot em I've, I've pretty much stuck in Dublin. You know, I'm staying here.   I mean I've been living in the same house for eleven years now which is the longest I've been anywhere in my life

75   Brendan: Right (laugh) Right.

76   Paul: Up until then I'd say the longest I've lived in any one house was five years.

77   Brendan: Okay.

78   Paul: So I think there's something in that. If I was talking to a, sort of a, psychiatrist now or shrink or something and he said to me

79   Brendan: Yeah

80   Paul: 'Well you know all that moving around you did when you were younger, well that's how you're working. You're moving from project to project and you find it easier'

81   Brendan: Right.

82   Paul: I think maybe I'm more adaptable to change.

<u>Source:</u> Transcript from 3 minutes 27.2 to 5 minutes 14.7 seconds of the audio record of an 87-minute interview between 'Paul' and Brendan.

Unfortunately, I interrupt Paul's talk about the ultimate things of enterprise to ask him about the consultancy he worked for at the beginning of his career: "And just to bring you back to the old ((name of well-known consultancy firm))" (Turn 49), asking what he was doing before he joined that firm. The specific nature of this query means that it is pretty hard for Paul to continue talking on the same topic. To this query Paul responds with the start of the story of a self-made man, saying he came from the dole queue, although his autonomy is asserted by a correction in Turn 58: "You know, okay I was never on the dole", but he was not working after having had the lowly identity of a van driver (Turn 62) for his father. This correction – that he never had been given welfare payments –helps to avoid any tarnishing of Paul's image as an autonomous character, and autonomy (as was discussed in the literature review) is a key part of entrepreneurial identity (e.g. Down, 2006).

 I provide the opportunity, perhaps even the prompt, for a return to more explicit talk on the nature of being an entrepreneur in Turn 63, asking: "Had your Dad been an entrepreneur or ? " Paul answers in the affirmative and soon is declaring that "I'm very like him" (Turn 66) and stressing this through repetition in Turn 68: "Very like him. Dad's a big risk taker". Here Paul clearly selects the specific characteristic of risk-taking to stress about his father when his father is referred to as an entrepreneur. Another attribution Paul assigns to himself and his father is adaptability: "So I think there's something in that. If I was talking to a, sort of a, psychiatrist now or shrink or something and he said to me   'Well you know all that moving around you did when you were younger, well that's how you're working. You're moving from project to project and you find it easier' …I think maybe I'm more adaptable to change" (Turns 78-81). By putting the attribute of adaptability in the mouth of a hypothetical psychiatrist, Paul makes the attribution appear more objective and avoids charges of boasting about himself. By acting as his own psychiatrist, Paul is illustrating his willingness to engage in the secular form of the confession where all is revealed. All that is revealed in Paul's good confession is skillfully made to chime with the commonly recognised entrepreneurial traits of risk-taking and change debated in the academic literature (Kanter, 1983; Gartner, 1988; Carland, Carland, & Ensley, 2001).

In these turns of Extract PB 3, Paul has stressed his autonomy and his risking-taking and adaptable nature as an entrepreneur. Here these traits are constructed as

deep characteristics inherited or acquired in early childhood – the kind of personality traits detectable by a psychiatrist. The search for the relevant underlying personality traits seems to be a particularly strong feature of entrepreneurship studies despite the difficulty in finding the entrepreneurial character (Gartner, 1988; Ogbor, 2000; Carland, & Ensley, 2001; Jones & Spicer, 2005b). Paul does seem to do some learning in adulthood, that relates to being concerned about more than just making money (Turn 46) and to money-making not being the ultimate thing (Turns 46-48). More learning is evident in Extract PB4, which follows immediately from Extract PB3 and is analysed below.

Extract PB 4 from an interview between Paul and Brendan

83   Brendan: Right, right
84   Paul: But eh, but eh what I <u>have</u> found is that, particularly within this business, is that em the (4) Much (.) 'm much quicker to turn things around ((a third person moves noisily nearby))

85   Brendan: mmm.

86   Paul: Right. Perhaps I'm less tolerant than I used be [Right.

87   Brendan: Right.]

88   Paul: And I'm very quick, much quicker now to, to, em, understand an opportunity

89   Brendan: Right

90   Paul: And to be able to see where where   the win is.

91   Brendan: Right.

92   Paul: And <u>that's</u> taken me twenty years. To be, to be as quick as I am at it.

93   Brendan: And is that eh, a kind of, because of the the way you've constructed this vehicle of

94   Paul: Em it's that and I think it's also eh, understanding what doesn't work.

95   Brendan: Okay.

96   Paul: I think it's understanding what failure is.

97   Brendan: Right

98   Paul: Em and you know or what success is.

99   Brendan: Em
100   Paul: And you know people are always going to, you're only supposed to make mistakes once. You know I was like, I'd make the same mistake a couple of times. You know, but the, when it comes to something like publishing, or event management, you have to take a wider picture. I think, you have to take the communications industry
101   Brendan: OK
102   Paul: What I am as well, is an entrepreneur that operates in the communications sector. And I've operated across <u>all</u> communication platforms. You know, internet publishing
103   Brendan: Mmm

<u>Source:</u> Transcript from 5 minutes 14.7 seconds to 6 minutes 35.3 seconds of the audio record of an 87-minute interview between 'Paul' and Brendan.

Another element of Paul's identity is constructed in Extract PB 4 above: not only is Paul very adaptable but he is fast and decisive. In Turn 84, he talks of being

"Much (.) 'm much quicker to turn things around" –this boast is softened by the personal pronoun being missing from the statement. A more negative appraisal of that same attribute is given when Paul states more proprietorially: "Perhaps I'm less tolerant than I used to be" (Turn 86), while in Turn 88 he boldly declares: "And I'm very quick, much quicker now to, to, em, understand an opportunity". Recognising an opportunity is a key function of the entrepreneur in academic enterprise discourse (e.g. Phillips & Tracey, 2007:313-314) but, from this point, the level of enterprise talk goes down as more strategic talk arises. As well as recognition of opportunity, Paul is talking of understanding the opportunity, so the talk is shifting from enterprise to strategy, which always requires greater understanding to make things explicable (Knights & Morgan, 1991:263). Paul's speed of understanding has been earned from experience: "And that's taken me twenty years. To be, to be as quick as I am at it". This experience has taught him lessons and he has come to 'understand' opportunity, what success is and what failure is (Turns 88-98). These are not entrepreneurial character traits inherited from his father or learned in early childhood; rather they are things that he has learned from his experience. After these claims about his learning, Paul admits: "you're only supposed to make mistakes once. You know I was like, I'd make the same mistake a couple of times" (Turn 100). He then points to the importance of taking a wider view (Turn 100). This is less the integrative view of Kanter's entrepreneurial spirit that combines "... ideas from unconnected sources to embrace change as an opportunity to test limits" (Kanter, 1983:27) than it is the holistic view of the strategist which gains its particular greater overview by abstracting more – so Paul has a broader definition of a sector (communications rather than magazine publishing). This broad, more abstract view is built into his identity as he declares: "What I am as well, is an entrepreneur that operates in the communications sector", who has operated "across all communication platforms" (Turn 102). Thus, in Extract PB 4, Paul has moved from talk of innate entrepreneurial characteristics to someone who has in adulthood learned greater strategic skills, such as understandings of opportunities, and greater decisiveness. He has become, through this learning, more intolerant, and he expresses all this in the strategic language of 'sectors' and 'understanding'.

Extract PB 5 follows Extract PB 4 immediately.

Extract PB 5 from an interview between Paul and Brendan

104 Paul: events, direct marketing, I'm still on the board of the ((An Irish sectoral association)), television, radio, I've worked across all of those particular media. Eh, I'm probably best known for digital media work. But that's just, at times that feels more like a crusade than it does an occupation [to be perfectly honest.

105 Brendan: Right. (Laugh)] Are you very passionate about that?

106 Paul: I'm p, I'm, I'm losing passion.

107 Brendan: Right ((laugh))

108 Paul: Which is quite sad. Em, I'm losing passion because <I'm perhaps, em, was very early out of the blocks in terms of digital media. Em, I'm getting (.) you know frustrated with the lack of, em, you know, I suppose, <u>drive</u> that I see in Irish institutions.> And eh that kills me, I mean, I go into these places, I don't want to sort of necessarily single, you know

109 Brendan: Yeah yeah yeah

110 Paul: bits and pieces out

111 Brendan: but

112 Paul: but

113 Brendan: (laughs)

114 Paul: em, I'm a tax payer, my company pays tax, everyone who works for me pays tax, and we go into these places eh, who are supposed to be driving digital media, and they haven't got a fucking clue.

115 Brendan: Right.

116 Paul: They have no idea. They have no interest in anything apart from themselves.

117 Brendan: And

118 Paul: And their retirement package, or their relocation package, whatever it is they're doing. Eh, and I think that em, the (.) there's an anomaly exists here. Right, where the government has a vision to drive the future of the Irish media industry

119 Brendan: mm.

120 Paul: And in particular to drive the only element of that which will grow, which is digital media.

121 Brendan: mm.

122 Paul: <u>Nothing</u> in traditional media will grow. It's impossible. It has to shrink. It can't go anywhere else.

123 Brendan: mmm.

124 Paul: And digital media can't go can't do anything but up.

125 Brendan: mm

126 Paul: Right. And I found this extremely frustrating eh over the last three years. Because I've spent a lot of money. I mean I've spent half a million quid, in the last three years, you know, <u>driving</u> something. And as it happens, by default I've I'm still in business

127 Brendan: Right

128 Paul: Right. Survival by wits or by having good contacts and with having good ideas. But we're doing, we are actually doing more work in traditional media now cause it pays the bills.

129 Brendan: Okay.

130 Paul: The digital media work, we are still going to pursue. We're never going to give up on that ever.

131 Brendan: Right.

132 Paul: Not ever. That's something else by the way. You never give up.

133 Brendan: Right (laugh).

134 Paul: You let it, you sell it to somebody.

135 Brendan: Right.

136 Paul: Right. But you never give up. That's not allowed. You can't do that.

<u>Source:</u> Transcript from 6 minutes 35.3 seconds to 9 minutes 0.9 seconds of the audio record of an 87-minute interview between 'Paul' and Brendan.

In Extract PB 5, the ascendancy of the strategic talk continues. More evidence of Paul's wide and deep experience of the sector is provided in Turn 104. Paul talks more (see discussion of Turns 46-48 above) about how his work is more than about selfishly making money for his work on digital media that, at times, "feels more like a crusade than it does an occupation" (Turn 104). However, Paul is losing passion on the issue (Turns 105-108) because the lack of "drive that I see in Irish institutions" (Turn 108). Loss of passion is clearly a move away from the emotions of enterprise and creates a space for the more analytical strategy talk. He, his company and his employees pay tax to those in public institutions "who are supposed to be driving digital media, and they haven't got a fucking clue … They have no idea. They have no interest in anything apart from themselves … And their retirement package, or their relocation package, whatever it is they're doing" (Turns 114-118). It is interesting that these people, who lack drive or passion, focus on the long-term symbol of security – the retirement package. They are engaged in risk-avoidance and seem to be unaccountable in their narrow selfishness. Interestingly, too, there is a hint of respect for politicians: "where the government has a vision to drive the future of the Irish media industry" (Turn 118), though this respect may also be just functioning to give a public legitimacy to the vision that Paul shares. In any case, the talk here is of having to be accountable – a key feature of strategy. The masterful metaphor of driving is used again, mixed with the metaphor of the sector as organism, with the government having the vision to "drive the only element of that which will grow, which is digital media" (Turn 120). This analysis of the sector leads to a definite conclusion about the elements of the sector: "Nothing in traditional media will grow. It's impossible. It has to shrink. It can't go anywhere else. … And digital media can't go can't do anything but up" (Turns 122-124). After this strategic analysis of the objective situation, Paul talks about his frustration and his activity "because I've spent a lot of money. I mean I've spent half a million quid, in the last three years, you know, driving something. And as it happens, by default I've I'm still in business … Right. Survival by wits or by having good contacts and with having good ideas. But we're doing, we are actually doing more work in traditional media now cause it pays the bills" (Turns 126-128). The driver is no longer the government but Paul himself who is now the active one. His "survival by wits or by having good contacts and having good ideas" is something that illustrates some of Paul's talents and his contacts within the sector.

Paul's activity continues into Extract PB 6 below which follows immediately Extract PB 5. My question refers to the longevity of Paul's commitment to the public vision for digital media, referring to some "very old documents there", associated with Paul, that push for a particular public project in digital media (Turns 137-141). Paul responds by continuing on the more positive aspects of his experiences: "there have been some successes you know", and detailing his current activities and their significance: "we're actually going to go global" (Turn 142). In Turn 145, after the preceding turns in which Paul is portrayed as very active, there is a rather uncomfortable (as indicated by the hesitations in this turn, and the "for want of a better word") declaration that "we've waited so long for em (.) you know (.) help, I suppose for want of a better word". That admission of passivity – waiting for help – is uncomfortable is also evidenced by his quick compensatory declaration about his and his companions' grand vision: "our idea - our vision basically is to position Dublin as the Hollywood of digital media" (Turn 147). This is followed by lots of detailed information about Paul's activity (turns not shown) adding credibility to his grand vision.

However, Paul has more to offer than mere money-making survival; he has a grander vision of helping the public and his country: "our vision basically is to position Dublin as the Hollywood of digital media (.) Why not?" (Turn 147). 'Position' is a very strategic word, harping back to strategy's military origins and defining the school from which strategy's most famous current proponent, Michael Porter, writes (Mintzberg et al., 1998). This vision has been driven by Paul's personal passion: "in the last couple of years I was very passionate about that, about the whole Irish thing and protecting our identity and heritage" (Turn 161) but now he is just "more interested in basically profiting from it" (Turn 163). Only by adopting a more focused and selfish strategic approach will Paul be able to pursue his view: "...you know if we come back to the table in two years time, in front of these people here and have em (.) you know, worldwide reputation, oh they'll all fall into line..." (Turn 165). It seems that Paul's natural (portrayed here as more in the past) entrepreneurial concern for the national good is thwarted by public institutions that ensure: ">You're never a prophet in your own country<" (Turn 167). So drive, passion, a sense of a crusade, a sense of vision and patriotism towards "the whole Irish thing" (Turn 161) is contrasted with selfish calculation by bureaucrats (Turns 116 & 118) and by his more strategic self (Turns 155, 157 &163) at play in these

extracts. Yet a cool analytical strategy and the focus on profit is necessary to achieve
the strategic aim of getting them all to "fall into line" (Turn 165).

Extract PB 6 from an interview between Paul and Brendan

137   Brendan: That's I mean, it's you know, obviously in preparation for the interview I googled you. And [certainly

138   Paul: Okay]

139   Brendan: what comes up is, em, you know a lot of, I mean, I think there very some very old documents there pushing the ((Major public project in the sector)) for instance. So it [must be

140   Paul: Yeah.]

141   Brendan: you've been at it a fair while all right.

142   Paul: Yeah. And I mean I think that there have been some successes you know. Yeah doing things like the ((sectoral awards)). We're now in the third year of doing that. Eh, we had a meeting on it this morning, we're actually going to go global

143   Brendan: Oh the [award.

144   Paul: (for) the awards].

145   Paul: Because, we've waited so long for em (.) you know (.) help, I suppose for want of a better word.

146   Brendan: Right

147   Paul: To, you know, our idea- our vision basically is to position Dublin as the Hollywood of digital media (.) Why not?
    ((Seven turns specifying details of the business excluded to avoid identification of the interviewee))

155   Paul: You know, we're at a level. And em I think that (.) em, I don't see any reason why Dublin shouldn't be home of digital media, but I'm losing int -I'm losing losing passion on that one now. And where my head is at, I'm sort of saying, well just let just take care of ourselves

156   Brendan: Right, right.

157   Paul: Let's just make this event a worldwide event and let's make sure that that we we get paid first

158   Brendan: Right

159   Paul: And if Dublin gets some kudos out of that, then well good luck to them.

160   Brendan: Right.

161   Paul: It's it's no longer (.) I think that where (.) you know, in the last couple of years I was very passionate about that, about the whole Irish thing and protecting our identity and heritage, I care less about that now.

162   Brendan: Right right.

163   Paul: You know I'm more interested in basically profiting from it.

164   Brendan: And that's because of, kind of grinding down almost of by the institutions?

165   Paul: Yeah, yeah.. And you know the thing about it is, is that, you know if we come back to the table in two years time, in front of these people here and have em (.) you know, worldwide reputation, oh they'll all fall into line.

166   Brendan: Right.

167   Paul: >You're never a prophet in your own country<

168   Brendan: Right, right.

169   Paul: you know

Source: Transcript from 9 minutes 0.9 seconds to 11 minutes 2.1 seconds of the audio record of an 87-minute interview between 'Paul' and Brendan.

My interpretation of some of the features of how enterprise and strategy talk is used in Extracts PB1- PB 6 is summarised in Figure 5.2 below.

Figure 5.2 Abstract of Extracts PB 1 to PB 6
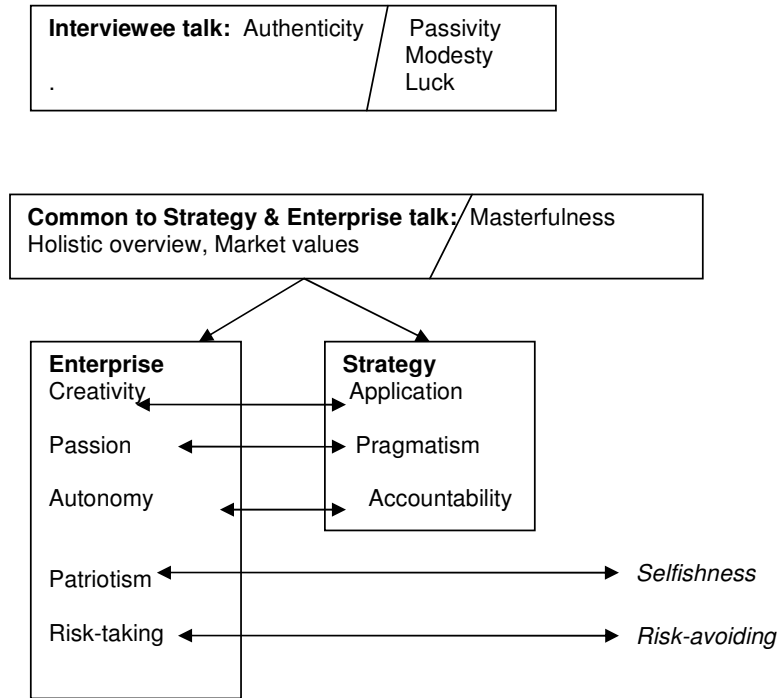
Interviewee talk: Authenticity	Passivity
	Modesty
.	Luck

Common to Strategy & Enterprise talk:	Masterfulness
Holistic overview, Market values	

Enterprise
Creativity

Passion

Autonomy

Strategy
Application

Pragmatism

Accountability

Patriotism ← → *Selfishness*

Risk-taking ← → *Risk-avoiding*

Key to symbols in Figure

A   An italicised A means A is treated as undesirable or unapproved of

| A | ←→ | B | Means the A and B are in tension with one another |

| A | → | B | Means B belongs to the more general category of A |

A
B
C

Means B and C are characteristics of **A**

Source: Abstracted by the author from interview between 'Paul' and Brendan

Some features that I covered in the above analysis are not contained in the figure, as I think their interpretation is best left until further material from the interview can make their meanings clearer. From the extracts it seemed that as interviewee Paul performs as an authentic modest individual subject to luck, and passively responds in a helpful manner to the questions I put as interviewer. He also acts to provide strategy and enterprise talk that position him as more masterful and, in these extracts, this is done separately to his more passive roles as a good interviewee. Whereas there were commonalities to the strategy and enterprise discourses (holistic view, masterfulness, the acceptance of the market as the arbiter of value), there also appeared to be elements of enterprise and strategy talk that were in tension with each other. Thus there is tension shown between the more enterprise element of being creative and the more strategic element of application, with similar tensions between the passionate and the pragmatic, the autonomous and the accountable. Not shown in the diagram is that the polar ends of these tensions between enterprise and strategy seemed to swop in prominence within the extracts of the interview looked at so far: when strategy arises, enterprise talk seems to submerge, and vice-versa. In the analysis of Extracts PB 1 - PB6, there are also elements of enterprise talk – i.e. the patriotic and risk-taking – that are contrasted with attributes (risk-avoidance and being narrowly selfish) that seem outside of both strategy.

5.4 Developing and handling interview, strategy and enterprise

This section provides an analysis of extracts PB7 to PB 14. These extracts show many of the features that were exhibited in extracts PB1 to PB6. However, these features are exercised with greater confidence and complexity, with the conflicts between the various discourses coming more to the fore. In particular, these extracts show some conflict between the active positioning required of Paul by the strategy and enterprise discourses and the passive role normally expected of an interviewee.

Extract PB 7 from an interview between Paul and Brendan

170   Brendan: And em, I mean, that was quite a kind of networking drive to to try and push that industry. Was that the kind of thing you were doing in, in NewWay?

171   Paul: NewWay was different you see. NewWay was basically a very eh, straight forward, em, offering. Straight forward proposition. Em, as was the publishing industry before then.

172   Brendan: Mmm.

173   Paul: NewWay. The proposition with NewWay was basically …

174   ((exclusion of end of Turn 173, all 174 & start of 175 for anonymity))

175   Paul: ... .And there was some activity, it was very sporadic and it was very piecemeal in the Irish market. We were doing it ourselves, in fact as early as1994, right 95 or 94, Em but I had this idea for a long time and when I saw the publishing company, at the time I was very, I wasn't ill but I was very out of shape because I had a dreadful ((health)) problem, ended up having major surgery.

176   Brendan: Oh wow

177   Paul: So I was out of action for about four months (.) And eh, it was like one of these moments in your life, that eh, I was thirty three, eh I was single, excellent,

178   Brendan: ((laughs))

179   Paul: eh I was,

180   Bren: They were the days

181   Paul: I was actually broke as well. I think I was, eh no money. So I was broke, I was single, I was in excruciating pain, all the time. I couldn't walk more than 50 yards. And eh, I just had enough of publishing. I'd just started the ((another sectoral awards)), I'd just started IreNET magazine, I'd launched EirServ News, I was running Srait2U, I was running BusGenda magazine, I was running IreNET magazine. Em, I was (.) you know, I had a team of 15 or 18 people and I'd just had enough. You know, just, perhaps I took the easy way out of it too early but I also wasn't in great shape. I think that- I experienced a massive change in myself during that period of time.

182   Brendan: mm

183   Paul: And actually having time to reflect on things, think about the opportunities. NewWay was, NewWay was an extremely bold move at a very early time.

184   Brendan: mm

185   Paul: We started, we went into a market which had zero value.

186   Brendan: emmmm

187   Paul: So we actually made our own market. Right, so I've gone, so my career has been (.) identifying opportunities for magazines launching them and selling them.

188   Brendan: em

189   Paul: Identifying opportunities for new media, like internet advertising, building it and selling it.

190   Brendan: em

191   Paul: And then, identifying new industries, like digital media, and building it.

192   Brendan: Right, right.

193   Paul: So I've gone, there is a natural kind of evolution and I think the model for it, or the modus operandi for it is basically eh, build, develop, transfer.

194   Brendan: Right.

195   Paul: That's, or create, develop, transfer.

196   Brendan: Right, right.

197   Paul: So, em.

198   Brendan: That's quite a thought out model. You're quite conscious of that.

199   Paul: Very comfortable, I'm very comfortable with it yeah. I'm very comfortable with it. I don't think, don't think anything is forever.

200   Brendan: Right

Source: Transcript from 11 minutes 2.1 seconds to 13 minutes 57.2 seconds of the audio record of an 87-minute interview between 'Paul' and Brendan .
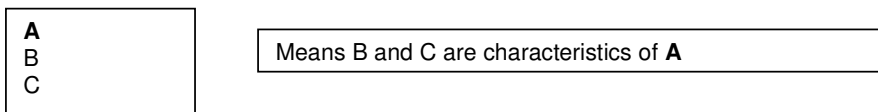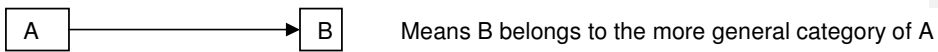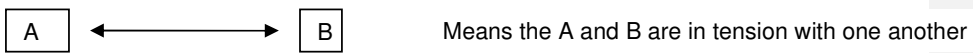
In Extract PB 7, which follows immediately from Extract PB 6, Paul highlights some aspects of his personal story of developing as an entrepreneur, with the more strategic discourse of the more recent turns falling away as more enterprise talk arises. He talks about a time when he was ill and "out of action for about four months … it was like one of these moments in your life" (Turn 177). This time was not good but both his achievements and his personal reflection shone through this time of adversity: "I was actually broke as well. I think I was, eh no money. So I was broke, I was single, I was in excruciating pain, all the time… ((Paul then lists an impressive five projects he either had just started or was then running)) … You know, just, perhaps I took the easy way out of it too early but I also wasn't in great shape. I think that- I experienced a massive change in myself during that period of time. And actually having time to reflect on things, think about the opportunities" (Turn 181). Notice the personal nature of this talk of change and opportunity that marks it out as enterprise talk. This reflection seems to have led to founding the NewWay company that Paul describes as "an extremely bold move at a very early time… …We started, we went into a market which had zero value" (Turns 183-185). This description stresses the risk-taking that is so prominent a feature of enterprise talk. So Paul constructs the creative boldness and change of enterprise as coming from reflection due to adversity.

After the above evidence of 'creativity, risk-taking and love of change' enterprise talk has been offered by Paul, there is once again, as enterprise talk falls away, a rise in strategy talk. Reflecting on his career in Turns187- 193, he summarises his "model for it, or the modus operandi for it is basically eh, build, develop, transfer " that captures what he has done at the progressively higher levels of magazines, opportunities for new media and finally at the level of creating new industries. Both 'model' and '*modus operandi*' are much more procedural, analytical and therefore strategic than the 'creative, authentic, etc' enterprise talk of the preceding turns. This model he's very comfortable with as "I don't think anything is forever" (Turn 199). In the next extract, which immediately follows the last extract, there is more talk of change.

Extract PB 8 from an interview between Paul and Brendan

201   Paul: Right. And I thinks it's the people who work in this company here, with me, don't think anything is forever either

202   Brendan: mm.

203   Paul: em (.) they (.) and myself both feel that there is more long term security- people people you know, respond to different things

204   Brendan: yeah, yeah

205   Paul: they respond basically to recognition or money and security, those kind of things and everyone's different in that respect. But eh, I think that people get more security these days from the fact that what they're doing isn't going to be for the rest of their life.

206   Brendan: Right.

207   Paul: Do you know what I mean?

208   Brendan: Yeah (laugh).

209   Paul: It's, you know, it's a better, you know, state of mind, I think or we think.

210   Brendan: yeah, yeah [they just think like that

211   Paul: And so we don't have, we don't have people working with us who are em (.) lifers.

212   Brendan: Right.

213   Paul: You know, it just, it doesn't work because I mean we're not going to be here forever.

214   Brendan: Yea. And how many do you have here?

215   Paul: About nine, eight or nine people working from here.

216   Brendan: And are they mostly from the tech industry or em?

217   Paul: All sorts of people, all sorts of people. Em, eh, I don't think as such, we have any em (.) you know, well documented recruitment process. Oh, we have a process all right .

218   Brendan: Yeah.

219   Paul: but we don't have any sort of recruitment policy and what we <u>do</u> tend to look for, is we look for people who have been through adversity.

220   Brendan: Okay.

221   Paul: Because we know that they're tough.

222   Brendan: Right

223   Paul: And we know that they are going to have a tough time. Em, because it's a tough market out there and I think that eh, for people who are, perhaps into a more easier kind of role or whatever we're not the right company.

224   Brendan: mm

225   Paul: You know, but em, people here earn good money and you know, and they also have tremendous opportunities for advancement.

226   Brendan: mm

227   Paul: In fact, I would, I would expect half the people in this business here in two years time to be shareholders of the company so they'll actually <u>own</u> the business.

228   Brendan: Okay

229   Paul: And I that that's motivating for them as well.

230   Brendan: Okay.

231   Paul: But em (.) we're we're sort of going a bit all over the place here.
              [You'll just get what you ya

232   Brendan: No that's fine. From my point of view that's fine] [ha ha

<u>Source:</u> Transcript from 13 minutes 57.2 seconds to 15 minutes 57.4 seconds of the audio record of an 87-minute interview between 'Paul' and Brendan.

Extract PB 8 follows immediately on from Extract PB 7 and in it enterprise talk is on the rise again. This time the enterprise is not just about Paul but it is used to talk about the whole company and this seems to be rather difficult to do. Paul says, speaking of "the people who work in this company here" (Turn 201) that "em (.) they (.) and myself both feel that there is more long term security- people people you know, respond to different things" (Turn 203). Notice the hesitating "em" and pauses around "they" as Paul begins to talk on behalf of people in the company rather than just himself. This is the kind of hesitation or cruce that Fairclough (1992a:230) notes as tending to point to an area that seems to be a troubling one in the discourse. In any case, Paul thinks that "… that people get more security these days from the fact that what they're doing isn't going to be for the rest of their life" (Turn 205). This way of looking at things constitutes "a better, you know, state of mind, I think or we think" (Turn 209). That the 'we' here is still "the people who work in this company here, with me" of Turn 201 is confirmed in Turn 211's "we don't have people working with us who are em (.) lifers." Paul's company looks "for people who have been through adversity" (Turn 219) "because we know that they're tough". We have seen earlier (Turn 181, Extract PB 6) how Paul too has been through adversity, and his toughness is reinforced by this tale of the requirements on his employees who, though they can be "all sorts of people" (said twice, perhaps for emphasis, in Turn 218), "we know … are going to have a tough time. Em, because it's a tough market out there and I think that eh, for people who are, perhaps into a more easier kind of role or whatever we're not the right company" (Turn 223).

Those that match the tough requirements of Paul's company also have the benefit of all this work and risk as they "earn good money" and "have tremendous opportunities for advancement" (Turn 225). The terms "opportunities" and "advancement" have a certain strategic ring about them but quickly there is a switch to more entrepreneurial talk: Paul expects "half the people in this business here in two years time to be shareholders of the company so they'll actually own the business" (Turn 227). Paul finishes this topic rather abruptly. This abrupt change of topic is in order to make a meta-comment about how the interview is proceeding (Turn 231), remarking that the interview is "going a bit all over the place here". It is interesting that similar meta-comments are made when employees or team members are discussed elsewhere in the interview (see analysis of Turn 285 below). Perhaps it is difficult to use enterprise talk

to discuss a more collective and corporate 'we' as enterprise talk stresses the autonomous individual so much.

In Extracts PB 7 and PB 8, there is a dimension along which people in Paul's company (tough people who don't expect to be there forever, who have been through adversity) and the people who would not fit in with his company ('lifers', people into an easier role) are contrasted. This chimes with the 'crucible' theory of entrepreneurship introduced by the 19th century German theorist Von Thünen (discussed in the literature review).

Between the end of Extract PB 8 and the start of Extract PB 9 there was a segment of just under five minutes that has been omitted from display here. It contains lots of detailed and identifying information about both Paul's businesses and the period in which he was doing a lot of consultancy. There are criticisms of identifiable individuals in both business and the public sector. Paul also expressed concern about these matters remaining confidential. Many of the issues discussed are repeated in a more anonymous form elsewhere in the interview. One quote from this unshown segment that is worth noting is when Paul does reflect on selling some of the businesses he founded, saying that he thinks " eh that people, people do feel a sense of loss when they build you know something and transfer" (Turn 245, segment not shown).

Extract PB 9 from an interview between Paul and Brendan

279 … And em I think that we have a lot of work to do in July to prepare our plans for the next twelve months, but em one of the, one of the good things is that where   we're at right now is that we've built a very strong team of people and they're tremendous

280 Brendan: And have you taken on a new MD here or (.)

281 Paul: No I haven't no, no em (.) I'm grooming a General Manager.

282 Brendan: OK, [right

283 Paul: At that moment.] and em I'm looking eh around other ideas all the time(.)

284 Brendan: Em

285 Paul:.<I think that's something else, I think em I think that team development is (.) eh it's a an ongoing process (.) it's a (.) certainly for anybody running the company.> >Tell me more about the the objectives from all this, < [((inaudible))

286 Brendan: Sure yeah] yeah, I realise I've kinda lured you in [to a conversation

287 Paul: No]

288 Brendan: a[bout eh

289 Paul: I 'm I'm] just telling warts and all here.

290 Brendan: Sure, and that's that's really useful to me. Em, I kind of started off in being very interested in, I suppose how -you know I teach in ((name of higher education/research institution))- how my students went out and actually used any thinking

291 Paul: ya, ya

292 Brendan:that we developed within ((name of higher education/research institution))

293 Paul: ya

294 Brendan: Em and gradually that (.) eh came to being well, let's find out what practitioners use at the moment.

295 Paul: [ya

296 Brendan: And] I was appalled in the literature,
There's very little [description really

297 Paul: ya ya]

298 Brendan: Em, there's all sorts of time studies

299 Paul: [ya

300 Brendan: a]nd things like that and then there's kind of, what I'd call <u>lab</u> work, where you know we ask people like yourself to do case studies which seems [a little silly

301 Paul: ya]

302 Brendan: given [that you are living your own case study

303 Paul: ya (.) ya]

304 Brendan: Em so I came to the conclusion that a good way to study what was going on eh in terms of people's em (.) thinking about their business, and I, I decided the word strategy

305 Paul: [Ya

306 Brendan: was]a nice loose [ambiguous one

307 Paul: Well I can talk] I'll talk to you about strategy in a minute

308 Brendan: Sure ya

309 Paul: but go on go on.

<u>Source:</u> Transcript from 20 minutes 47.5 seconds to 22 minutes 45.1 seconds of the audio record of an 87-minute interview between 'Paul' and Brendan.

Extract 9 begins with Paul talking about his employees again – as he had been in Extract 8 – declaring that "we've built a very strong team of people and they're tremendous." (Turn 279). After some specific exchanges about developing a general manger, Paul again (in Turn 285) talks about his employees: "<I think that's something else, I think em I think that team development is (.) eh it's a an ongoing process (.) it's a (.) certainly for anybody running the company.>   >Tell me more about the the objectives from all this <". Notice that the talk of team development is rather slow and is followed by the more quickly paced directive to ">Tell me more about the the objectives from all this <". Such an assertive request for meta-discourse also came up the last time employees were being discussed (Turn 232). Again, accounting for team building and employee commitment seems difficult for Paul in using this discourse.

    In Turn 285, Paul takes over from the interviewer the role of generalising. Generally the interviewer is made more powerful by being the one who generalises the experience of the interviewee (Rapley & Antaki, 1998). Here, however, Paul does the generalising in his comment that "(.) it's a, certainly for anybody running the company" (Turn 285). That the preferred manner of an interview is that it is interviewer-led is evidenced by Paul's hurried follow-up ">Tell me more about the the objectives from all this, ()<" (again Turn 285) . This question not only signals an acceptance that something may be out of place in Paul's generalisation; the repetition of the word 'the' can be read as a hesitation giving control of the interview back to me, as also can the invitation to me to explain what the interview is about. I – perhaps somewhat defensively (Turn 286) – attempt to repair my position: "Sure yeah yeah, I realise I've kinda lured you in to a conversation." I assert here that I 'realise' exactly what is going on and the word 'lured' implies that it was all expertly planned by me. Soon (Turn 292) I am building on my institutional position "- that we developed within ((name of local higher education institute))", showing my expertise by being in such a knowledgeable position as to be "appalled in the literature" (Turn 296) and labelling bits in a familiar manner: "all sorts of time studies" (Turn 298) and "what I'd call lab work" (Turn 300). I stress my power to decide and define: "... I, I decided the word strategy" (end of Turn 304) and then leap over an interruption from the interviewee to finish my too clever characterisation of the word 'strategy' as "a nice loose [ambiguous one" (Turn 306). This last quip positions me as an intellectual who knows what I am about. Paul, the interviewee, then inserts (notice the overlap in talk between Turns 306 and 307, and in

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Turns 286 to 307 in general) an assertion of himself as both an expert practitioner and as the controller of the timing of events in the interview with: "Well I can talk] I'll talk to you about strategy in a minute" (Turn 307). I signal my acceptance with "Sure ya", implied as necessary since the interviewer is normally more powerful. Paul reasserts his power by directing me to continue my explanation: "but go on go on" (Turn 307).

In these turns of Extract PB 9, Paul seemed to resist the passivity in which his role as interviewee cast him. I too worked hard on my identity as the competent interviewer. What was happening here? We ran into trouble at Turn 285 when Paul, while seeking to perform his role as a good interviewee, is also at work on his identity as somebody "running the company" (Turn 20). Unlike in Extract PB 1, the role of small-business practitioner cannot here be managed by the specificity of the confessions needed for managing the role of interviewee; the stimulated role of the strategist and entrepreneur here clash with the passivity required of a good interviewee. After all, strategy and entrepreneurship discourses cast their subjects as very active (Knights & Morgan, 1991; Carr & Beaver, 2002; Grey, 2004).

Resistance by Paul to the passivity of being an interviewee is also found in Extract PB 10 which follows immediately from Extract PB 9. It begins as I get over my initial hesitation to expand on an explanation, but Paul's mobile phone rings and interrupts him. Paul then instructs (Turn 312) me: – "Just turn it off for a second > is that OK<" – to stop the recording device. Notice that 'is that OK' is said faster than the earlier bit of the talk. There is no raise in intonation at the end of 'is that OK'; it seems that 'is that OK' is part of an instruction, not a question. Unlike for another phone call later in the interview (not shown), Paul completes the call rather than excusing himself in order to call back later. All of this is very active for an interviewee. In Turn 318, I cast my rather long contribution (stretching back to before the telephone call) as an explanation, with a "so that's why". This shows my acceptance that Paul is entitled to ask for and receive explanations. Here the interviewer is not the only one who can ask questions. The negotiation of a more active role for Paul is completed with my declaration in Turn 320 that I am happy to follow Paul's direction, although that a norm is being breached is acknowledged by my "even though that might seem a little aimless at times." With a more active role acknowledged as being in the interests of the interaction, Paul gets busy in constructing himself as an active and in-control 'interviewee'. This can be seen from turns 321 to 331 where there is a careful

specification by Paul – with facilitation by me – of what this bit of the interview is about.

Extract PB 10 from an interview between Paul and Brendan

310   Brendan: em was simply to go out and ask them to see what kind of words they use in discussing that.

311   ((Paul's mobile phone rings and he signals he's taking the call))

312   Brendan: Sure ya no worries

313   Paul: Just turn it off for a second >is that OK<

314   Brendan: Em , Sure [ya

315   Paul: Hello((on the phone))]

316   ((Recording device is switched off for about 2/3minutes while Paul takes the phone call))

317   Brendan: Yes that's great ((laughs)) > >So em as I was saying it was just in terms if I go out and actually talk to people about their [business<

318   Paul: mm]

319   Brendan: they might show me how they're thinking about it, in their in their talk. So that's why I'm (.)

320   Paul:Yep

321   Brendan: happy to follow your direction, if you like even though that might seem a little aimless at times.

322   Paul: If the (.) objective is about you know what is the modus operandi

323   Brendan: Mmmh

324   Paul: of entrepreneurs or business people

325   Brendan: Mmmh

326   Paul :   and and what are the watch words they use

327   Brendan: Yeah

328   Paul :what are the touchstones they have how is it they [think

329   Brendan: Yeah]

330   Paul: how is it they sort of organise their mindset

331   Brendan: Mmmh

332   Paul : Em I have to say, I'm em (.) extremely well organised

333   Brendan: Okay

334   Paul: Extremely well organised and I put a lot of (.) eh, eh emphasis on planning

335   Brendan: Okay

336   Paul: Okay Eh here's something about planning, if you have a business and you don't have a plan, you will fail

337   Brendan: Right

338   Paul: I guarantee you (.) I guarantee ya (.) If you have a business (.)and I don't care how bad the situation is, I don't care, give me any business, right, it could be in the <u>absolute shite</u>. Right. If you have time to plan, there's a way out

339   Brendan: Okay.

340   Paul: There's a way out. There's always a way out. Okay, <u>always</u>. Right. If you have a plan. Right?

341   Brendan: Yeah.

<u>Source:</u> Transcript from 22 minutes 45.1 seconds to 24 minutes 24.7 seconds of the audio record of an 87-minute interview between 'Paul' and Brendan.

Extract PB 10 sees a successful completion of the negotiation of a more active role in the interaction for Paul. This success results in Paul being able to effectively set the objectives of the interview (over Turns 322 to 327), with my passive agreement. Paul evokes the model of the report interview or even the Great Man interview (see the discussion of Table 3.3 above) as he negotiates a more active and authoritative position for himself. This negotiation was needed to allow the stimulated discourse to emerge more starkly; Paul can thus report authoritatively "of entrepreneurs or business people" (Turn 324). With his identity as entrepreneur and business person secured, Paul can reveal that he – now as presumably an acknowledged member of this very active and in-control group – is "extremely well organised" and puts a lot of emphasis on planning (Turn 332-334). This talk of planning is clearly a switch to strategy discourse – as was evident from the literature review, planning was part of strategy discourse from the start. Paul's negotiation of a more active role in the interview and the establishment of his authority as a businessman means he has overcome the difficulty of positioning himself as being a good (and so informative but normatively more passive) interviewee and expressing the power of a strategist who can be given "any business, right it could be in the absolute shite" and, given enough time to plan, will be able to find a way out (Turn 337). Paul now has a more secure warrant that he is entitled to speak authoritatively in the more analytical discourse of strategy, even with me as the interviewer who has presented myself as an expert in strategy. Paul is able to generalise about planning in Turn 340 when he declares authoritatively: "There's a way out. There's always a way out. Okay, always. Right. If you have a plan. Right?" This question from the interviewee is answered obediently by the interviewer with the required affirmative response (e.g. Rapley & Antaki, 1998: 605).

Extract PB 11 follows immediately from Extract PB 10.

Extract PB 11 from an interview between Paul and Brendan

342   Paul: I would spend probably about °twenty per cent of my time in planning°

343   Brendan: OK

344   Paul: So I would spend a day a week.

345   Brendan: That's quite a discipline isn't it

346   Paul: Yeah, yeah, but it's not. >It doesn't feel like it, [it

347   Brendan: Yer]

348   Paul: fee-< For me it's profitable.

349   Brendan: Right.

350   Paul: To do that. Right. So I'm <u>extremely</u> – an extreme emphasis on planning. Okay. The other thing I
       do (.) is I put a lot of emphasis on team development.

351   Brendan: Okay.

352   Paul: Okay. I probably spend about °twenty per cent of my time° team development. So hang on,
       you're saying, that's two days week.

353   Brendan: Yeah yeah yeah.

354   Paul: What do I do with the rest the time?

355   Brendan: Yeah yeah

356   Paul: Well, I don't work as °hard as some people would°

357   Brendan: Okay

358   Paul: Because, I've just had kids and

359   Brendan: Yeah yeah

360   Paul: I want to see them grow up & everything else & you know,I like the odd game of so golf as well.
       So ((inaudible))

361   Brendan: Em (laughs)

362   Paul: But ultimately where I try and get myself towards is a situation where <u>all I do</u> is deals.

363   Brendan: Okay.

364   Paul: That is <u>all I do</u>. Right, so the guys upstairs is selling advertising, the guys over here are
       organising events, and the guys are organising production.

365   Brendan: Em

366   Paul: Right. People are amazed °when they come in here as to how few people we have & how much
       we churn out°. They're absolutely gobsmacked. Right. <That the revenue per employee

367   Brendan: Em

368   Paul: in this company> is as high as any company I know

369   Brendan: Em

370   Paul: Right and the reason why we have that is because we're organised.

371   Brendan: Em

372   Paul: Is because our planning is <u>extremely</u> in touch. Em The <u>goal</u> setting is extremely important. Most
       people I speak to in business don't know what a goal is.

373   Brendan: Right.

374   Paul: Again, if you don't have goals, you won't succeed (.) Being goal-oriented is extremely important.
       And how one eh (.) <u>goes</u> about setting goals for oneself and how one goes about monitoring the
       progress of those goals

375   Brendan: Em

376   Paul : is extremely important

377   Brendan: Ah

<u>Source:</u> Transcript from 24 minutes 24.7 seconds to 26 minutes 12.8 seconds of the
audio record of the 87-minute interview between 'Paul' and Brendan.

In Extract PB 11 Paul continues the strategy talk with a confident exposition of the importance of planning. He reveals the secret in hushed tones that he spends "about °twenty per cent of my time in planning°" (Turn 342) and stresses that this is because "it's profitable" (Turn 348). Paul also stresses, again in hushed tones, that he values team development highly by reporting that he probably spends "about °twenty per cent of my time°"(Turn 352) on it. Both of these are very much strategy talk: planning and team development require the overview of strategy and both are talked about in a calculated accounting way (the percentage of time, the profitability).

The accountability of strategy is evident, too, in an anticipatory observation from Paul: "So hang on, you're saying, that's two days week" (Turn 352) and his anticipatory question "What do I do with the rest the time?" (Turn 354). In the light of the literature that showed both enterprise (e.g. Bygrave, 2004:5-6) and strategy (e.g. Clegg et al., 2004) to involve extremely dedicated *personae,* Paul's initial answer to his own question appears at first glance to be very much at odds with enterprise or strategy discourse. However, further investigation reveals that this is no serious departure from the dedicated element of strategy and enterprise. This initial answer is given in hushed tones: "Well, I don't work as °hard as some people would°" (Turn 356). To some extent this lack of hard work is immediately accounted for (and therefore perhaps made excusable) by the fact that Paul has "just had kids" (Turn 356). There is then a more jocular turn - as evidenced by my laughing response – in Turn 361 to Paul talking of liking "the odd game of golf" (Turn 360). Quickly, too, Paul introduces another activity he engages in, in fact an activity he wants to ultimately spend 100% of his time at, so that "all I do is deals" (Turn 360). Note the stress on 'all' in "all I do is deals" (Turn 360) and how this is compared to the other productive activities. The stress on 'all' is repeated: "That is all I do. Right, so the guys upstairs is selling advertising, the guys over here are organizing events, and the guys are organising production" (Turn 364). The claim that Paul does not "work as °hard as some people would°" (Turn 356) begins to be undermined. Even his liking of the leisurely game of golf might really be more to do with this productive activity of deal-making that is often associated with that game (e.g.Macnow, 1996). Furthermore, as Paul immediately explains, his focus on planning has led to amazing levels of productivity: "People are amazed °when they come in here as to how few people we have & how much we churn out°. They're absolutely gobsmacked." (Turn 366). Paul even supplies a very accountable measure, "<...the

revenue per employee ... ... in this company> is as high as any company I know" (Turns 366-368). Paul's (often whispered) claims not to work as hard as other people have therefore been systematically undermined – or at least sharply differentiated from any doubt about his dedication – by the context he creates around them that gives an account of his productive behavior. The claim not to work so much does not represent a departure from the dedication of strategy and enterprise talk but rather provides an occasion which to perform more strategy talk.

This very accountable strategy talk is continued with the stress on goals: "...The goal-setting is extremely important" (Turns 372). There is some move to more personal talk in: "...how one eh (.) goes about setting goals for oneself" (Turns 374) but this is also accompanied by the strategic accountability inherent in "how one goes about monitoring the progress of those goals" (Turns 374).

The move towards the personal aspects of goal-setting is furthered in Extract PB 12, which follows Extract PB 11 immediately.

Extract PB 12 from an interview between Paul and Brendan

378 Paul : And how one balances eh goal-setting in business with goal-setting outside of business. Because, hang on a minute, I mean we're asleep a third of the time, we're working a third of the time, what are the other third. Surely they can't be recovery?

379 Brendan: Right

380 Paul: Right

381 Brendan: [Right

382 Paul: There] has to be something to do with it. I think if you can get a good balance going, I think it's, I think

383 Brendan: Mm

384 Paul: it makes you more productive as a person

385 Brendan: And is, and is that something you always had?

386 Paul: No.

387 Brendan: That's, That's a bitter lesson kind of thing? Or eh, not a bitter [lesson but eh

388 Paul: No not a bitter] It's been a tremendous lesson. It's been- it's not, it's not enlightenment or anything

389 Brendan: Right, right, right

390 Paul: It's not a new religion or anything but you know, if I talk to successful people, guess what, this is what they all have in common.

391 Brendan: Right, yeah.

392 Paul: They don't look the same, they don't dress the same, they don't have the same kind of ethics.

393 Brendan: Right

394 Paul: Right, but you know what they all have? Is they're all very good at planning

395 Brendan: Mmm

396 Paul: they're all very well organised

397 Brendan: Mmm

398 Paul: and all extremely good at setting goals.

399 Brendan: Mmm, Mmm

400 Paul: Right, and monitoring those goals. And that's all they do. And remember it's only, it's only a slight edge

401 Brendan: Right. That's all you need

402 Paul: It's only a slight edge. °It's the tiniest little thing. I mean these° guys who run the hundred meters.

403 Brendan: Yea, yea

404 Paul: 9.95 seconds, forget about it.

405 Brendan: Right, right

406   Paul: You're not at the races, quite literally not at the races

407 Brendan: (laughs)

408 Paul: But if you were like you know, two hundredths better than that, you know you're the world champion.

409 Brendan: OK

410 Paul: Now business is slightly more, you know, complicated a person running a hundred meters. But it really is only a slight edge in terms of the individuals who comprise of that business- industry -comprise the business sector. The people who do well invariably are people who plan or people who have good people around them. Right. I know people who've set goals and you know eh, track those goals

In Extract PB 12 Paul expands the extreme importance of goal-setting and monitoring (Turns 374-377, Extract PB11 above) beyond the work arena into "how one balances eh goal-setting in business with goal-setting outside of business" (Turns 374). This is quickly justified in quite economistic productivity terms: "if you can get a good balance going... it makes you more productive as a person" (Turns 382-384). This has "been a tremendous lesson" (Turn 388). This lesson is "not enlightenment or anything ... It's not a new religion or anything but" (Turns 388-390). It may not be a religion but Paul does state it with certainty and conviction: "you know, if I talk to successful people, guess what, this is what they all have in common" (Turn 390). There is then what rhetoricians call an anaphoric tricolon of "They don't", giving Paul's talk the flavour of an inspirational speech: "They don't look the same, they don't dress the same, they don't have the same kind of ethics... ... Right, but you know what they all have? Is they're all very good at planning... ...they're all very well organised... ... and all extremely good at setting goals... ... and monitoring those goals" (Turn 392). In the same style, there is a punching-out of the elements of planning: being 'organised', 'setting goals' and 'monitoring', each of which the other diverse group of successful people are very or extremely good at: "right, but you know what they all have? Is they're all very good at planning... ...they're all very well organised... ... and all extremely good at setting goals... ... and monitoring those goals" (Turns 394-400). Paul asserts that this organisation, this goal-setting and this goal-monitoring makes the small but vital difference: "...only, it's only a slight edge" (Turn 400). To this I provide an indication that I share the same faith: "Right. That's all you need" (Turn 401). Paul introduces the market as testimony to this secret of success that he likens to a race (Turn 410) in which, as he whispers, "°It's the tiniest little thing...°" (Turns 402) that makes the difference between success and failure. This backs his firm statement that "...The people who do well invariably are people who plan or people who have good people around them..." (Turn 410).

After Extract PB12 there is a segment of about six minutes that is not displayed here as it repeats a lot of what goes on in the last two extracts or in Extract PB13 below – for example, the importance of planning and the idea of having a *modus operandi* for the business. I also attempt to link the wisdom Paul has learned to his earlier-mentioned period of bad health, but he does not really take this up. However, he does talk briefly about learning as a motivator for him in response to my

introduction of learning. He also details much of how and where he does his planning as well as mentioning many identifiable business details.

Extract PB 13 from an interview between Paul and Brendan

483 Paul: … What we've developed there basically is a franchise.

484 Brendan: Right.

485 Paul: Right. Where, and this is an other part of strategic thinking

486 Brendan: Okay

487 Paul: Right. We think about it in terms of ring-fencing

488 Brendan: Okay, Right

489 Paul: Right. So if we take the stakeholders that comprise the financial services industry, we've got consumers who buy financial products, we've got suppliers who sell financial products and then we have the in-betweens.

490 Brendan: Okay

491 Paul: We have people like the associations and the trade bodies

492 Brendan: mmm

493 Paul: and the stock exchange and the government and you know all of the bleeding hearts

494 Brendan: mmm

495 Paul: that sort of make up, you know, the financial services industry. We want to put a ring fence around that. right, what are we going to provide for this community? Right, we're going provide them with a magazine, tick,

496 Brendan: Right

497 Paul: an exhibition, tick, and an awards, tick.

498 Brendan: Right.

499 Paul: So the exhibition will take care of the consumers, and that's our strategy there

500 Brendan: OK

501 Paul: The ((brand name)) awards will take care of the trade, and that's our strategy there (.) That franchise is worth about a million euro a year.

502 Brendan: Right.

503 Paul: That's it in its developed state. Right. I think that that's far more saleable

<u>Source:</u> Transcript from 34 minutes 12.8 seconds to 35 minutes 16.8 seconds of the audio record of an 87- minute interview between 'Paul' and Brendan conducted on 29th June, 2004.

In Extract PB 13, Paul outlines his strategy model for the growth markets he want to operate. In illustrating it, he refers to one particular market where he says that "What we've developed there is basically a franchise" (Turn 483). Paul is explicitly addressing his strategic thinking in his sector (Turn 485). He uses the term 'ring-fencing' to describe his strategic thinking. Ring-fence is an interesting word as its first recorded use is in the Enclosure Act of 1769 – a time when the property rights of commons land were being assigned to individuals (Simpson, 2007). Ring-fencing also has the sense of collecting a bunch of (perhaps disparate) entities and separating them from the rest of the world. This latter sense is used a lot in finance to mean funds that

are reserved for a particular purpose. There is also sense of security, safety and even stability behind a completely enclosing fence or barrier that protects one from a risky and changing world outside. Paul's use of ring-fence draws on all of these senses; in Turns 488-495 he lists all the components of the financial services industry (consumers, suppliers and the 'in-betweens'). Around this collection of entities he lists (in Turns 495-501) the fences that will encircle them into his new 'franchise' (Turn 501) and turn it into a developed thing: "That's it in its developed state" (Turn 503). We then have the economistic market justification for Paul's strategic thinking: ring-fencing makes the business "far more saleable" (Turn 503), the higher price meaning a higher value for the strategy.

Figure 5.3 below summarises the foregoing analysis.

Figure 5.3 Abstract of Extracts PB 1 to PB 13

Interviewee talk: Authenticity .	Passivity Modesty Luck

Common to Strategy & Enterprise talk: Holistic overview, Market values, Determination & dedication	Masterfulness

Enterprise
Creativity

Passion

Autonomy

Personal
Adversity & love
of change

Risk-taking

Patriotism

Strategy
Application

Pragmatism

Accountability

Planning

Ring-
fencing

Risk-avoiding

Selfishness

<u>**Key to symbols in Figure**</u>

𝔸 is endowed with a particular flavour in this interviewee's talk (see discussion of figure)

A An italicised A means A is treated as undesirable or unapproved of.

Item in blue means this item is an interpretation from the latest extracts of this interview.

| A | ⟷ | B | Means the A and B are in tension with one another |

| A | → | B | Means B belongs to the more general category of A |

| **A**
B
C | | Means B and C are characteristics of **A** |

<u>Source:</u> Abstracted by the author from interview between 'Paul' and Brendan.

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In Figure 5.3 above I repeat all elements of Figure 5.2 as the interview is a cumulative experience and many of the features I noted earlier repeat themselves in Extracts PB 7 to PB 13. Figure 5.2 can thus serve as a consolidated summary of the current interpretation of PB 1 to PB 13. From extracts PB 7 to PB 13, additional features can be interpreted. To make clear these additional elements arising from the interpretation of these later extracts I have highlighted them in blue in Figure 5.3. One new element noted is the tension between the passive positioning expected of the interviewee and that of the masterfulness expected in the strategy and enterprise talk. Paul's determination and dedication, common to both strategy and enterprise discourse, has been added despite his explicit declaration of not working as hard as other people. He may not be working himself to exhaustion but he is determined and dedicated in his commitment to his entrepreneurial projects. In these later extracts of PB 7 to PB 13, after establishing his enterprise and thus his business credentials, Paul also addresses more directly the strategic element, the element that had been stressed in my approach to Paul concerning the interview. In particular, Paul spends a lot of time talking about planning. This is linked in an oppositional way (note for example the contrast between openness to change and the protection of a ring-fence) to the idea of change and personal toughness gained through personal adversity, for such change and adversity can be handled through planning (e.g. Extract PB 10). The ideas of personal adversity, change and planning all seems to have a certainty in common in Paul's talk; they also seem for him to have strong implications for the character of people who embrace them. People without an experience of personal adversity would simply not be tough enough for Paul's company (see discussion of Extract PB8), while being good at planning was what successful people had in common (see interpretation of Extract PB12).

5.5 Others and the ultimate

Between Extract PB 13 and PB14, there is an unshown segment of about 25 seconds during which the idea of the saleability of the ring-fenced entities Paul has introduced is explained further.   What then happens, in Extract PB 14 below, is that Paul continues his strategy talk, focusing on the very strategic element of planning.

Extract PB 14 from an interview between Paul and Brendan

517   Paul: it's what I intended, but I mean it does. And I think that you know, also part of planning if you want to have an idea when you're planning, who's going to buy this, who's going to buy this thing off me I want to know when to sell it, when's my <u>out</u>?

518   Brendan: Right.

519   Paul: And I think with ((name of a financial magazine)). That, eh you know, everything is for sale all the time. Somebody walks in now today and said eh, you know I'll give you X for that magazine, I'll sell it,

520   Brendan: Right.

521   Paul: if the price is right. Versus, do I put in another two years' sweat into building the ((name of a financial magazine)) brand? Right will I get that money back? Yeah, I will.

522   Brendan: Okay right. It's not going unless you do yeah.

523   Paul: Okay I'll get the money back, definitely. Because the value of the franchise will have increased. I would, I would hope that, to give you an idea in terms of the multiples on that, I would hope that. Take the ((name of a financial magazine)) activity, as a franchise, I call it a franchise, it's not really a franchise. I would hope that we'd be able to do two things in the next three years.

524   Brendan: Mmm

525   Paul: We'd be able to em, develop the magazine into a monthly, build up a very good online community-type activity, perfect the ((name of a financial magazine)) show and ((name of a financial magazine)) awards and have that whole thing going the whole time. I think that I could rack it up to about two million euro in turnover. Right. I'd like to launch in Eastern Europe. Right. I'm over to China in November to look at that. But I think that three years time, that business should be, should be able to go on the market (.) for something in the region of between five to seven million, or something like that

526   Brendan: Can I just ask something about the Chinese one and the Eastern.   Is that in terms of investment opportunities or would it be consumer sales?

527   Paul: Oh, that's, that's look-see.

528   Brendan: Okay

529   Paul: That's look-see. I take one mad trip every year.

530   Brendan: Right, right.

531   Paul: Right and eh if I can. I didn't do one last year, I did one this year, I went to eh.. Where did I go this year Dick? Where was I? Hollywood

532   Dick: Hollywood

533   Brendan: ((laughs))

534   Paul: Oh ya, Hollywood, Hollywood and I went to Hollywood

535   Brendan: right

536   Paul:and I went to ((name of a city in the US)). I was gone for a week out of the office and as it happens we did some good business over there.

537   Brendan: right

538   Paul: We made some new friends. We're doing a joint venture with a company over there, in Dublin in April. So we got something alright.
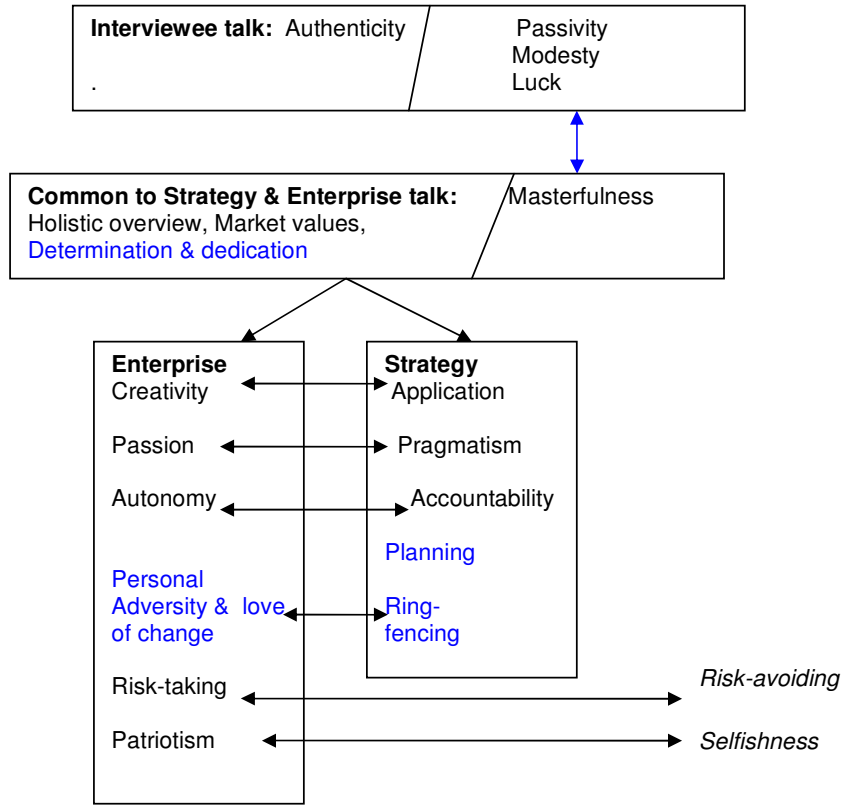
<u>Source:</u> Transcript from 35 minutes 41.5 seconds to 37 minutes 59.6 seconds of the audio record of an 87-minute interview between 'Paul' and Brendan.

At the very start of Extract PB 14, above, Paul illustrates that a core part of planning, other aspects of which he had stressed so much earlier, concerns the marketable and measurable: "And I think that you know, also part of planning if you want to have an idea when you're planning, who's going to buy this, who's going to buy this thing off me I want to know when to sell it, when's my <u>out</u>?" (Turn 517). This calculative nature of strategy is developed further as Paul declares: "That, eh you know, everything is for sale all the time" (Turn 519), provided of course "the price is right" (Turn 521). Turns 521-525 develop further some of the factors (e.g. amount of sweat equity to increase value, likelihood of getting further returns, potential for development of brand for Eastern Europe, etc) that might go into calculating whether or not to sell a business. Clearly, this underscores the economistic market measure of value mentioned above, and shows that Paul does not present himself here as merely taking risks in a careless way but as engaging in a strategic, calculative managing of those risks.

Immediately following on the calculative talk of Turns 517-523, there is a falling away of the very strategic talk of planning and a rise in the more exploratory and creative enterprise talk. In response to a query from me (Turn 526) on his trips to China and Eastern Europe, Paul says these are 'look-see' (Turn 527), repeated in Turn 529), in other words, casual reconnaissance trips and that he takes "one mad trip every year" (Turn 529). Here there is therefore a switch to things much less calculative; indeed, he calls on a staff member to help him remember where he went on his 'mad trip' most recently (Turn 533) and, in a reportedly most unplanned manner, "as it happens ... did some good business over there" and "made some new friends" (again Turn 534). This loose and playful talk of Turns 526-537 is enterprise talk that balances the more calculative element of the Turns 517-Turn 523.

Before leaving Extract PB 14, it is worth noting that one of the factors that Paul mentions when calculating whether or not to sell a brand is appraising the value of putting "in another two years' sweat into building" (again Turn 521). This assumption of a determined and solid dedication to the work required adds to the interpretation, illustrated in Figure 5.3 above, that being determined and dedicated is characteristic of both enterprise and strategy.

Between Extract PB 14 and Extract PB 15 there is an unpresented segment of about three minutes. This includes some repetition (see discussion of Extract PB 6 above) of how Paul's company now does more traditional media than new media, as

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well as short interactions with two other people: an equipment salesman and a member of Paul's office team who offers to bring cups of tea.

Extract PB 15 from an interview between Paul and Brendan

593   Brendan: Em so em, I think now in terms of one or two things that you said that I wanted to pick oh yeah in terms of, em. You've had various board of directors

594   Paul: Yeah.

595   Brendan: You've been members of boards of directors.

596   Paul: Yeah, yeah.

597   Brendan: How have those worked for you? Or have you found them useful

598   Paul: Yeah

599   Brendan: or a formality or?

600   Paul: Em (4)< I think that (.) em it's an area that I >continue to improve on

601   Brendan: Right.

602   Paul: Em I think you have to be (.) I th- I'm a very amiable guy. Right.

603   Brendan: Mm.

604   Paul <Right, I mean, I probably even made the wrong decision> Em several times where people I work with, people I go into business with

605   Brendan: Mm.

606   Paul: Right but the way my mind works, I think, is I'm prepared to give it a go.

607   Brendan: Right.

608   Paul: You know, try it out. I'm more you know `let's go and give it a go'

609   Brendan: Right.

610   Paul: and if that doesn't work, it doesn't work

611   Brendan: Right.

612   Paul: rather than not doing it at all. And em (.) <I have actually heard back from other people, em, it's important it's important to everyone in the world wor>- I think many people do care what people think

613   Brendan: ya, ya

614   Paul: You know it is a human trait, you know. And you know I tend to get on well with most people in the media industry, but there are some people that I wished that I'd never worked with.

615   Brendan: Yes, yeah

Source: Transcript from 41 minutes 12.8 seconds to 42 minutes 33.5 seconds of the audio record of an 87-minute interview between 'Paul' and Brendan.

Extract PB 15 (above) and Extract PB 16 (below) both come from a rather long topic (from 41 minutes 13 seconds to 52 minutes 42 seconds) in the interview about working with other directors and shareholders. This issue seems important to me in the interview as I keep probing Paul on the topic. In this segment, shareholders and other directors seems to constitute a different type of person – a partner – compared with members of his team.

Extract PB 15, as noted, begins after some interactions with others (a visiting salesman and a member of staff) and, as the interview settles down to be just a dyadic

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interaction again, I ask about Paul's experience with boards of directors and whether or not he has found them useful (Turns 593-599). As Paul responds to this question there is much hesitancy; notice the general slowness of the turn and the four-second delay before he completes Turn 600: "Em (4)< I think that (.) em it's an area that I >continue to improve on". Such hesitancies or cruces (Fairclough, 1992a:230) tend to point to an area that seems to be troubling. Indeed, this is where Paul can "continue to improve" (Turn 600) and an area where he admits: "Right, I mean, I probably even made the wrong decision. Em several times where people I work with, people I go into business with" (Turn 604), though this mistake is put down to his preparedness "to give it a go" (Turn 606) and he's prepared to "try it out. I'm more you know `let's go and give it a go'" (Turn 608). Thus his incorrect choice has a positive side in that it is a warrant of his identity as a risk-taker, though we have seen Paul as risk-manager above.

There seems to be another cruce in Turn 612; notice the hesitancy in Paul's admitting that he cares what other people think: "And em (.) <I have actually heard back from other people, em, it's important it's important to everyone in the world wor- I think many people do care what people think>" (Turn 612). This hesitancy can be seen in the repetitions (it's important, wor-), the slowness of the speech and the depersonalisation ('many people care' rather than 'I care'). In the next turn, referring to this care about what others think, he declares "You know it is a human trait, you know" (Turn 614). This hesitancy may be explained by modesty since he has "heard back from other people" something, perhaps, that flatters him. Another explanation might be that Paul has to balance his identity as entrepreneur (autonomous and so unaccountable and not caring of other's opinions) with working with partners where issues of accountability, transparency and reputation are important. This later, perhaps additional rather than alternative, explanation is given further support as we examine Extract PB 16 below that follows immediately on Extract PB15.

Extract PB 16 from an interview between Paul and Brendan

616 Paul: And (.) em I think what gets me (.) is that, em (.) it doesn't have to be like that

617 Brendan: Right.

618 Paul: It doesn't have to be like that. I think ultimately it's about setting expectations for people that you work with

619 Brendan: Mm.

620 Paul: But there's some people that, em, are just <u>fucking</u> greedy

621 Brendan: Mm.

622 Paul: you know malicious

623 Brendan: ya, ya

624 Paul: em they have chips on their shoulder I'm thinking of someone when I say that.

625 Brendan: Mm.

626 Paul: <they are you know, untrustworthy and they have a difficulty I think in being able to (.) eh, you know, maintain a <u>friendship</u>>

627 Brendan: Mm.

628 Paul: really as well as a partnership. I think, when you get into business with somebody, I mean I would rather work with friends rather

629 Brendan: Yeah

630 Paul: than work with enemies. Yea I'd rather know where I stand and I think that some people <u>differ</u> in that respect, they feel that if they get too close, then certain decisions become difficult.

631 Brendan: Right.

632 Paul: Well I think that's, that's a negative.

633 Brendan: Right.

634 Paul: I think that's a negative and maybe I'll learn differently in the future and then I'll stand to be corrected, if you like on that one. But em (.) people I've worked with so far, I mean I've probably had, let me see, one (.)I've certainly had every combination of shareholding in companies that I've worked in. From 100% to 0%

635 Brendan: Right.

636 Paul: And I had 20% of it, 30, 50 or 51 and 70 and 80. So I've had every, every combination. Em (.) I don't mind eh, what level of shareholding it is, <as long as the reward matches the risk>

<u>Source:</u> Transcript from 42 minutes 33.5 seconds to 44 minutes 19.1 seconds of the audio record of an 87-minute interview between 'Paul' and Brendan.

Paul, referring to the people he wished he had never worked with (Turn 614, Extract PB 15), opens Extract PB 16 by remark that it doesn't have to be like that (Turn 616). Despite the difficulty concerning just some people, Paul retains responsibility: "I think ultimately it's about setting expectations for people that you work with" (Turn 618). This maintenance of the high internal locus of control is typical of both strategy (e.g. Hodgkinson & Sparrow, 2002: 197-203) and enterprise (e.g. Deakins, 1996) discourse, although the 'setting of expectations' implies more strategic accountability. Working with some people, it seems, is difficult: "But there's some people that, em, are just fucking greedy" (Turn 620), "you know, malicious" (Turn 622) and are "untrustworthy and they have a difficulty I think being able to (.) eh, you know maintain a friendship ... … really as well as a partnership. I think when you get into business with

somebody..." (Turn 626-628). These difficult-to-work-with people seem to be from the class of fellow directors and shareholders which Paul identifies as 'partners'. These partners remain anonymous and generalised here; the closest we get to a specific is in Turn 624 when Paul says: "I'm thinking of someone when I say that". Partners seem different from team members or plain employees of the company. Paul would "rather work with friends... ...than work with enemies" (Turns 628-630). Turns 630-634 see Paul construct his view that working with friends is something he prefers but that others (Turn 630) wrongly (see 'that's a negative' in Turn 632 and again in 634) have difficulty with. Paul constructs a partnership in an enterprise as good not only in terms of making money but also in terms of moral character, and humanness in terms of personal development. It is interesting to note that, immediately after this discussion of the personal and humane side of enterprise, Paul (towards the end of Turn 634) switches to the more calculating aspects of business: " ... I've certainly had every combination of shareholding in companies that I've worked in. From 100% to 0%." Turn 636 completes the transition to the calculative and quantitative: "And I had 20% of it, 30, 50 or 51 and 70 and 80. So I've had every, every combination. Em (.) I don't mind eh, what level of shareholding it is, <as long as the reward matches the risk>". The last phrase "<as long as the reward matches the risk>" of Turn 604 is said particularly slowly, which stresses the importance of this calculation. This switching from talk of friendship to the impersonality of the measured adds strength to the view (see discussion of Extract PB 15 above) that what we are dealing with in these extracts is a balancing of the individual and autonomous nature of enterprise (partnership, friendship) with the more corporate and accountable ('it's about setting expectations', percentages of ownership and reward) nature of strategy. We also see that Paul is not only talking about entrepreneurial risk-taking but also about strategic risk-managing, in that he calculates the risk and manages the expectations of those he deals with.

There is a gap between Extract PB16 and PB17 of nearly a minute and half that is not presented. During this gap Paul begins to discuss the issues of working with difficult people but gets a phone call. Though he deals briefly with this phone call, the interruption means he begins Extract 17 repeating some of the work he did immediately before the phone call.

Extract PB 17 from an interview between Paul and Brendan

654 Paul: Eh, I think people should err on the side of caution when it comes to doing that. Em and I think that ultimately what you're looking for in a partnership, I have some, you know ((phone rings)) I've, I've, I've one excellent partnership at the moment, which has got legs and legs and legs. ((Answers phone)) Hi can I call you back, is that okay? Alright, thanks. Yeah that's right, I need to talk to you about that. Yeah ((finishes phone call)) Em I've had some excellent partnerships over the years, I've gone to, eh, I've had some bad ones too

655 Brendan: Mm.

656 Paul: Em, I think that, what I have seen about working in Ireland, and I don't think it's necessarily just an Irish thing, I think it's em, eh, is that, that people can get very silly and very stupid when, em a great sum of money is involved

657 Brendan: Mm

658 Paul: Or they feel they are going to get fucked. They can get very, very stupid. And I think people are very quick to throw lawyers at problems, when they don't have to.

659 Brendan: Mm.

660 Paul: Eh I think people are, eh, you know, can be very eh, you know malicious.

661 Brendan: Mm.

662 Paul: ..at times as well. This is, it's just life, you know.

663 Brendan: Mm

664 Paul: But you know one of the lessons, I mean forget all the negatives, but eh the positives are that, you know that: (A) It's very, very difficult to run a company without people.

665 Brendan: Right. (Laugh)

666 Paul: I think the word company means people.

667 Brendan: Right, right. (Laugh)

668 Paul: Em, that's very difficult, so I think that eh, you have to be very eh, focused on that. Em after all, you know, it's one thing picking a team, it's another thing empowering that team

669 Brendan: Mm

670 Paul: to do what it is that the company requires them to do.

671 Brendan: Mm

672 Paul: Em, I'm rambling a little bit here Brendan.

673 Brendan: No, no I like you rambling, because it's gets me some eh, some good ideas. I know it's more difficult for the interviewee, if you like.

674 Paul: I think, in summary just in terms of working in partnership. I think that partnerships are important, I think that working with other companies, I think em that the risk should, the reward should always represent the risk that people take. Em, I would be very, em, careful about working with friends and family

675 Brendan: Mm

676 Paul: I think that em, you have to, you have to basically eh operate on the basis that ` what happens if it doesn't work?'

677 Brendan: Right.

678 Paul: Right. So plan to fail, is an interesting idiom thing to threw in. Plan to fail. People plan the businesses to succeed, but plan to fail as well. What happens if you get a fail? How are we going to cover that? You know

<u>Source:</u> Transcript from 45 minutes 44.3 seconds to 48 minutes 28.8 seconds of the audio record of an 87-minute interview between 'Paul' and Brendan.

In Turn 654, Paul mentions that "Em I've had some excellent partnerships over the years, I've gone to, eh, I've had some bad ones too". Even a specific excellent partnership "which has got legs and legs and legs" (Turn 654) remains anonymous. Again Paul

describes how "people can get very silly and very stupid when, em a great sum of money is involved" (Turn 656) "Or they feel they are going to get fucked. They can get very, very stupid. And I think people are very quick to throw lawyers at problems, when they don't have to" (Turn 658) and "people are, eh, you know, can be very eh, you know malicious" (Turn 660). In Turns 664 to 670, he switches tone and tries to "forget all the negatives" as it is "very difficult to run a company without people". The kind of people now being talked about are team members rather than partners: "it's one thing picking a team, it's another thing empowering that team … … to do what it is that the company requires them to do" (Turns 668-670). The move from individuals to the corporate here is done in a very dense way. It is clear that, while such team individual members may be 'empowered', they are so empowered to do what the company as now a separate corporate entity requires of them and certainly don't have the status of partners. Notice too that we have here for the third time (see analysis of Turn 231, Extract PB 8 and Turn 285, Extract PB 9) an occasion where, at a time when employees are being discussed, Paul raises a meta-discourse issue (Turn 672's "I'm rambling a bit here Brendan"). In the light of Fairclough's (1992a:230) observation on cruces, employees seem to be an area of difficulty in Paul's talk. In Turn 674, he returns to talk about partners: "I think that partnerships are important, I think that working with other companies, I think em that the risk should, the reward should always represent the risk that people take". Notice how 'partners' are put together with 'other companies'. For working with such partners you need to "Plan to fail. People plan the businesses to succeed, but plan to fail as well. What happens if you get a fail? How are we going to cover that?" (Turn 678).

Between Extract PB 17 and Extract PB 18, there is an unshown segment of a little over six minutes. During this segment, I ask Paul about a particular one of the directors he has listed for one of his companies. Unusually for this sector, I did not know of that individual so we spent some time talking about him. Furthermore, since that director was leaving the company, Paul spent some time talking about how he finishes his business relationships both when there is success and when there is failure. Thus, in a ,sense Paul was reinforcing the idea of planning to fail and of planning in general that has also been dealt with in Extract PB 17 and earlier extracts.

Extract PB 18 from an interview between Paul and Brendan

748 Paul:You know, but again it's, you know, I had a plan. And the point I was making to you earlier on that em, you kno,< call it a discipline or modus operandi or whatever, the planning is extremely important.>

749 Brendan: And you, you tend to actually need time alone to do your thinking?

750 Paul: Yeah,& sometimes with the team, sometimes I do think with the team. > This morning we met at 8 o'clock for 2 hours, every Tuesday & Wednesday morning, this week it's Tuesday next week it's Wednesday.<

751 Brendan: This is with all [nine or↑

752 Paul: Yeah] >Yeah we have, we have, we have our planning meeting in the diary until

753 Brendan: Okay.

754 Paul: 'til 20th July. So I can tell you at 8 o'clock on the 20th July who'll be at the meeting & what we'll be talking < about

755 Brendan: Okay.

756 Paul: Down to that detail.

757 Brendan: Right.

758 Paul: And they know it too

759 Brendan: So em, and that, they're monthly are they?

760 Paul: Weekly, 8 o'clock every Wednesday morning.

761 Brendan: Right.

762 Paul: >Two hours. No phone calls, nothing. How are we doing? Every aspect of the business, [fifteen minutes for each part of it<

763 Brendan: Okay] so quite structured.

764 Paul: Ya. ((aside to one of the team)) Hey Lisa! Hey Lisa! do you have a copy of that agenda from this meeting this morning?

765 Lisa: Yeah.

766 Paul: Is it handy?

767 Lisa: Em

768 Alexa: I can get it, don't worry.

769 Paul: Yeah, Alexa will you give us a copy?

770 Alexa: Yeah

771 Paul: Cheers

772 Brendan: And em, I mean, you still you have, you have a lot of input from people there

773 Paul: Yeah

774 Brendan: Do you tend to talk business at home, do you tend to talk it with kind of older friends or?

775 Paul: Sometimes yeah. I think that is important to It's good to have sounding boards.

776 Brendan: Right, yeah.

777 Paul: It's good to have people like that who you can feel you can open up to.((to Alexa)) Thanks

778 Brendan: Right, yeah.

779 Paul: And eh, because you know, a lot of people clam up. You know,& worry about stuff & ((he is handed a paper)) eh cheers This is eh, basically this morning.>Fifteen-minute segments between 8 & 10, actions, production of our events, sales, discussion of finance, cash flow, ((sectoral awards)), close of meeting.<

780 Brendan: Okay, so you've quite a structured.

781 Paul: Yeah, very and these guys take their turns to chair it

Source: Transcript from 52 minutes 42.8 seconds to 54 minutes 40.6 seconds of the audio record of an 87-minute interview between 'Paul' and Brendan.

Soon after finishing talking about working with partners, Paul, in the context of stressing the importance of planning, talks of the planning meeting he holds with the 'Team'. In contrast with the talk of interacting with 'partners' and earlier talk of his employees, he is now much more fluent; Turns 750-754, and Turn 762 are particularly rapid in contrast to some turns (600, 604 and 612) of Extract PB 15. The language here is full of detail: the weekly meeting is at 8am Tuesday and Wednesday (Turn 750). This very planning-orientated and planned meeting (Turn 752-754) has a definite agenda: "Two hours. No phone calls, nothing. How are we doing? Every aspect of the business, [fifteen minutes for each part of it" (Turn 762). While talking about those he classed as 'partners', Paul's talk lacked details, whereas here he can conveniently and does go into great detail about his interactions with 'the team', even illustrating his interaction with them by drawing them into the interview. Of course, the presence of the team at the site of the interview means this illustration of interaction is possible with them, whereas the absence from the interview site of any partners meant that option was impossible for partners. Nevertheless, Paul elaborates much more about his interactions with the 'guys' (Turn 781) on his team than he does about those with the people he classes as partners. Also, at this point in the interview, no questions are raised about the conduct of the interview as he talks easily of the team. In fact, Paul has become clearly part of the team from Turn 750 where he moves from the individualistic – "I do think with the team" – to the corporate: "we met this morning". For the rest of the extract, the collective language of strategy (Crouch & Basch, 1997) is more dominant than the entrepreneurial and individualistic 'I' and 'my' words. Unusually in this interview, employees seem to be easier to talk about for Paul. It is noteworthy that in this segment Paul's employees are here being talked of as part of a planning process, a theme that Paul is fluent in even if here it takes a more collective form than his talk elsewhere in the interview. This contrasts with two (Turn 231, Extract PB 8 and Turn 670, Extract PB 17) of the three previous troubled occasions where his talk of employees focused on the interaction of their individual motivations and what the company requires. The third troubled extract about employees (Turn 285, Extract PB 9) was when I asked about getting a new managing director to follow one that had been less than successful.

Between Extracts PB18 and PB19, there is a gap of about 13 minutes. During this time I asked some questions about the detail of the ownership of the companies

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Paul was involved in and the purposes of setting up ownership in the manner he did. This clearly involved a lot of detail. This meant that the language was plainly descriptive and its presentation here would risk Paul's anonymity. I also asked Paul about some consultancy work he had done but this discussion is not presented as the discourse of the need and usefulness of planning that it contains has been analysed in detail already in other extracts.   During this segment omitted from presentation, there was also a repeat of what was happening earlier in Extract PB 6: a discussion of Paul's passionate and patriotic interest in digital media but the failure of public institutions to deliver on the promised vision.

Extract PB 19 from an interview between Paul and Brendan

940   Brendan: I suppose, it's it's a general thing that I come across, that em, I talk to quite a few (.) people like yourself em

941   Paul: Yep

942   Brendan: (.) and I found them downplaying the intellectual difficulty of it Em, in terms of saying look, it is simple you, once you have a clear vision it's simple. Eh, and yet at the [same time ya

943   Paul: But Clear vision] it is important that used the words clear and the word vision in the same sentence there you're absolutely right. Eh you've <u>got</u> to be able, you've got to be able to visualise it. You've got to be able to see it

944   Brendan: But getting that vision is damn hard, I think?

945   Paul: No, no I mean not for everybody. Em but you know, I think everybody has one vision in them.

946   Brendan: Right.

947   Paul: Em, I think courage

948   Brendan: Mm

949   Paul:it mean it takes a lot of courage

950   Brendan: Mm

951   Paul: em and I think it takes em (.) planning obviously.   I think it takes- Fran Rooney has eh, a great line which is eh, you know, you need three things, you need people, cash and plans.

952   Brendan: Mm

953   Paul: And that's a very, very simple way to look at it

954   Brendan: Right

955   Paul: but he's absolutely right. And I can guarantee you that if Fran Rooney is down in the FAI now and saying the same thing ' we need a fucking plan, we need'

956   Brendan: Right (Laugh)

957   Paul: Em, so that's a very simple way of looking at it, but it's absolutely right. Em, an idea, most ideas people have just come to nothing. You know I'd say probably 95/99% of them come to nothing.You know (.) <em every idea that turns into a success,

958   Brendan: Mm

959   Paul: has got you know something in common. And that is that it has a person driving that idea> (.) who (.) who it's not a question of belief, it's, it's above that↑

960   Brendan: Mm

961   Paul: It's a different level. It's knowledge. It's absolute one hundred per cent knowledge. That that's what that's going to be. Right. So with ((name of financial)) magazine.

962   Brendan: Mm

963   Paul: Right so I knew that ((name of financial)) magazine would look like the ((name of financial)) magazine before I started work on it. I believed it looked like that, I knew it would.

964   Brendan: Okay

965   Paul: Right, and I think that, you know, being able to (.) close the gap right between that vision and where you're at now, work backwards.

966   Brendan: Right

967   Paul: Start, did you ever hear that phrase 'Start with the end in mind'?

968   Brendan: Yes 'Start with the end in mind'

940   Paul: Ya

<u>Source:</u> Transcript from 67 minutes 45.8 seconds to 70 minutes 5.1 seconds of the audio record of an 87-minute interview between 'Paul' and Brendan.

At the start of Extract PB 19, in Turns 940-942, I ask Paul about something that is a bit of a mystery to me: that "people like" himself downplay "the intellectual difficulty of it" by saying "once you have a clear vision" it is simple. Paul's answer focuses more on the issue of vision than intellectual difficulty as he, somewhat mystically,

observes: "Eh you've got to be able, you've got to be able to visualise it. You've got to be able to see it" (Turn 943). Whereas vision is sometimes seen as part of strategy, it is placed firmly in the entrepreneurial school of strategy (e.g. Mintzberg et al., 1998) and is seen as a core part of entrepreneurship (Brush, 2008:23). This mysticism is somewhat added to when in answer to my assertion that "getting that vision is damn hard" (Turn 944), Paul says: "No, no I mean not for everybody. Em but you know, I think everybody has one vision in them" (Turn 945). This idea of everybody having a natural entrepreneurial vision chimes with the view that entrepreneurship is a natural state of people who, despite great adversity, cannot be killed off (see, for example, Keat's 1991 discussion of Margaret Thatcher's view). Over the next few turns (951-957), Paul switches to the strategic talk of planning as being needed as a support to entrepreneurial vision. However, most ideas come to nothing, but "<em every idea that turns into a success ... ... has you know got something in common. And that is that it has a person driving that idea, who (.) who it's not a question of belief, it's, it's above that- ... ...It's a different level. It's knowledge. It's absolute one hundred per cent knowledge. That that's what that's going to be. Right" (Turns 957-961). Here Paul's vision is much clearer than the vision talked of by Bennis & Nanus (1985: 89) that requires leaders to articulate vision that "may be as vague as a dream or as precise as a goal or a mission statement". Paul's vision is much more specific than a mission statement: "knew that ((name of financial)) magazine would look like the ((name of financial)) magazine before I started work on it" (Turn 963). The clarity of the vision seems to add the necessary commitment and perhaps grants some mechanism for its achievement. Perhaps we are here in the realm of the American New Thought religious movement (Melton, 1984: 461) and its Law of Attraction, where a vision in the mind gives substance to the form of the thought (e.g. Wattles, 1996, orig 1910). While Paul is an experienced entrepreneur, such discourses are very popular as evidenced by the success of New Thought-influenced books such as *The Power of Positive Thinking* (Peale, 1966, orig.1952) and the recent success of *The Secret* (Byrne, 2006). This can be contrasted with the earlier praise and detailed description of planning. Again in Turns 965-967, Paul does switch back to create room for the importance of planning by talking about being able "to close the gap right between that vision and where you're at now, work backwards" (Turn 965) and by introducing the phrase "start with the end in mind" (Turn 967). The phrase "start with the end in mind" (Turn 967) is evidence of Paul's discourse sharing some of the Latter-Day

Saint-inspired philosophy of Covey (1999) as 'start with the end in mind' is one of his recommended seven habits.

In the following turns (not shown), Paul gives examples of where he gets these ideas and visions (he spends some time leafing through the newspaper each day) and reacting creatively to the news. While these turns were interesting, they don't add anything or take away anything from the talk of 'knowing the vision'. In the gap of about eight minutes between extracts PB 19 and PB20, Paul also takes a brief call on his mobile.

Extract PB 20 from an interview between Paul and Brendan

1062 Paul: Yeah] yeah it's a step, it's a step on the way. Em, I think that em (.) you know (.) keeping that vision in mind is very important. I think that keeping -oh yeah here's something else as well em little gem. Em negative people (.) don't succeed. I don't know any negative people who've succeeded. I think that negative people resentful (.) the analogy always is `ah I was going to do that myself but I couldn't be arsed, like you know'

1063 Brendan: ((laughs))

1064 Paul: You know there's a lot of that going on you know. Eh I think people who are entrepreneurial have to be positive all the time

1065 Brendan: Right.

1066 Paul: Regardless (.)

1067 Brendan: [And

1068 Paul: It] doesn't matter, it doesn't matter how bad it gets

1069 Brendan: Mmmm

1070 Paul: and believe me it can get (,) [° fucking bad°

1071 Brendan: >Yes I can imagine<]

1072 Paul: °it can get really, really bad° you know?

1073 Brendan: I mean, what that a struggle for you to learn or were you↑ (.)

1074 Paul: Yeah, absolutely, you don't, you don't, well I mean, some people probably learn it faster than I do.

1075 Brendan: Right.

1076 Paul: Right and I don't think I was a particularly a fast learner. But, em I think that realising that it doesn't make any difference if you're positive, if you're positive about something. .

1077 Brendan: Right it's

1078 Paul: It's not (.)

1079 Brendan: not [going make it worse

1080 Paul: not going make it worse] Exactly You might as well be positive about it.

1081 Brendan: Yeah (Laugh) you're not going to be punished for having a nice thought about it.

1082 Paul: No and eh I think in particular em, people buy positive people.

1083 Brendan: Right

1084 Paul: And (.) after a while these, people tell me that I'm always enthusiastic and you know I've got something to ya know

1085 Brendan: Right.

1086 Paul: to add to the party, you know whatever, which is great. …

Source: Transcript from 78 minutes 36.2 seconds to 80 minutes 9.6 seconds of the audio record of an 87-minute interview.

In Extract PB 20 above, we see Paul stress the importance of having a positive mental attitude. In Turn 1062, he describes the insight about the positivity as a "little gem". This description adds to the sense that enterprise (to which we will see, in Turn 1064, this little gem is particularly tied) has little esoteric golden secrets. Again we see some of the discourse of New Thought that might also be found in the works of such popular writers as Peale (1966; 1952); however, while there is still a flavour of New Thought to this section, on its own it is largely 'straightforwardly' positive in the sense in which business, including strategy and enterprise, tends to be positive (Nelson, 2000). Paul declares that "negative people don't succeed" (Turn 1062), offering as support that at least "I don't know any negative people who've succeeded." (Turn 1062). In Turn 1064 Paul explicitly ties the need to be positive to enterprise: "I think people who are entrepreneurial have to be positive all the time". He hints that this positivity is not the kind that denies the reality of bad situations: "It doesn't matter, it doesn't matter how bad it gets" in Turn 1068. Paul's acknowledgement of bad situations is deepened in Turn 1070 when he urges "believe me it can get (,) [° fucking bad°". His unusually whispered way of speaking continues the emphasis into Turn 1072: "°it can get really, really bad°". Paul adds more credibility to his version of positivity by talking of "realising that it doesn't make any difference if you're positive, if you're positive about something" (Turn 1076). Such thoughts are "not going make it worse. Exactly. You might as well be positive about it" (Turn 1080). To this skeptical argument for positivity, Paul adds a more familiar argument in business discourse: "I think in particular em, people buy positive people" (Turn 1082). In Turns 1062-1086, he ties this positivity to his own identity.

Between extracts PB 20 and PB 21 there is about a 14-second gap which when analysed seemed to be reinforcing the stress Paul was giving to the importance of being positive. Its analysis and its detail are therefore not shown here.

Extract PB 21 from an interview between Paul and Brendan

1096   Paul: And em that's that's ((remaining positive)) difficult sometimes, I mean you know I've been (.) em, I've worked with companies where people have been you know <u>suicidal</u>

1097   Brendan: Mm, mm (.) well things can get pretty nasty can't [they

1098   Paul: Yes] Things can get bad, but think about that. Think about the fact some people actually get it in their heads

1099   Brendan: Mm

1100   Paul: Right.   That this is only that this is only a business It's it's

1101   Brendan: ((sighs))

1102   Paul: You- know we started off this conversation by saying that this was just a commodity, this was just channel, just a vehicle

1103   Brendan: Yeah.

1104   Paul: Right, it's about you, it's about people.

1105   Brendan: Mmm.

1106   Paul: It's about you know (.) achieving your goals

1107   Brendan: Mmm.

1108   Paul: and it's about you know you decide what success is.

1109   Brendan: Mm.

1110   Paul: Don't let anybody else decide what success is, you have, you got to have your own interpretation of success

1111   Brendan: Mm.

1112   Paul: What does success look like? Well it looks like that. You know eh, and ultimately it's about freedom.

1113   Brendan: Mm.

1114   Paul: The more people you ask them `what do you really want?' ` I want a car'. `No, no want to you really want?'  `I want house,' they answer. `No what do you really, really want?'  `I want a house down the road'. `No, no listen to me, what do you actually really want?' They want, most people want freedom.

1115   Brendan: Right.

1116   Paul: Their free- financial freedom, freedom of choice, freedom for them to do <u>whatever</u> they want to do, <u>whenever</u> they want to do it, to <u>w- whoever</u> they want to do it to.

1117   Brendan: Mm.

1118   Paul: That's what most people want. That's what we, that's what we find.

1119   Brendan: Mm.

1120   Paul: Em, but em, when people get very, very down, and very upset and very stressed and they don't sleep, and they're ill

1121   Brendan: Mm.

1122   Paul: and they make themselves sick and people. When you've met people who want to kill themselves because their business is going into the toilet, or because they can't pay their debts, or because someone is going to sue them and because their name is going to be in the paper

1123   Brendan: Mm.

1124   Paul:Right. It's only <u>fucking</u> business.

Source: Transcript from 80 minutes 23.8 seconds to 82 minutes 0.9 seconds of the audio record of an 87-minute interview between 'Paul' and Brendan.

In Turn 1096, Paul recognises that remaining positive might be difficult and gives the benefits of his real-world experience: "I've worked with companies where people have been you know <u>suicidal</u>" (Turn 1096). In talking through this experience, Paul

shows much empathy for people in such situations and attempts to fashion a robust and realistic outlook that also maintains a discourse of freedom and self-control. Perhaps this difficult balancing of empathy with a stress on self-control might explain why Turns 1098-1110 are a little ambiguous in detail: Paul says "Think about the fact some people actually get it in their heads … … That this is only business…" (Turn 1098-1100). This ambiguity is worth considering in some detail and I think it worth on this occasion to explicitly present three of the interpretations considered.

The first interpretation of "Think about the fact some people actually get it in their heads … … That this is only business" (Turn 1098-1100) takes this statement literally. Paul is presenting as erroneous the view that business is merely business and not more important than that (e.g. not worth considering suicide for). This interpretation would be supported by his assertion that "it's about you, it's about people" (Turn 1104). In support of this interpretation (call it interpretation L for literal), Turn 1102's recall by Paul that "You, know we started off this conversation by saying that this was just a commodity, this was just channel, just a vehicle" could be seen as a mitigator of a perceived inconsistency with his current position.

Another interpretation (call it interpretation G for gist) of Turns 1098-110 is that Paul has haphazardly left out some words that would switch the meaning of Turns 1098-1100 so that they would read: "Think about the fact some people actually get it in their heads … <u>and don't see</u> That this is only business" (where the doubled-underlined <u>and don't see</u> have been inserted by me as a hypothesised haphazardly dropped switch). This interpretation would be more consistent with the rest of Paul's views on the issue, for example Turn 1124's declaration that "It's only fucking business". This latter interpretation is also more consistent with my understanding of the gist of the conversation as I recall it at the time – alas, my turns don't indicate my specific understanding. In fact it took me quite a few careful listenings to assure myself that a switch phrase such as "<u>and don't see</u>" was not on the recording.

I think there is a third interpretation (call it interpretation C for complicated or contextualised) that explains the actual words used in a better way than the two interpretations offered so far. Interpretation C accepts that Paul's overall construction is that businesses are just a commodity, a channel, just a vehicle whose success or failure should not be matters for contemplating suicide. Thus Turn 1124's assertion that "It's only fucking business". However in Turns 1096-1106 Paul is anxious to

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demonstrate "the fact some people actually get it ((some suicidal thoughts)) in their heads" (Turn 1098). Note the use of 'the fact' and 'actually' – words that stress the reality of this, as does the imperative 'think about it' (stated twice in Turn 1098). Paul shows his empathy for the importance of business to people by pointing out: "It's about you, it's about people" (Turn 1104) and "It's about you know achieving your goals" (Turn 1106). Ultimately business seems to be about each person and his/her goals. Now we can understand why people might treat mere vehicles, mere commodities as concerns of life and death – a failing business is about a person failing, a person not getting his/her goals. Interpretation C thus explains more of the data than interpretations L or G.

    With this C interpretation, we can also hear Paul recognising that the market business is an important measure and yet escaping the dangers of suicidal thinking through talking about the goals of the autonomous individual. Thus, while business is "about you ... ... It's about you know (.) achieving your goals" (Turn 1106), those goals are yours individually "...you decide what success is ... ... Don't let anybody else decide what success is, you have, you got to have your own interpretation of success" (Turns 1108-1110). While defining success is a matter for each individual, "ultimately it's about freedom" (Turn 1112). Paul argues that, while different individuals might say otherwise (initially at least), when the ultimate question and the ultimate answer are "... 'what do you actually really want?' They want, most people want freedom" (Turn 1114). This is their ultimate authentic want and Paul not only is being a good interviewee in revealing it (as his concern throughout the interview to get to what it is all about has revealed) but also shows that this autonomous and thus authentic individual is vital to enterprise. Paul has very skillfully promoted and recognised the importance of business – because it is about oneself, other people and one's goals – and tied it to the importance of individual choice and freedom: "...financial freedom, freedom of choice, freedom for them to do whatever they want to do, <u>whenever </u>they want to do it, to <u> w- whoever</u> they want to do it to" (Turn 1116). Note how Paul is using the classic rhetorical device of anaphoric trimoron to drive home his ideological point here. Even when he is talking of unhappy business situations where people become suicidal, notice how Paul maintains the active autonomous identity of those who   "... get very, very down, and very upset and very stressed and they don't sleep, and they're ill ... ... and they make themselves sick and people. When you've met people who want to kill themselves because their business is going into the toilet, or because they can't pay their debts, or because

someone is going to sue them and because their name is going to be in the paper" (Turn 1120-1122). These autonomous individuals don't, rather than can't, sleep. Notice, too, that they make themselves – rather than passively become – sick; that they *want* to kill themselves rather than saying they suffer passively from suicidal thoughts or feel they have no alternative. It is seemingly only after and at extreme proximity to such celebration of individual freedom – and presumably its corollary of individual responsibility – that Paul can make – which might, without his skilful preparation, be misunderstood as irresponsibility – the choice to declare: " Right. It is only <u>fucking</u> business" (Turn 1124). Immediately following Turn 1124, Extract PB 22 (see below) begins.

Extract PB 22 from an interview between Paul and Brendan

1125   Brendan: Right.
1126   Paul: D'you know? That is, it doesn't matter how bad it gets. I hope I'm not sort of walking- talking myself in to a self-fulfilling prophecy
1127   Brendan: ((laughs))
1128   Paul:it doesn't- sounds like I am,
1129   Brendan: Ya
1130   Paul: but it doesn't matter how bad it gets.
1131   Brendan: No (.) I think everybody in business has been through that
1132   Paul: If you have a plan If you have a plan there's a way out always(.) always(.)

Source: Transcript from 82 minutes 0.9 seconds to 82 minutes 16.5 seconds of the audio record of an 87-minute interview between 'Paul' and Brendan.

After what might be perceived as the irresponsible and negative talk of some of Extract PB 21 (e.g. "It is only <u>fucking</u> business" of Turn 1124), Paul from the start of Extract PB 22 quickly takes responsibility by remarking, with what I in the interview interpret as a somewhat humorous tone, "I hope I'm not sort of walking- talking myself in to a self-fulfilling prophecy" (Turn 1126). This remark, of course, chimes with the earlier talk (e.g. Turn 961, Extract PB 19) about the powerful nature of the individual who has had the absolute knowledge of a vision that drives its achievement. Paul returns to more responsible choices, declaring that "... it doesn't matter how bad it gets" (Turn 1130) a plan can come to rescue of the autonomous individual because "If you have a plan there's a way out always" (Turn 1132).

Figure 5.4 below summarises the foregoing analysis of Extracts PB 8 to PB 22 and includes with this the findings of earlier analysis of PB1 to PB6, and of PB 7 to PB 13.

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Figure 5.4 Abstract of Extracts PB 1 to PB 22
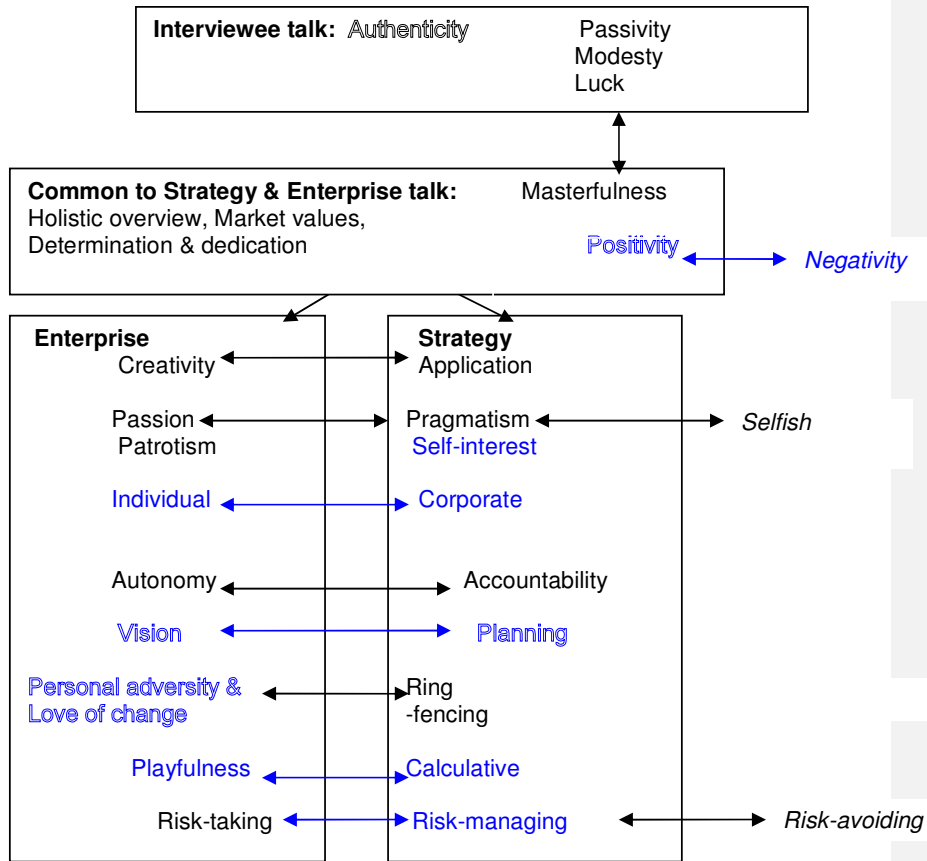
Interviewee talk: Authenticity	Passivity Modesty Luck

Common to Strategy & Enterprise talk: Masterfulness Holistic overview, Market values, Determination & dedication	Positivity ⟷ *Negativity*

Enterprise
Creativity

Strategy
Application

Passion ⟷ Pragmatism ⟷ *Selfish*
Patrotism   Self-interest

Individual ⟷ Corporate

Autonomy ⟷ Accountability

Vision ⟷ Planning

Personal adversity & ⟷ Ring
Love of change   -fencing

Playfulness ⟷ Calculative

Risk-taking ⟷ Risk-managing ⟷ *Risk-avoiding*

Key to symbols in Figure

A is endowed with a particular flavour in this interviewee's talk (see discussion of figure)

A An italicised A means A is treated as undesirable or unapproved of.

Item in blue means this item is an interpretation from the latest extracts of this interview.

A ⟷ B	Means the A and B are in tension with one another

A → B	Means B belongs to the more general category of A

A B C	Means B and C are characteristics of **A**
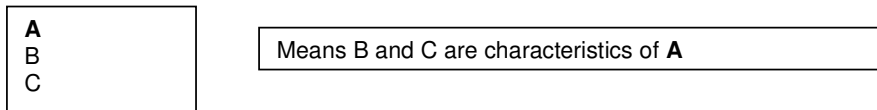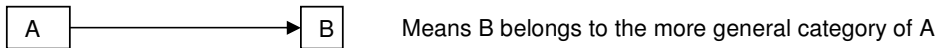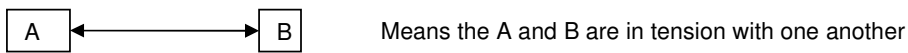
Source: Abstracted by the author from interview between 'Paul' and Brendan.

New elements from extracts PB 14 to PB 22 have been rendered in blue to show their more recent origin. Elements of Figures 5.2 and 5.3 have been repeated and rearranged if the later analysis of Extracts PB 13 to PB 22 and/or the overall analysis of the interview now available warranted it. Figure 5.4 then serves as a consolidated summary of the interpretation of PB 1 to PB 22. The upper box of Figure 5.4 contains the features of interviewee talk illustrated in the interview between Paul and me; in the various extracts Paul performed as a good interviewee, showing his talk to be authentic, willing to be passive in letting me lead the interview, illustrating modesty and showing the role of luck in his therefore more credible story. At times passivity, modesty and luck were at tension with the masterfulness – illustrated in Figure 5.4 as being a common characteristic of strategy and enterprise talk. Other common characteristics that occurred when strategy and enterprise were being performed were the demonstration of the importance of a holistic viewpoint, the ultimate valuation of things by the market, the importance of dedication and positivity. Positivity was clearly contrasted with negativity which lay outside and was unacceptable to Paul in his strategy, enterprise or interview talk. In separate boxes, headed by Enterprise in the left-hand box and Strategy in the right-hand box, are features peculiar to the performance of enterprise and strategy talk respectively. What was interesting about these features is that they seemed to occur in dilemmatic pairings when much talk about one – say, having entrepreneurial vision – would result in a rapid switch to a compensating discussion of its dilemmatic pair – in the case mentioned, the importance of the more strategic planning. While there were more extreme versions of some elements of some pairs (e.g. risk-avoidance), these extremes lay outside what was accepted as enterprise or strategy, were disapproved of and did not form part of the dilemmatic pairings that seemed central to the way enterprise and strategy were discussed. In Figure 5.4 I have highlighted certain words (authenticity, positivity, vision, planning, personal adversity & love of change), which had a New Thought flavour to them, that seemed to be of particular importance in how Paul talked about his business and also to the sincere and intense way he conducted the interview.

5.6 Conclusion

In this chapter I have identified in the interview with Paul the workings of three key well-structured discourses together with a fourth more diffuse discourse.

The three well-structured discourses are the strategy discourse, the enterprise discourse and the interview discourse. While aware of warnings of how interviews are performances in themselves, by writers such as Atkinson & Silverman (1997), the intricate way this operated was a surprise, particularly in the way I could use the performance of the interview as an interpretative resource. The aim of the analysis in this chapter was not simply to identify the discourses found but rather to examine *how* they operated. As Figure 5.4 above illustrates, much of this operation in the case of the interview with Paul has been explicated.

What I have illustrated is that, in the interview with Paul, the enterprise-strategy discourse can be seen as operating as a whole. Some elements of this whole operate in harmony with each other (masterfulness, holistic overview, market values, determination & dedication, and positivity), whereas other elements seem to belong to either enterprise or strategy but were linked in dilemmatic pairings (e.g. the creative element of enterprise is linked to the applicative element of strategy). When an enterprise element of a dilemmatic pairing rises to prominence, the strategy element seems to fall back and vice-versa. Additionally to the elements either commonly held or dilemmatically paired with enterprise-strategy talk, enterprise-strategy talk seemed to create disapproved elements such as negativity (counter to the commonalities of enterprise-discourse), being selfish or risk-avoiding. Thus 'lifers' seems to be a disapproved of, extreme strategy-like, element that has gone too far to remain within enterprise-strategy talk. In this interview with Paul, there seem to no equivalents of extreme disapproved enterprise-like elements.

As was pointed out in earlier chapters, it need not have been the case that enterprise and strategy discourse formed a unity through both commonality and dilemmatic pairing in the way found in this interview. Indeed, enterprise and strategy might have been linked in the manner that interviewee talk is linked to enterprise-strategy in this interview – i.e. interviewee talk forms a largely separate discourse composed of key elements such as authenticity, modesty, luck and passivity. Whereas there is a tension between modesty, luck and passivity of the interviewee on the one hand and the masterfulness of enterprise-strategy on the other, after some performance of these politenesses of interviewee talk, Paul is much more asserting of the dominant enterprise-strategy discourse's masterfulness. There is not the rising of one coinciding with the falling away of the other that we see between enterprise and

strategy elements that are in dilemmatic tension. There is some overlap between the authenticity required by the interview and the personal nature of adversity endured by the entrepreneur, but these seem connected loosely by a certain flavour rather than tightly linked together in the manner of the more harmonious elements (e.g. masterfulness) shared by enterprise and strategy.

There is a particular flavour linking the authenticity of the interview with the personal nature of some elements of enterprise in this interview. This flavour I name as New Thought discourse as it seems to draw so much on the New Thought American religious movements of the 19th and early 20th centuries. Its presence here was an empirical surprise to me. This New Thought discourse diffuses in a loose way through a limited number of elements of Paul's talk (authenticity, positivity, vision, planning and personal adversity and love of change). New Thought discourse does not structure Paul's talk in the way the Enterprise-Strategy discourse does, but rather seems to arise more in a haphazard way. For example, New Thought language does not really show up when Paul talks about the importance of being autonomous or being passionate, where those New Thought gurus (e.g. Wattles, 1996, orig 1910) did talk about these matters a lot.

Although presenting the analysis of this interview in a holistic way has been expensive in terms of space, the interrelations between elements of the interview that has thus been illustrated have made it worthwhile. The transparency afforded by following the LUCID-DA set of guiding principles, outlined when setting out to do this work, hopefully allows readers to satisfy themselves with respect to the empirical bases of the arguments presented.

In closing this chapter, then, we have now an abstraction of how discourses of enterprise and strategy were at work in one particular interview. We now move on to look again in a holistic way at their operation in another interview.

CHAPTER 6 THE INTERVIEW WITH UNA

6.1 Introduction

In this chapter I provide a detailed analysis of the second of the three interviews
selected for presentation. The interview analysed here is with 'Una'. Will the
relationship between enterprise and strategy discourse be the same in the interview
with Una as it was with Paul? Will the same features of the discourses be used? Will
the New Thought that surprised in Paul's talk occur once again?

The next section of this chapter gives an overview of the interview, including
a breakdown of the interview into the three parts for further analysis. The third, fourth
and fifth sections of this chapter then analyse these three parts of the interview in turn.
At the end of these sections, cumulative abstractions of how the discourses of strategy
and enterprise are deployed are given in graphic form in Figures 6.2, 6.4 and 6.5. In
the final section of this chapter a commentary is made on the operation of the
discourses throughout the interview.

6.2 Overview of the interview

Una is the founder and owner of a small firm. She and I had met each other previously
but were not well acquainted. An email sent to Una prior to the interview declared
that I was doing "a PhD on strategic thinking" that involved "unstructured interviews
with directors of small to medium-sized enterprises." The initial part of the interview
took place in a taxi that we took from Una's workplace to a bar where the interview
was completed.

Una had invited me to conduct the interview with her at the end of the working
day, so I called to her busy office in a prime central location at a pre-arranged 6pm.
Her office was small, open-plan and a bit cramped. I waited for about 10 minutes or
so while she finished a telephone call and tidied away some papers. Originally she
was hoping to do the interview by mobile phone on her walk home but agreed to see
me in a pub when I suggested I'd provide a taxi to save time. Una preferred a pub near
her home to a pub near her workplace as she did not want to be overheard by
businesses she dealt or competed with. The initial 17 minutes of the interview took
place in the taxi; the remaining 59 minutes were conducted in a quiet corner of a
neighbourhood pub. Una was concerned with confidentiality not only in her choice of

pub but also, before the interview, in questioning my relationships with other people in the business. I answered her questions as openly as I could, without breaching confidentiality. This seemed to be what Una needed to hear. She proceeded to be open and trusting throughout the rest of the interview. Una used her voice in lots of non-verbal expressions (as we can see from the transcript) and the atmosphere in the interview was one of friendly and intense engagement. This overall impression can be in the extracts analysed below.

The analysis of the extracts presented in the rest of this chapter constitute a little over three-fifths of the total recorded interview. The analysis of the remaining two-fifths of the interview is not presented here. Figure 6.1 below shows the 22 extracts analysed here in blue and shows the 13 segments of the interview whose analysis is omitted in red. The sequence in which the extract or segment occurred can be read from the horizontal axis, and the length of the extract or segment as a percentage of the total interview can be read from the vertical axis.

Figure 6.1 An overview of the interview between Una and Brendan
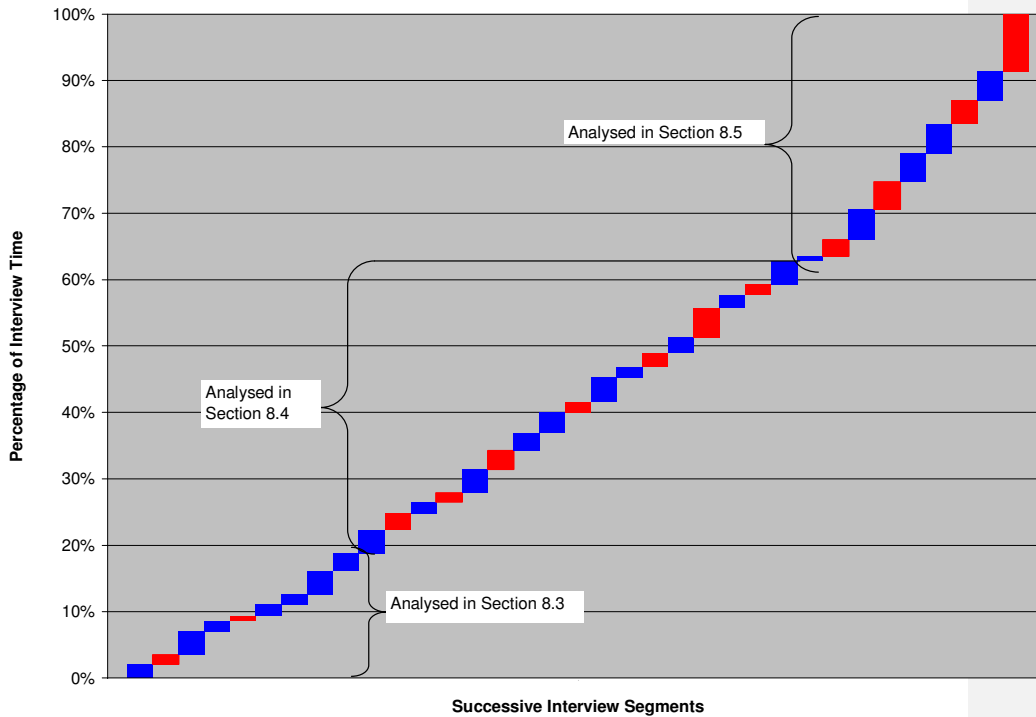
Legend　　■ Extract shown i.e. a segment analysed later in this chapter

　　　　　　■ Omission i.e. a segment the analysis of which is not shown

Source: Derived from transcript of the 76-minute interview between 'Una' and Brendan.

6.3 Introducing Una, the skilled craft journalist

Extract UB 1 below begins at the very start of the formal interview as I express my interest in strategy and ask Una how she arrived in her current situation.

Extract UB 1 from an interview between Una and Brendan

1   Brendan: That should do it. OK, Em well I suppose I just wanted to (.) as I say chat to you about your thinking about the strategy for your firm.
2   Una:Mmmm
3   Brendan: And maybe a good way to do that is is to kinda ask how do you arrive in the current situation that you are in - the kinda of position you are in
4   Una: I was a freelance journalist em I had worked em (.) in well I had done my degree in California and (.) when I came back to Ireland in '9 (.) 5 because I had worked in a business paper in Silicon Valley
5   Brendan: Right
6   Una: I kind of had, business papers there were approaching kind of thought that I knew about technology because I'd been working over there but I > I didn't really<
7   Brendan: Mmmm
8   Una: but I mean I, I contacted a whole bunch of publications and it was only that the technology that an that had kind of [came back to me
9   Brendan: Right, yeah.
10   Una: and I think] again because I'd been in Silicon Valley and I was at ((a prestigious University in USA)) and everything when um all the tech stuff was happening so we just got into, I got into writing about technology but when I was in college I was interested in any kind of explanatory journalism, eh stuff that <makes hard material> ex- understandable by normal people.
11   Brendan: Emm.
12   Una: And I think it was that, at that stage and that sentiment that drove me all the way through to where I am today
13   Brendan: Right, yeah.
14   Una: Because eh if I, if I hadn't of been doing this kind of journalism it might have been some other kind of explanatory journalism

<u>Source:</u> Transcript from the start of interview to 1 minute 34.4 seconds of audio record of 76-minute interview.

Turns 1 to Turn 14 are interesting in that Una performs a number of aspects of her identity. She begins by defining herself as having been a freelance journalist; this identification as a journalist is repeated throughout this extract and indeed the interview. While defining herself as a journalist Una also portrays a slightly 'adventurer'[8] aspect to her identity as she confides that she profited from a false impression that exaggerated her technology expertise: "business papers there were approaching kind of thought that I knew about technology because I'd been working over there but I > I didn't really<" (Turn 6). Admitting that she did not know much about technology adds a confessional element to the interview that conveys a feeling of authenticity, whereby Una is prepared to be appropriately modest. The false impression of her

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[8] I use the term 'adventurer' to capture a sense of an entrepreneurial person who undermines his or her status as entrepreneur by going too far in the enterprise qualities like risk-taking, informality and playfulness. The threat to their entrepreneurial status of such extremes comes from breaching some ethical barrier expected of a 'real' entrepreneur. Perhaps one could use words such as charlatan, chancer or trickster to capture the same sense. I have chosen 'adventurer' as it is sufficiently light in tone and it also chimes with the disapproving way Adam Smith used the term 'adventurer' (for a discussion of Smith's use of terms for the entrepreneur see Hébert & Link, 2006:37-40).

knowledge of technology that the newspapers have had is quickly explained as arising innocently on her behalf. She accounts for it by attributing it to her dedication in contacting "a whole bunch of publications and it was only that the technology that an that had kind of [came back to me" (Turn 8). Her dedication is also illustrated in her claim that it was the sentiment (towards explanatory journalism) that had driven her "all the way through to where I am today" (Turn 12). Luck – such as being "in Silicon Valley and I was at ((a prestigious University in USA)) and everything when um all the tech stuff was happening" (Turn 10) and the resulting, erroneous impression that she knew a lot about technology (Turn 6) – is acknowledged, as one would expect from a good interviewee (O'Rourke & Pitt, 2007). Una also asserts her masterfulness in declaring that her will won through because "if I hadn't of been doing this kind of journalism it might have been some other kind of explanatory journalism" (Turn 14). As we have discussed, masterfulness is a key attribute of both strategy and enterprise (Clegg et al., 2004:26; Nicholson & Anderson, 2005:161).

Extract UB 1 then presents Una as primarily a professional journalist but also demonstrates masterfulness and dedication that are key features that form a common base in enterprise-strategy discourse. There is also a hint of an adventurer element in her benefiting from the exaggerated impression of her technology knowledge.

Between the end of Extract UB 1 and the beginning of Extract UB 2, there is a segment of a little over a minute, not shown here, during which Una gives more detail of her career that would threaten her anonymity. She also stresses again that there's a lot of value in explanatory journalism that takes "material that's always badly explained and badly communicated and very important" (Turn 28, segment not shown).

Extract UB 2 from an interview between Una and Brendan

34   Una: I preferred the technology journalism and I was given some contact management software to play with by a friend of mine and it was a revelation to me at that time that you could put together a web site and not have to handwrite every page

35   Brendan: Yeah sure.

36   Una: that it would populate an archive and sort things and um, you know, have a rolling headlines on the

37   Brendan: Ah okay

38   Una: front page and everything. Um so that's how I started with TronCom and the business kind of

39   Brendan: Yeah and did that, was that an intimidating start for you? You had been a kind of employ-employee if you like, you were working as a journalist and you were going into being a journalist entrepreneur or manager or whatever you, business person(.)[was that

40   Una: I was] <u>never</u> of an employee anywhere, I was always on my own.

41   Brendan: Okay.

42   Una: Um and I, and I found that I worked well on my own and I didn't feel isolated working at home oth-some freelancers do

43   Brendan: Uh-huh.

44   Una: but what did feel strange was hiring another journalist to write stuff for <u>me</u>, for my own project because I had been used to hiring freelancers to write for other publications that I was editing

45   Brendan: Mm.

46   Una: as a freelance editor but what it was actually a journalist writing stuff for <u>me</u>

47   Brendan: Mm.

48   Una: I remember having a real, having just this brainwave thinking if the website is growing, people are looking for more news on the website and I have some people who are willing to <u>buy</u> this newsfeed from me, but I can't write it all myself. At the same time I was writ I was writing a lot of eh analyst reports for companies on their internet strategy

49   Brendan: Right, yeah.

50   Una: and making good money from that and I remember realising that I could take the money that I was earning doing this analysis and pay another journalist to write for the website.

51   Brendan: Right, yeah.

52   Una: And I had eh, I, I met a friend of mine, who's a journalist, in the Headline Bar, which we're going to go by I think, and said would you write a few stories a week for me for like £100 or something?

((Seven short turns are excluded to avoid identification of the company))

60   Una: But from the very beginning I want to make clear that, well what TronCom does is we publish a series of publications under our brand and under our clients' brand. So going back to that original consulting part of TronCom where I was writing strategy reports for people I was also doing one of the first email newsletters for a company in Ireland, for ((a prominent Irish company)), I was doing a printed publication about internet banking for ((a prominent Irish bank)), all that [corporate

61   Brendan: so they were licensing] the content?

62   Una: No - all original content for those people

63   Brendan: Okay.

64   Una: so corporate publications.

65   Brendan: Okay.

66   Una: From the very beginning TronCom has had those two divisions. We've- essentially we publish and we publish things under our own brand or under our clients' brands so those two strands have all, always moved along together.

<u>Source:</u> Transcript from 2 minutes 37.3 seconds to 5 minutes 21.7 seconds of audio record of 76-minute interview between 'Una' and Brendan.

        In Extract UB 2 above, Una demonstrates more aspects of the enterprise and strategy discourses. As with the extracts from the interview with Paul, enterprise talk seems to fall away when there is a switch to strategy discourse.

Extract UB 2 starts with Una attributing the start of her company (here named TronCom) to her being "given contact management software to play with" (Turn 34). This not only signals the creative, playful element of enterprise talk (Hjorth 2002: 65) but also illustrates Una's ability in being so casually able to grasp such technological skills. It also portrays an element of luck that makes Una's performance as interviewee authentic. In Turn 39, in an effort to give some space for Una to discuss any difficulties that she might have encountered in becoming a manager, I inadvertently but usefully stimulate Una to point out how autonomous she has been in her career when she declares :"I was] never of an employee anywhere, I was always on my own" (Turn 40). This is quite an assertive correction by Una: her statement starts before my turn finishes and she focuses on correcting the error which had been stated in any case in quite a mitigated way ("You had been a kind of employ- employee if you like, you were working as a journalist", Turn 40). Here Una is demonstrating an autonomy of the sort associated with enterprise (Down, 2006). The assertive way this is done is somewhat in tension with the passive position of being an interviewee (O'Rourke & Pitt, 2007). Una acknowledges as new the increase in responsibility that came with having her own company: "but what did feel strange was hiring another journalist to write stuff for me, for my own project because I had been used to hiring freelancers to write for other publications that I was editing (…) as a freelance editor but what it was actually a journalist writing stuff for me" (Turn 46). The fact of it being her company seems to make it more of her "own project" – she stresses her control (note how she emphasises and repeats 'me') – than talk of her roles as editor working for other companies.

In Turn 60 strategy talk seems to have displaced enterprise talk, as Una declares: "But from the very beginning I want to make clear that, well what TronCom does is we publish a series of publications under our brand and under our client's brand" (Turn 60). Here the company is very much emphasised as a separate corporate entity from Una the individual: the language moves from "I" to "We", from "my project" to "our brand". The company is referred to in the third person: "what TronCom does is" (Turn 60) and it possesses "divisions" (Turn 66). This reification of the company is what would expect from a strategy discourse that developed to provide legitimation for the professional manager (Knights & Morgan, 1991). By using this more strategic language, Una is balancing the personal and individualised way in which the company that had been

discussed in the earlier entrepreneurial talk of the extract. Una does this by portraying here the more formal strategic aspect of the company where some things were clear "from the very beginning" (note that this phrase is used both in Turn 60 and in Turn 66) and where the impersonal corporation is to the fore.

Extract UB 3 from an interview between Una and Brendan

67　Brendan: Right. Um and I mean the, you, so without kind of getting too specific is, which revenue streams are more important for you or?
68　Una: Oh well the corporate, the corporate makes more
69　Brendan: Is it, yeah
70　Una: than the, the news does but the news certainly pays for itself because we get good sponsorship and advertising revenue
71　Brendan: That's interesting, the advertising revenue is kind of, it had a bit of a- (.) in terms of the internet advertising, that was a bit troubled for a while wasn't it?
72　Una: Mm-mm.
73　Brendan: But it's settled down again now, I mean is, are you happy with the future there or?
74　Una: Eh
75　Brendan: Are[you just
76　Una:　　　　　Yes] We, we don't make enough out of advertising and sponsorship, in my opinion, because although we make okay money we need to be <u>selling</u> it a lot a harder. We're- It's so <u>sponsor-able</u>
77　Brendan: Right
78　Una: and there's a lot of more advertising dollars out there that we<u> could</u> be getting, we just don't have a dedicated salesperson on
79　Brendan: Okay
80　Una: Troncom, which is what we're going to try to do over the next few months we hope is hire our first sales person.
81　Brendan: Okay
82　Una:　It's a big growth spurt period for us because hiring two people in the space of six months after having hired nobody for,[you know
83　Brendan: For the tough years
84　Una: two years.]
85　Brendan: yeah, yeah

<u>Source:</u> Transcript from 5 minutes 21.7 seconds to 6 minutes 29.7 seconds of audio record of 76-minute interview between 'Una' and Brendan.

Extract UB 3 above follows directly from Extract UB 2. The strategic talk of the formal separation of the company from herself is continued and elaborated by Una. Notice how, at Turn 73, when I ask if she or they – it is ambiguous because I use 'you' which could be either second-person singular or plural – are happy with the performance in the online advertising division of TronCom, Una replies: "Yes] We, we don't make enough out of advertising and sponsorship, in my opinion, because although we make okay money we need to be <u>selling</u> it a lot a harder. It's so <u>sponsor-able</u>" (Turn 76). Notice how complex the actors are here and how skilfully Una separates the personal from the corporate. She replies that she, presumably as an individual, is indeed happy

with the future of this division, though the company as a collective –the "We, we" of Turn 76 – "don't make enough out of advertising and sponsorship" in *her own individual opinion* (the "in my opinion" of Turn 76) because while the collective "we" of the corporation "make okay money we need to be selling it a lot harder" (Turn 76). The elaborate separation of formal personalities involved in this small company is an impressive example of strategy talk, as strategy talk certainly involves talk of the firm as being a collective entity (Crouch & Basch, 1997).

Between the end of Extract UB 3 and the start of Extract UB 4 there is a gap of just under a minute, where we talked about some details about employees that might identify the company and do not add anything to the analysis already presented. This segment is therefore not presented here.

Extract UB 4 from an interview between Una and Brendan

107   Brendan: Um do you think most of your kind of readers are in the Irish market or
108   Una: We know that eh we've got about 50,000 individual readers a month. That's not page impressions
109   Brendan: Yeah.
110   Una: that's people.
111   Brendan: Right.
112   Una: And we know that the core of about 10,000 of them come to us time and again. You know
113   Brendan: Right yeah.
114   Una: I mean those are core readers, and they are mostly Irish but eh we get a lot of eyeballs from America because we get picked up by the search engines in Google and stuff so people hit us just for the Sun Microsystems story but they've
115   Brendan: Okay, right
116   Una: they've never been before.
117   Brendan: right and they mightn't be there again sort of thing.
118   Una: So it's a, maybe never again but um it means that especially for global brands we have a great, great platform because we do get a lot of one-time American or foreign traffic but we're also great for the local Irish people because they can customise you know, you know they can have a banner ad for their Microsoft series seminar going on in Punchestown and, and they know
119   Brendan: Okay, right.
120   Una: that they will get hundreds and hundreds of Irish IT Managers reading that. So yes the, the website eh looks like we're a big company. A lot of people think we're a multi-national
((three short turns excluded to avoid identification of company))
124   Una: our TronCom dot ie address um but we've always tried to look bigger than we are because it's-advertisers like that.

Source: Transcript from 7 minutes 4.5 seconds to 8 minutes 23 seconds of audio record of 76-minute interview between 'Una' and Brendan.

As Extract UB 4 begins we are still talking about TronCom's website. In answering my question about who reads the website, Una shows how the people in the company know their market. When I ask does "she think most of the readers are in the Irish market" (Turn 107), Una replies "We know we've got 50,000 individual readers" (Turn

108). Note the certainty of the knowledge and the collectivity of the knowing – the 'we' rather the 'I'. This extract is peppered with numbers and specifics in abstract, formally defined categories, the kind of codified knowledge which Una has at her finger-tips, perhaps for both sales and strategic planning purposes. It is full of specifics resulting from, and ready for, calculation and analysis. This is hard strategy talk where people are reduced to that necessary for readership and sales i.e. to "eyeballs" (Turn 114). This figure of speech, where a part is taken as standing for the whole, is known as synecdoche and seems to be a feature of a lot of business discourse. Synecdoche is an inherently analytical trope as it breaks down a complex identity and focuses on its analytically relevant aspect. This makes the talk strategic in the sense that a key feature of strategy is its claim to be rationalistic and analytical (Crouch & Basch, 1997;Grandy & Mills, 2004).

After the formality of the strategic talk in the latter half of Turn 120, this strategy talk begin to die away. There is an adventurer element to the talk: "So yes the, the website eh looks like we're a big company. A lot of people think we're a multi-national … …but we've always tried to look bigger than we are because it's, advertisers like that" (Turns 120 & 124). While this adventurer talk shares some elements of enterprise talk in that it is creative and playful, it tends to go beyond the moral and responsible element of enterprise (Koiranen, 1995), and so, while adventurer talk is definitely on the enterprise side of strategy, it goes beyond enterprise talk.

Extract UB 5 from an interview between Una and Brendan

125	Brendan: Absolutely yeah well it works ((laughs)). Eh I kind of gathered from the number of you know and I looked at the number of journalists that you had
126	Una: Mm-mm.
127	Brendan: that you, you were a reasonably op, eh operation which I was thrilled with because of my, my interests. Um in terms of when you set it up, did you envisage, envisage it growing very big or were you happy for a kind of lifestyle business or was it- What, what was your kind of motivations back if, if you can remember? [laughs]
128	Una: Um (3) I think I don't, I don't honestly know. I had hoped that we would be able to get big but I just didn't have the experience to see that we couldn't really be big being a small craft-type business. We
129	Brendan: Mm.
130	Una: we do have higher aims now to become a much bigger business eh in terms of revenues but eh we, I, I can't say we had a plan to be, to be big or to be a lifestyle business because there was no particular plan but I recognise it has been a lifestyle business up 'til now.
131	Brendan: Right
132	Una: Covering our costs.

Source: Transcript from 8 minutes 23 seconds to 9 minutes 37.7 seconds of audio record of 76-minute interview between 'Una' and Brendan.

Extract UB 5 follows immediately on Extract UB 4; enterprise talk continues to rise and displace strategy talk. This extract also shows how the question of company growth, or more specifically lack of growth, is an accountable issue. In Turn 127 my question is a cautious one, hinting that I'm approaching something delicate. This is shown not only by it being an unusually long turn but in the particular way that my talk is hesitant: I seem to leave out a word between 'reasonably' and 'operation' in Turn 127: "that you, you were a reasonably op-, eh operation which I was thrilled with because of my interests": The word I think I was avoiding was 'small'; thus the thrill I got had to be accounted for by "my interests". I then ask (Turn 127) if at the start of the company did Una "envisage it growing very big or were you happy for a kind of lifestyle business or was it- What, what was your kind of motivations back if, if you can remember?" In Turn 128, Una indicates that this question indeed does cause some difficulties by pausing for a full three seconds. In Turn 128 Una also repeats in a fumbling manner: "I don't, I don't honestly know". Turn 128 continues with the rather complex phrase "I had hoped that we would be able to get big" rather than, say, the more direct "I hoped we'd get big". Not getting big seems to be something that needs to be accounted for; Una seems to be saying that it's not some failing of hers or others that has resulted in the company not getting big but that somehow the objective situation meant it was not possible for company to get big (Turn 128). These hesitations and awkwardnesses are more examples of Fairclough's (1992a:230) cruces that alert one to a troubled area in the talk. Furthermore, though I only asked whether or not she wanted the company to get big, Una goes on to give a reason, perhaps an excuse for not getting big: "I had hoped that we would be able to get big but I just didn't have the experience to see that we couldn't really be big being a small craft-type business" (Turn 128). Later, in Extract UB 7 below, we discuss this idea of craft more explicitly but for the moment what is in focus concerns TronCom's lack of growth. That this lack of growth is constructed as a problem by Una is confirmed when she claims that "we do have higher aims now to become a much bigger business" (Turn 130); metaphorically, higher is usually seen as better (Lakoff & Johnson, 1980). This need to account for the lack of growth within the firm is a feature of enterprise discourse more generally for, as Lewis & Llewellyn (2004:7) point out, "Those who choose a model of 'small and stable business' (called trundlers) over a model of 'fast-growth business' (called gazelles) are less likely to be recognized and accepted as entrepreneurs." We might illustrate the state of being a lifestyle or trundler entrepreneur as even more personal,

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even self-indulgent, than the personal, passionate nature of being an entrepreneur and much more personal than being a strategist. The label of a lifestyle that I introduced in Turn 127 starts to be be particularly accounted for in Turn 130 where my attribution of a lifestyle business is 'recognised' in a way that hints it might be like the recognition of a disease or acknowledgement of a problem.

Extract UB 6 from an interview between Una and Brendan

133 Brendan: Has it been, um has it settled down to um to be a lifestyle business in the sense of giving you reasonable working hours or has it been eh a lot

134 Una: Um.

135 Brendan: investment of, of sweat equity as they say?

136 Una: The first two years were <u>desperate</u> and ((mobile phone goes off)) sorry about that.

137 Brendan: No, no you're alright.

138 Una: The second two years I had ((mobile phone goes off again))

139 Brendan: If, if you need to get it I, I don't mind.

140 Una: It's just a text message. The second two years um have been a case of me seeing what the boundaries eh recognising what my boundaries are and working around them. So I will never work weekends, I, if I don't take lunch I know that I'll pay for it

141 Brendan: Right, yeah, yeah.

142 Una: Like yesterday I was <u>blind</u> by a quarter past five, I didn't know anything because I had worked <u>straight</u> through lunch and I'd gone to a breakfast networking event at half six in the morning em you know by half five I just didn't even know my own name. So yes it was, eh it was a lot of sweat equity in the first two years but um and it is still very, very hard work for our staff but (.) we put up limits and we're happier that way.

143 Brendan: That's um, that's interesting because I, I think in most kind of two to five year old firms eh I usually don't peo- don't find people aware of that

144 Una: [Mm-mm

145 Brendan: self aware] [of that

146 Una: mm-mm]

147 Brendan: that's interesting. Um [laughs] it's usually after about six years and the first heart attack [laughs] they seem to come to that realisation.

148 Una: Ummm (.) we (.) we have no (.) <u>assets</u>, capital assets. We have nothing that a bank could seize. Everything that we are is between our ears

149 Brendan:
      [Right

150 Una: and]you know we need, eh we need an internet terminal but um our, our website isn't hosted in-house em our archive isn't hosted eh locally um we can work from anywhere but, but our biggest asset is, is our people and our ability to write the best content in Ireland. We think so

151 Brendan: Mm-mm.

152 Una: better than any of our competitors but um (.) why do I mention that? I mention that because um we (.) if, if we burn out that being our only resource we have nothing to give to people because that's all we have to give to people rest on the, on the strength of our last product line that we're still punching out in the factory.

153 Brendan: Right. Yeah, yeah.

154 Una: We have to always be completely focused because we're here to explain what <u>you</u> want to write in your newsletter. We all, we have

155 Brendan: Right.

156 Una: to be <u>very on</u> and very focused and not exhausted↑

<u>Source:</u> Transcript from 9 minutes 37.7 seconds to 12 minutes 13.8 seconds of audio record of 76-minute interview between 'Una' and Brendan.

Extract UB 6 begins immediately after Extract UB 5 but has a much more comfortable tone to it. As I ask about whether the firm has settled "to be a lifestyle business in the sense of giving you reasonable working hours or" (Turn 136), I in a way seem to be trying to repair the possible insult (of Turn 127, Extract UB 5) of asking whether Una's business is a lifestyle one in the sense of barely covering its costs or not being truly an economic success. The relative comfortableness of Extract UB 6 is as one would expect from the nature of the enterprise discourse, as Una can now talk about the dedication involved in building the company, a theme much more approved of in the enterprise discourse than explaining why a venture is not growing. Una's dedication is shown in how "The first two years were <u>desperate</u>" (Turn 136). Now she has learned to impose boundaries and "never works weekends", knowing that, if "I don't take lunch I know that I'll pay for it" (Turn 136). Such admissions of human frailty are quickly followed by an example that both illustrates the reasonableness of her position as well as communicating her underlying dedication to the business and her determined nature: "I was blind by a quarter past five, I didn't know anything because I had worked straight through lunch and I'd gone to a breakfast networking event at half six in the morning em you know by half five I just didn't even know my own name"(Turn 142).

In justifying having reasonable working hours, Una brings to the surface a more strategic discourse. The justification is made, not in terms of personal health, personal self-awareness or avoidance heart attacks as I sagely hint at in Turns 143-147, but in strategic terms: Una notes: "we (.) we have no (.) assets, capital assets. We have nothing that a bank could seize. Everything that we are is between our ears". Here again is the use of synecdoche (only what is between ears standing for the whole human) – that analytical trope that fits well, as had been argued above, with strategy's analytical nature. This strategic rationale is further elaborated: "our biggest asset is, is our people and our ability to write the best content in Ireland … …better than any of our competitors but um (.) why do I mention that? I mention that because um we (.) if, if we burn out that being our only resource we have nothing to give to people because that's all we have to give to people rest on the, on the strength of our last product line that we're still punching out in the factory" (Turn 150-152). The values being used here to justify reasonable working conditions are market values related to 'competition' and 'products' from a 'factory'. Even the primacy of the customer is invoked to justify a better lifestyle – "We have to always be completely focused because we're here to explain what you want to write in your newsletter.

We all, we have… …to be very on and very focused and not exhausted↑" (Turns 154-156). So Extract UB 6 goes from a tale of desperate work by Una in the first two, presumably particularly entrepreneurial, years of TronCom to her individually recognising her boundaries, to a more strategic discourse of how the only assets of the firm (rather than the assets of any individual) – human assets – need to be protected. This is a commitment to a strategic position of the kind Porter (1996) would approve. Market values are clearly the important ones here and Una's argument for providing value here is most strategic.

In contrast to Paul, Una ignores her phone alert sound (Turns 136-140). The contrast is, however, difficult to read. Here the phone is signalling a text message rather than a voice call. Additionally, the time of the interview with Una is after office hours whereas that with Paul was during the working day. Yet another possibility is that the way Una handles this interruption from her phone could hint at a greater embrace of an interviewee role and/or a reinforcement of the message that she carefully conserves her energy to do quality work. However, while there is a sharp contrast, there are too many complications to allow for a strong interpretation.

Extract UB 7 from an interview between Una and Brendan

157   Brendan: Right yeah.
158   Una: because you can't work that way.
159   Brendan: Absolutely. Yeah it was interesting you used the term 'craft'
160   Una: Yeah.
161   Brendan: that's um, was it, when, when did you start thinking of your, of your business as a craft business? Was that back to maybe ((reference to an earlier job of Una that would make her easily identifiable)) days ((laughs)) or ?
162   Una: Mm (.) I would spend (.) One of our clients that, that we do an email newsletter for, we've been doing it for them for a while, and I was aware that we were charging them our top consulting day rate, which we charge people when they want that kind of thing and I wasn't going to charge them five days work and spend a half day on it.
163   Brendan: Yeah.
164   Una: Yet at the same time the style that we outlined for this publication only called for, in this instance, a 300-word article and I would spend three days on a 300-word article. That's when I started thinking craft and that really was sort of the beginning because I was aware that I wanted to give them value for money and if it was only going to be 300 words on, you know, disaster recovery technology or storage or something it had to be completely definitive and I think it paid off because the reaction we would get from the readers was `Wow, this is good'
165   Brendan: Yeah I bet.
166   Una: you know? It was, it was on the, it was more like analysis or what you get in a research report from IDC than
167   Brendan: Right.
168   Una: than just a journalist writing a story (.) My anxieties about scaling the business are connected to the quality and can we maintain the quality because even if we are doing a hub and spoke model and managing external reliable writers um the task of managing requires a lot of energy and attention and of course, course client liaison always needs to be done by, by a, a
169   Brendan: Inhouse?
170   Una: staff member um so.

Source: Transcript from 12 minutes 13.8 seconds to 14 minutes 12.9 seconds of audio record of 76-minute interview between 'Una' and Brendan.

Extract UB 7 follows immediately from Extract UB 6. In it I communicate to Una support for her view expressed in the last extract that all in her company need "to be very on and very focused and not exhausted↑" (Turn 156, Extract UB 6) and ask her "when did you start thinking of your, of your business as a craft business?" (Turn 161) (Una had referred to her business as a 'craft-type' business earlier – see Turn 128, Extract UB 5 above.) In answer, Una tells a story of a specific incident where what she was doing was a high-quality, highly priced but small "... 300-word article and I would spend three days on a 300-word article" (Turn 164). She says the 300-word article "... was more like analysis or what you get in a research report from IDC" (Turn 166). This is a rare occasion where Una seems happy to describe herself as something other than a journalist, for this valuable but small article means that she is other "than just a journalist writing a story" (Turn 168). Her "anxieties about scaling the business are connected to the quality and can we maintain the quality…" (Turn 168). It is interesting to

note that Una compares the crafted product to a product of IDC (Turn 166). Given that that article seems to be information technology-orientated (Turn 164's "disaster recovery technology or storage or something"), IDC is understood as referring to International Data Corporation. This is a large consultancy firm in information technology founded in Massachusetts in 1964 and having nearly 1,000 analysts worldwide (www.idc.com). This may seem a strange company to cite in support of anxieties about growing your company, though Patrick McGovern, the founder of IDC, does seem to give a craft-orientated philosophy as an explanation for his publishing and consultancy success: "If you're good at picking people and giving them the freedom of authority to do what they like to do, you will succeed" (Anonymous, 2008).

Figure 6.2 below abstracts some of the features of the interview talk seen in Extracts UB 1 to UB 7.

Figure 6.2   Abstract of Extracts UB 1 to UB 7

Interviewee talk:	Passivity
Authenticity	Modesty,
.	Luck

Common to Strategy & Enterprise talk:	Masterfulness
Market values,	
Determined & dedicated	

Enterprise

Fast growth

Lifestyle Trundler

Individual → Corporate

Strategy

Codified knowledge

Commitment

Creativity & playfulness

Adventurer

Autonomy

Key to symbols in Figure

𝔸 is endowed with a particular flavour in this interviewee's talk (see discussion of figure)

A   An italicised A means A is treated as undesirable or unapproved of.

| A | ←——→ | B | Means the A and B are in tension with one another

| A | ———→ | B | Means B belongs to the more general category of A

A
B
C   Means B and C are characteristics of **A**

Source: Abstracted by the author from interview between 'Una' and Brendan.

Figure 6.2 shows that, as with Paul's talk, there was in the interview with Una the passivity, modesty and acknowledgement of luck expected of the interviewee.

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There were also features common to both strategy and enterprise discourse: masterfulness, the stress on market values and the determined and dedicated nature of the strategist/entrepreneur. There also was quite a contrast made between the dedicated nature of Una and the 'lifestyle trundler' attribution, sometimes used as an explanation for slow-growing firms. The accusation of being a lifestyle trundler did not arise with Paul, perhaps because his story was more like that of a serial entrepreneur, and his identity as an entrepreneur was fully embraced and established. As in Paul's talk, there were times when the dilemmatically related elements of enterprise and strategy discourse swapped with each other, e.g. where stretches of formal analytical talk were followed by creative enterprise elements. Time spent in talking of the personal entrepreneurial nature of life gave rise to switches to the more impersonal talk of the company. Elements of enterprise and strategy discourse were also raised but, at least for the moment, did not seem to have a dilemmatic opposite adjacent to them. These elements currently without dilemmatic opposites, include the playfulness of enterprise and the codified knowledge of strategy. Autonomy, an important feature of enterprise, was in use but carried with it an added flavour in Una's talk. This flavour, not essential to enterprise talk, seemed to be added, too, to the determined and dedicated element common to both strategy and enterprise. This was not the flavour of New Thought thinking, as was the case with Paul, but was that of a stress on the inherent value of the work. Thus I label this flavour 'Craftwork'.

6.4 Talking more strategy and enterprise

Extract UB 8, below, follows immediately from Extract UB 7 above.

Extract UB 8 from an interview between Una and Brendan

171 Brendan: How, how do you feel about that transition for yourself from writing and crafting to (.) that kind of managing are have you

172 Una: I love managing

173 Brendan: Do you?

174 Una: other people. Yeah I get great pleasure out of, out of seeing copy come in from other people and thinking this is great, this is really good um. I do too much writing. I, I want to do less writing um, this new woman who's joining us is going to free up my right hand man to do more of my writing

175 Brendan: Okay.

176 Una: so she'll do his writing and he'll do my writing

177 Brendan: Right, yes.

178 Una: and I'll be more free to focus on business development and work with our new sales person. Um I (.) I kind of have these two parts of me that I would recognise. One part of me is a creative type but the other part is quite organised and business-like and it's kind of like the lawyer in me. I can

179 Brendan: Right.

180 Una: I can be both of those um which I suppose is handy, it's handy for business but it means that you have extremely high- like a lot of publishers aren't writers, they're publishers.

181 Brendan: Right.

182 Una: And hence possibly the quality of some of the stuff the writers produce isn't great because the boss isn't a great writer

183 Brendan:Right, right.

184 Una: himself or herself you know. But I, that's why I like to think that we have high standards across the board because um (.)

185 Brendan: Um it's, it's interesting though <in, in when I was asking about managing you were saying you love you love getting good copy and then >

186 Una: Yeah, yeah, yeah.

187 Brendan: <seeing how great it is.In In a way that's a master-writer role>.

188 Una: Yeah.

((Una remarks that my recorder is playing back: the turns dealing with this are excluded))

198 Una: Getting good copy in

199 Brendan: Yeah, so in a way you're almost a master crafts person in terms of writing

200 Una: Yes.

201 Brendan: um, is there a change as you manage sales or?

202 Una: (.) Um I haven't the first clue how to manage sales.

203 Brendan: ((laughs)).

204 Una: Oh this is going to be interesting.

205 Brendan: Yeah.

206 Una: My husband eh works with us in TronCom and he's got a lot of experience in selling and managing sales although by journalist he was, by training a journalist he's probably better at the managing and selling than he is at the writing. He's a good writer too, a solid communicator and I will certainly be eh

207 Brendan: He was with ((well-known American based internet company)) was it?

208 Una: That's right.

209 Brendan: Yeah, yeah.

210 Una: Yeah.

211 Brendan: So and he's, he's heavily involved in the firm obviously
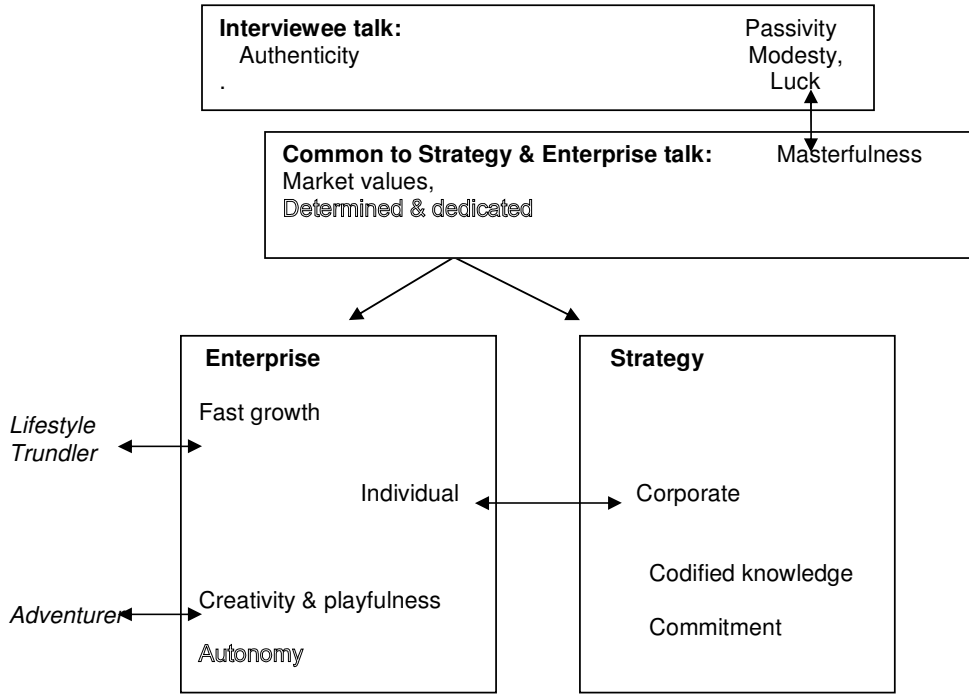
212 Una: Yes he is, yeah. ((Taxi stops)) Thank you!

Source: Transcript from 14 minutes 12.9 seconds to 16 minutes 57.5 seconds of audio record of 76-minute interview between 'Una' and Brendan.

At Turn 171 I ask how Una feels about the transition from writing and crafting to managing. She responds very positively with the claim that she loves managing – not only selecting such a positive word but, as we can see from the extract,

emphasising it with her voice. She elaborates, in response to my rather flat "Do you?", stressing the "<u>great</u>" pleasure she gets from seeing the "<u>really good</u>" writing of other people come in (Turn 174). Again here is the positivity characteristic of both enterprise and strategy, and indeed business discourse in general (Nelson, 2000). She declares she does "too much writing" (Turn 174). What is meant by 'too much' is perhaps clarified in the next sentence "I, I want to do less writing" (Turn 174). This can be interpreted as a demonstration of the masterfulness element of both enterprise and strategy discourses as it clearly establishes her as having a highly internal locus of control.

In Turn 178 Una talks of "these two parts of me that I would recognise. One part of me is a creative type but the other part is quite organised and business-like and it's kind of the lawyer in me." Here it seems the creative type is the writer/journalist while the inner lawyer is the business manager – both crafts or professions in their own right rather than business skills *per se*. Furthermore, it seems Una here constructs the business side of things as needing the lawyerly rational and organised, with the creative being needed for writing. Una's dichotomy is used by her to stress the advantage her firm has in having such a great writer as herself as the boss. Such a claim needs to be constructed carefully to avoid the charge of immodesty. First, she points out that "a lot of publishers aren't writers, they're publishers" (Turn 180) and "hence possibly the quality of some the stuff the writers produce isn't great because the boss isn't a great writer" (Turn 182) "himself or herself you know"; that, in contrast, is why in TronCom "we have high standards across the board because um (.)" (Turn 184). Notice how there is a pause at the end of Turn 184 which allows the hearer to draw the appropriate logical conclusion: that the high standards in TronCom are due to Una being a great writer. Of the creative and organised sides Una identified in Turn 178, the benefit of the creative side seems, for Una here, to lie only in the journalism side of the business.

At Turn 185 I put it to Una that "Um it's, it's interesting though <in, in when I was asking about managing you were saying you love you love getting good copy and then >". After a distraction, where Una thinks she hears my recording device playing, is dealt with, she returns to the subject in Turn 198 by saying "getting good copy in" and I can ask: "so in a way you're almost a master crafts person in terms of writing (…) um, is there a change as you manage sales or?". After an initial pause and an "Um", Una declares that she "hasn't a first clue how to manage sales." (Turn 202). I laugh heartily but alone at

this, and Una begins to construct how she is going to manage this, first declaring that it is "going to be interesting" (Turn 204), as opposed to something more negative like 'scary'. So in Turns 202-204 Una seems to be embracing entrepreneurial risk-taking – leaping into the unknown. Next (Turn 206), she quickly leaves this fun aspect behind and the more rational risk-managing strategic discourse arises. She's going to manage by bringing somebody with a lot of experience in selling and managing sales – there is none of the adventurer element (which was seen in Turn 124 of Extract UB 4) of 'chancing it' here. This strategic talk is disrupted by the taxi arriving at the pub we were going to.

Between Extract UB 8 and Extract UB 9, there is a segment of nearly two minutes; the transcript of which is not shown here as it involved talk that concerned the practicalities of moving from a taxi into a pub, paying the taxi man, ordering drinks and choosing a seat. During this interaction no relevant issues arose that were not also evident elsewhere. I paid for the taxi and asked Una what she wanted from the bar, while she, as elsewhere, responded politely but in a matter of fact way, while showing care that we were getting a good location to continue the interview in.

Extract UB 9 from an interview between Una and Brendan

233   Brendan: ... so (7) So in terms of sales management are you looking forward to that or is it a sort of a pain?

234   Una: Um.

235   Brendan: Or have I raised troubles for you that are

236   Una: No I just, I, I've no idea (.) um how it'll work out but we know that we don't have an option (.) without a dedicated sales role um

237   Bartender: with ice?

238   Una: Thank you

239   Brendan: Great

240   Bartender: What is it. 4.50 em 6.95 I think it is.Thanks very much

241   Una: Without a dedicated sales role, for somebody taking over our proposition that we have and, and flogging it to people, how can we hope to get anywhere with our revenues?

242   Bartender: 6.95.Thanks very much. Thanks

243   Una: Um we want this business to sustain us through the long term

245   Brendan: Mm

246   Una: so that's what we intend to do

Source: Transcript from 18 minutes 50.6 seconds to 20 minutes 6.5 seconds of audio record of 76-minute interview between 'Una' and Brendan.

As the interactions managing the change from riding in the taxi and sitting down in the pub are completed, I return to the topic of Una managing non-writers as can be seen in Extract UB 9 above, asking: "Yeah so (7) So in terms of sales management are you looking forward to that or is it a sort of a pain?" (Turn 233). Una's reply to this seems hesitant – which, as we have discussed, might indicate a difficulty with it

and/or the interruptions and expected interruptions from the bar's waiting staff. At Turn 236 Una reminds us that hiring a salesperson is a bit of a risky leap into the unknown. She has: "... no idea (.) um how it'll work out..." (Turn 236). Quickly she manages this unknown by using the decidedly analytical discourse of strategy: "but we know that we don't have an option (.) without a dedicated sales role um" (Turn 236). This 'there is no alternative' language is very much part of strategy's deterministic language (Eriksson & Lehtimäki, 2001:214). In Turn 241 this strategic argument continues: "Without a dedicated sales role ... flogging it to people, how can we hope to get anywhere with our revenues?" Dedication is used in a strategic way here as it indicates a commitment to a particular direction. The well-known strategic metaphor of a mapped-out journey (e.g. Eden & Ackermann, 1998) is present in the geographic allusion of "how can we hope to get anywhere" (Turn 241). The long-term, as is known from any strategy textbook (e.g. Johnson & Scholes, 2002), is a key aspect of strategy and this is raised in Turn 243 where Una declares "Um we want this business to sustain us through the long term".

Between the end of Extract UB 9 and the beginning of Extract UB 10 there is a gap of a little over one minute. During this time we discuss the difficulty of getting salespeople and details of Una's living arrangements that if presented would undermine her anonymity. Neither adds anything to the analysis so this segment is omitted from display here.

Extract UB 10 from an interview between Una and Brendan

261 Una: he only takes a small amount of money and takes commission and such and money for day rates that he can bill up um um and a big, a big part of it is I'm aware that we get, we get a big part of his expertise without paying full salary which gives us an unrealistic cost base↑ that um (.) because if somebody assessing the value of the business might say well yeah but you get this guy working for free whereas

262 Brendan: Right, right.

263 Una: you know if your costs aren't realistic your business, even though it might show a profit isn't actually profit.

264 Brendan: Okay.

265 Una: Um so that's why we need to grow our revenues by, by eh significant factor and not just boost it up, if we were to create a business that has <u>genuine</u> value and not just all perceived value with a website that looks like it's big.

266 Brendan: Right, right yeah. And in um, in terms of setting it up, it's kind of managing the quality of the writing is your biggest concern there is it?

267 Una: Mm, yes. Yes. Also ideas generation.

268 Brendan: That's an interesting one with, with, larger people less ideas or (laugh) -larger people! – a larger number of people less ideas!

269 Una: No it's um (.) what I'm saying is(.) we need to (.) you know there are f-five aspects to writing any newsletter. There is um (.)content brainstorming and there's content eh management, including writing up the brief for

270 Brendan: Right.

271 Una: the writer's going to do it and there's content authoring, then there's content design and delivery and there's client liaison, right? Some of those can be done out of house. Maybe, maybe one of them but the rest pretty much does have to be done in-house. Okay design and delivery can be done out of house and writing can be done out of house but it all starts with brainstorming the ideas from plans

272 Brendan: Mm-mm.

273 Una: and we have to make sure that we've got the calibre of people brainstorming those ideas and that has to be

274 Brendan: Okay sorry, yeah.

275 Una: done in-house.

276 Brendan: Now I get you yeah.

277 Una: Yeah.

278 Brendan: So that is hard to scale up.

279 Una: Yeah it is but um we haven't (.) been out to the market enough to know whether people want us to, for example, simply send out their newsletter and not write it for them, just manage the whole process for them or if they also want us to write it.

<u>Source:</u> Transcript from 21 minutes 10.7 seconds to 23 minutes 51.4 seconds of audio record of 76-minute interview between 'Una' and Brendan.

In Extract UB 10 above Una illustrates even more strategy talk. Talking of her life-partner who also works in the business, she analyses the value of his contribution in a very analytical and economistic way. The implication is that costs, to be 'realistic' and 'actual', must be at a hypothetical market value rather than the amount actually paid. Such an insight is a typical analytical type of strategy statement. In Turn 263 Una puts the very economistic claim that "you know if your costs are not realistic your business, even though it might show a profit isn't actually a profit". In Turn 265 Una talks of the need for revenue for funds "to create a business that has <u>genuine</u> value" (Turn 265).

Una in Turns 269-273 also very succinctly describes the value chain of the business she is in. This is a continuation of strategy as it is drawing on this very strategic concept to describe her business. The creative aspect of this value chain – including the "ideas generation" (Turn 267) and seemingly where "it all starts with brainstorming the ideas from plans" (Turn 271) – has to be done within the company. Though 'brain-storming' and the assertion that this creative activity has to be done in-house hint at collective creativity within the enterprise or its team, Una seems to link it again to the more individualistic aspect of "the calibre of people brainstorming those ideas" (Turn 273).

The importance of market valuation is again illustrated in Turn 279 when Una points to how the truth of her opinion can only be known by a market test: " we haven't (.) been out to the market enough to know whether people want us to, for example, simply send out their newsletter and not write it for them, just manage the whole process for them or if they also want us to write it."

Between the end of Extract UB 10 and the beginning of Extract UB 11 there is a gap of a little over two minutes. During this time we discuss more details of Una's living arrangements, and the under-costed role of her partner in the company and how another family member acts as sounding board but in way that separates their personal relationship from their professional one. Given that these issues are dealt with in other segments and to preserve confidentiality, this segment is omitted from display here.

Extract UB 11 from an interview between Una and Brendan

303   Una: but you know if Charles and I have a family as we hope to but this time next year I'm going to be much more over there and my colleagues here are going to have to pick up the slack. We've made up my, we've made my right hand man guy the director of the company just now and he's going to take on more of the local management. He's the one who'll be freed up to do more of my writing amongst work

304   Brendan: Okay.

305   Una: Um but I'm aware that it's really only <u>myself</u> who has the commitment to, who I can <u>be sure</u> has a commitment to TronCom in, in the the long term, myself and ((Charles))

306   Brendan: Right.

307   Una: even if he's not a director ((Una mentioned earlier that Charles was not a director)), um and I have to be aware of the fact that my most <u>precious</u> staff might leave. <u>They might</u> but <you have to just realise that people need to do what they need to do> you can't keep them imprisoned in a job that they don't want to be in, roll with the punches

308   Brendan: Um are you considering expanding TronCom to deal with ((elements of the UK market))

309   Una: Um not the news side of TronCom, although we did investigate that last year and we got a very good response from people like ((regional UK state body encouraging enterprise)) em we decided that eh for a lot of reasons you can't do news <u>in a market</u> unless you have a <u>newsroom</u>, that is the centre of things

310   Brendan: Right yeah

311   Una: We don't have the(.) any(.) any idea of(.) eh of having a news room in ((identifiable specific location)) first of all but that isn't a key really (.) First of all (.) First of all is it's a long slow burn to develop a news brand that has credibility. As I said we get 50,000 readers a month now, that's after four years.

312   Brendan: [laughs] Right.

313   Una: Two years of killing ourselves, two other years of just really working hard and

314   Brendan: You're not sure you want to do that again [laughs].

315   Una: Yeah, well the high-margin stuff is, is in corporate um, and what we're doing in the UK is liaising with PR agencies who are giving us work with their corporate, corporate writing work in case of any sort of

<u>Source:</u> Transcript from 25 minutes 59.6 seconds to 28 minutes 01.6 seconds of audio record of 76-minute interview between 'Una' and Brendan.

From the start of Extract UB 11 it is clear that the long stretches of almost uninterrupted analytical strategy talk in the preceding extracts have been displaced. Here Una talks about the business in a way where the boundaries between the personal and the business are fluid. This is in the context of "if Charles and I have a family as we hope to" (Turn 303). Una switches quickly from "my colleagues" (Turn 303) to "my right hand man guy" (Turn 303), a director. The more impersonal strategy talk has fallen away and the more personal enterprise talk has risen to take its place. The business-personal boundary slips because Una is "… aware that it's really only <u>myself</u> who has the commitment to, who I can <u>be sure</u> has a commitment to TronCom in, in the the long term, myself and ((Charles)) " (Turn 305), and she needs "to be aware that my most <u>precious</u> staff might leave" (Turn 307). Employees are no longer colleagues in the company but are Una's staff. She deals here with the issue of employees somewhat differently from the way Paul dealt with them. Rather than attempting to avoid the topic with

meta-discourse questions, she tries to be entrepreneurial enough herself to take account of the employees. This is too because they have personal lives and "you can't keep them imprisoned in a job that they don't want to be in" (Turn 307) so you cannot be inflexible but need to "roll with the punches" (Turn 307). Una has gone from the rigid abstractions of strategy and the kind of strategic commitment seen in Extract UB 6 above to a talk of freedom and flexibility in business that can termed more entrepreneurial. However, strategy talk is soon on the rebound as, in Turns 311-313, Una switches back to evidence of these aspects of her strategic identity, pointing out that "it's a long slow burn to develop a news brand that has credibility" (Turn 311) – the kind of commitment that she recalls she has already made in Troncom by "Two years of killing ourselves, two other years of just really working hard…" (Turn 313).

Extract UB 12 from an interview between Una and Brendan

316 Brendan: And in terms of the new director you've taken onboard um, has he been an employee for long or

317 Una: Yes it's sort of like, it's been almost four years now, just over four years I think. No, no did he come into, 2001 so just over three years

318 Brendan: Because I, that's quite a trusting thing to do in a way isn't it?

319 Una: I know, yeah I know but you know I have to have an Irish resident director, you can't been an Irish company and not have a director that's resident in this company. He's an <u>excellent</u> writer um (.) I look forward↑ to him taking on more of the management. We've talked a lot about him taking on like a lot more of the corporate writing, we've talked about planning for it, we've talked about <u>strategy</u> for bringing him onboard. A couple of weeks later he said >just give it to me, just throw stuff at me and see if I can do it< and he <u>did</u>. He handed in his first batch of stuff, not his first batch of stuff but his first batch of stuff that was going to be on a regular basis. Previously I had only thrown him corporate stuff   that I was too busy to do or whatever because he was so busy with news but um we've agreed that most of the news just has to fall by the wayside if we have corporate stuff that needs to get done.

320 Brendan: Yeah.

321 Una: Until we get this other woman in, it would just, in this one or two-month period until she actually starts, she's starting in two weeks now, I can't wait and this guy quitting on today didn't help us either

322 Brendan: Yeah.

323 Una: but um we all know what side our, our bread is buttered on and em, the corporate stuff is, it's brings in the money but if you let the quality of the news drop or the, the amount of the work,of the news drop you, you will lose your readers and you will lose your page impressions and you will lose your advertising revenues

324 Brendan: Right.

325 Una: so we have to keep that in balance. Um but anyway what I was saying there is we, I have been planning, planning, planning for the transition and he just said listen throw it at me and see how I do and I think, sometimes you can over-plan in a business and over-implement your strategy and you know

326 Brendan:Mm.

327 Una: have focus groups and

328 Brendan: Yeah, yeah, yeah.

329 Una: a six point plan and um

330 Brendan: And it doesn't turn out that way anyway in the end.

331 Una: Yeah I, I have those, I have that road map anyway. I know by the end of December how much corporate work I want him to be doing and blah-blah-blah but um when it comes to the letter of implementing it it's just going to be a question of um, throw me some stuff and see if I can do it

<u>Source:</u> Transcript from 28 minutes 1.6 seconds to 30 minutes 22.2 seconds of audio record of 76-minute interview between 'Una' and Brendan.

Extract UB 12 follows from Extract UB11 immediately. In Extract UB 12 there continues to be much strategy talk, which, unusually for the data so far, seems to contain or encapsulate some enterprise discourse. Una, in the context of promoting an employee, warns about the dangers of over-planning: " ...We've talked a lot about him taking on like a lot more of the corporate writing, we've talked about planning for it, we've talked about strategy for bringing him onboard. A couple of weeks later he said >just give it to me, just throw stuff at me and see if I can do it< and he <u>did</u>. ..." (from Turn 319), and later in Turn 325 "Um but anyway what I was saying there is we, I have been planning, planning, planning for the transition and he just said 'listen throw it at me and see how I do' and I think, sometimes you can over-plan in a business and over-implement your strategy and you know" . In Turn 331 Una withdraws from this 'give it a go' attitude a little and stresses her

competency as a planner: "... I have that road map anyway. I know by the end of December how much corporate work I want him to be doing and blah-blah-blah but um when it comes to the letter of implementing it it's just going to be a question of um, throw me some stuff and see if I can do it". Notice how Una in this last remark has reduced spontaneity to "the letter of implementing" (Turn 331) strategy. In this segment there is some evidence of a different relationship between strategy and enterprise discourse. Instead of the pattern so far, in both Paul and Una's talk, of strategy talk falling away to be replaced by the rise of enterprise talk or vice-versa, here is an incident where enterprise issues are almost reduced to a very contained element of strategy,

Interestingly, too, in Extract UB 12 Una seems reluctant again to allow for creativity (other than a limited form of 'just try it' spontaneity) in business as opposed to in her professional capacity as a journalist.

Between the end of Extract UB 12 and the beginning of Extract UB 13 there is a gap of over a minute. During this time I ask Una if she would like something to eat and we discuss how both her partner and another close relative of hers are involved in the company. I comment on the difficulties of mixing family and finances. Una merely observes that her partner will soon be formally made a director and agrees in a rather non-committed way with my comments on the difficulties of mixing finance and families.

Extract UB 13 from an interview between Una and Brendan

348   Brendan: In terms of your business experience, or did you have business experience before you set this up? or where you was that in terms of freelance?

349   Una: Um I was never (.) eh I had (.) my taxes were well organised, my invoicing was well organised, I was never shy about sending in the invoice and chasing it up and everything um yet (.) um I had I was registered for VAT which a <u>lot</u> of freelancers aren't I'm <u>surprised</u> to see, um but (.) I had no experience in business. Um the biggest mistake I made starting the business was to think that I can hire people to understand that for me, you know?

350   Brendan: Right.

351   Una: Eh so our first employee who eventually quit and went on to work with a company that we didn't want to work with um she had handled our accounts payable and accounts receivable and um (.) my reli- my clear reliance on her for that I think gave her an inflated sense of how important she was in the business and I, I probably gave her that impression anyway. You know, >'it's you and me'< you know? Um but I think because I was so, I used to glaze over looking at financial things I just, and when I can't understand something and I get so frustrated I just drop it instead of especially money things I felt like I couldn't understand it and I'm not like that at all now, I can read the financial statements

352   Brendan: Okay.

353   Una: I know what they mean, I know how much we need to invoice every month, I know how much is in the bank at all times, I know what our monthly outgoings are um (.) all are these numbers are up here now whereas before they were on a piece of paper somewhere and she knew about them but you know, I didn't

354   Brendan: Okay.

355   Una: so we hired a- I also didn't realise that we needed a bookkeeper as well as somebody to look after

356   Brendan: Right.

357   Una: the, send off the invoices and stuff, we didn't realise that, we didn't have our accounts formalised

358   Brendan: Mm-mm.

359   Una: The first thing he did was see that we were owed five grand from the Irish Examiner and um the lady who was doing the accounts was like 'I kinda of thought they might owe us something but I wasn't sure though' so he paid for himself immediately.

360   Brendan: [laughing] Right.

361   Una: Um but again there was time where I was paying when, when he first started with us that again I thought he, as long as he understands it I don't need to.

362   Brendan: Okay yeah.

363   Una: And it was only when we (.) had a (.) a couple of consulting days with a friend of mine who does consulting um kindly agreed to do this kind of strategy days with me that, that I realised that that I have to take ownership of these things that scare me

364   Brendan: Mmhh.

365   Una: or I will be forever enslaved to people who who I hire to understand them for me.

<u>Source:</u> Transcript from 31 minutes 36.5 seconds to 34 minutes 22.3 seconds of audio record of 76-minute interview between 'Una' and Brendan.

Extract UB 13 does mark a rise of enterprise talk to displace the strategy talk of Extract UB12. Una talks about "the biggest mistake I made starting the business was to think that I can hire people to understand that for me…" (Turn 349). It seems that 'the biggest mistake in business' is concerned with financial knowledge as this is further explained in Turn 351 as: "I used to glaze over looking at financial things I just, and when I can't understand something and I get so frustrated I just drop it instead of especially money things I felt like I couldn't understand it and I'm not like that at all now, I can read the financial

statements". In Turns 351-359 Una tells a tale of an ex-employee who "handled our accounts payable and accounts receivable" but turned out not be very good, and then of hiring somebody else who was more of a success. However, "...it was only when we (.) had a (.) a couple of consulting days with a friend of mine who does consulting um kindly agreed to do this kind of strategy days with me that, that I realised that that I have to take ownership of these things that scare me" (Turn 363) "or I will be forever enslaved to people who who I hire to understand them for me" (Turn 365). Note how this constructs the important business experience needed as financial expertise, a fact that was discovered in "kind of strategy days" (Turn 363). The word strategy is explicitly mentioned in this extract and some elements of the collective nature of business are associated with strategy in the use of 'we' (Turns 351, 353, 355, 357, 363), 'our' (Turns 351 and 357) and 'us'(Turns 361). Nevertheless, the concerns here are characteristic of enterprise discourse, which is more concerned with the autonomous individual than the collective strategy of the firm. 'We', 'our' and 'us' are not as frequently used throughout the extract as 'I', 'me' and 'mine'. The point, stressed by Una, of acquiring the financial knowledge is an enterprise one: "to take ownership of the things that scare me" is to be autonomous and not 'enslaved' to others (Turn 363). Both ownership and autonomy are very much concerns of the enterprise discourse. Here, too, Una again handles the issue of employees, which seems to be a common concern in her and Paul's talk; she secures autonomy *from* her employees through gaining the knowledge to take control of the company's finances.

Extract UB 14 from an interview between Una and Brendan

366 Brendan: Right, right. So um that's, that's interesting. Did you, I mean were your parents involved in business↑ or eh, just from your background it's eh, you know ((reference to Una's non-business primary degree)) ya doesn't seem a typical[

367 Una: No]

368 Brendan: background for an entrepreneur.

369 Una: <My mother was a chemist working in a la, lab, a quality control lab. My father was a labourer who (.) has an Irish um folk band in ((name of a large USA city)) and bred racing greyhounds at the weekend↑

370 Brendan: So a bit of a business there [laughs]

371 Una: Yeah, we had a lot of business. They, they, three, three businesses that he was trying to run but um no there is no, eh although my sister studied business and then got her, her Master's in finance and she's a <u>serious</u> business person I never had any of that. Again she didn't start her own business. I don't think entrepreneurial-ness has anything to do with (3)

372 Brendan: [Training.

373 Una: having a] business head or being about business (.)

Source: Transcript from 34 minutes 22.3 seconds to 35 minutes 33.7 seconds of audio record of 76-minute interview between 'Una' and Brendan.

In Extract UB 14, which follows immediately on from Extract UB 13, Una's enterprise discourse falls away and strategic discourse rises once again. The rise of the strategy talk is after I ask her about her possible entrepreneurial background (Turn 366). Una then recalls the careers of her parents, taking her time in listing the unusual combination of three activities by her father (Turn 369). This list finishes with a rising intonation that suggests that my amused response in Turn 370 is expected. In Turn 371 Una, while explicitly saying that her family "had a lot of business" experience, quickly seems to dismiss the importance of this by saying "but um no there is no," – presumably this is meant as an answer to my last question back in Turn 366: "were your parents involved in business↑". This interpretation is supported by: "eh although my sister studied business and then got her, her Masters in finance and she's a serious business person I never had any of that. Again she didn't start her own business" (again Turn 371). This greater valuation of what strategy, as opposed to enterprise, discourse holds dear (planning, expertise, rationality) is made explicit in this extract when Una states that she does not think "entrepreneurial-ness has anything to do with … having a business or being about business" (Turns 371-373). This is reminiscent of her reluctance to allow for creativity and spontaneity in business as opposed to either the content creation or ideas generation (Extract UB 10) or in her professional capacity as a journalist (Extract UB 11). In this extract, business needs finance and planning – analytics of strategy – but any specifically entrepreneurial skill seems to be dismissed.

Between the end of Extract UB 14 and the beginning of Extract UB 15 there is a gap of about a minute and a half. During this time I ask Una about some details I had read about her company, held by the CRO, that I didn't understand and she clarified these informational issues for me. I also asked about her change from her previous career to journalism – these exchanges were full of information that would identify Una and did not seem to have anything to add to the analysis.

Extract UB 15 from an interview between Una and Brendan

390   Brendan: Right, right
391   Una: because as I've later, much later learned, a journalist who can craft beautiful copy <u>and</u> obey deadlines is <u>gold dust</u>
392   Brendan: Yeah.
393   Una: and I think editors are always hopeful that they might find one of those at the end of the phone
394   Brendan: [laughs]
395   Una:so they never totally close the door
396   Brendan: Okay.
397   Una: Even <u>I</u>, when I, the calls that I, I must get (.) maybe four or five dozen CVs a year from people, and that's not a huge amount but that is big enough.
398   Brendan: Mm-mm.
399   Una: I don't ever say never, never say never
400   Brendan: Right.
401   Una: Never say never say I'll keep it on file and keep in touch with me and the really promising ones I say please call me back, once a month, until I give you some work because I would like to work with you I just don't have anything right now.
402   Brendan: Yeah right.
403   Una: That's how one one Australian guy who's working for us <u>from the UK</u> has started to work for us, because he did call me two months in a row and then I finally said <u>yes</u> we have space for you so um (.) the um ((Una profession before becoming a journalist)) certainly prepared for rejection. I haven't had a lot of rejections in this but it's um (.) it is (.) it is frustrating to me (.) that our sales are not more successful, that we're not <u>selling</u> more.
404   Brendan: Mm-mm.
405   Una: Because I think we can cope with more, I just feel like that that's something that I fall down on. People tell me that I'm a natural to sell our, our business or services because I can talk to people, I can tell them what we can do for them but it is a very tense one on one thing and it's not a cold call,
406   Brendan: Uh-huh.
407   Una: Eh so that's, that's the one frustration I have. I'm quite happy in the business.

<u>Source:</u> Transcript from 37 minutes 9.2 seconds to 38 minutes 53.9 seconds of audio record of 76-minute interview between 'Una' and Brendan.

In Extract UB 15 Una deals with the issue of freelance writers. She constructs the craft and skills of writing as deep and solid, and valued highly in the market: "a journalist who can craft beautiful copy <u>and</u> obey deadlines is <u>gold dust</u>" (Turn 391). This theme of 'Craftwork' is put forward along with a fairly solid embrace of business practices. Una values freelancers and talks about how editors like her "never totally close the door" (Turn 395) despite the "maybe four or five dozen CVs a year from people" (Turn 397). So while she may not have work for a particular freelance journalist at any one particular time (Turn 401), it is not a market that is one-sided against the craftsperson or journalist because the good ones (Turn 391) are like gold-dust. This fits in with the way Una constructed her employees earlier as autonomous agents that could not be kept "in a job that they don't want to be in" (Extract UB 11, Turn 307). This topic concerning employees and free-lancers, like the Australian guy working from the UK for Una's Irish company (Turn 403), slides – but not smoothly (note Turn

403's disfluencies) –   into an issue of frustration for Una. This is the issue of sales where she admits "it's um (.) it is (.) it is frustrating to me (.) that our sales are not more successful, that we're not <u>selling</u> more" (Turn 403). Quickly the positivity common to strategy and enterprise talk reasserts itself as Una mitigates this seemingly singular frustration: "Eh so that's, that's the one frustration I have. I'm quite happy in the business" (Turn 407). Perhaps this minor frustration of Turns 403-407 communicates what she explicitly stated in Turn 402 – that she is prepared for rejections – and so reinforces that this is a market where the suppliers and buyers are equal.

Between the end of Extract UB 15 and the beginning of Extract UB 16 there is a gap of over three minutes. During this time Una talked of the specifics of her career, with dates and details of that and of her family.

Extract UB 16 from an interview between Una and Brendan

418   Brendan: And you worked worked for PaddyNet ((pseudonym for another business publication)) at one stage, didn't you?
419   Una: Yes (4) I was its first proper editor it had an editor before that but I was the editor for probably two and half, three years almost.
420   Brendan: So you kind of, you got to know that business fairly well, did you?
421   Una: Yea I was- you mean what business? Publishing? Or?
422   Brendan: Yes.
423   Una: Yes. Ya
424   Brendan: And as editor you would have been reasonably close to management and commercial decisions as well.
425   Una: <Yes> Em. < We had an ad manager and we had a publisher who knew nothing about our title.> His He had bought the title from the previous publisher, and he proudly proclaimed that he knew nothing about technology, so we continued to be profitable enough so that was fine, we were left to do our own thing. Em. But that's when I learned to make a business case for things, and I showed them the freelance rates across the industry, showed them that we were paying not enough and weren't going to get the good quality, and they told that they were actually going to offer me a position <u>on their board</u> as a non-executive director
426   Brendan: Em
427   Una: when I was leaving, when I finally quit I kept trying to quit and they wouldn't let me quit, and ((unclear)) was like, I want to offer you a position and it's a non-executive director of the company because I think you've got a good business head
428   Brendan:Em
429   Una: blah blah and I guess that was the first indication to me that maybe I could do business.
<u>Source:</u> Transcript from 42 minutes 17.7 seconds to 43 minutes 44.1 seconds of audio record of 76-minute interview between 'Una' and Brendan.

In Extract UB 16, Una both builds her ability as a manager and a strategist and yet again seems to give more attention to her expertise as a journalist than as a business person. Talking about her experience in another publication, she identifies herself as the publication's "first proper editor" (Turn 419). I offer the assumption that she must have "got to know the business fairly well" (Turn 420). This requires some

clarification as Una wonders what business I mean. This may be for a variety of reasons. For example, later in the interview (Turn 443, see Extract UB 17 below), it is mentioned that there was some tension with this other publication over intellectual property rights of material Una had generated while working as a freelancer. Perhaps she is being careful about possible accusations that might be built on to any admittance about knowing that business well. For whatever reason, it takes another prompt by me in Turn 424 for Una to expand on her 'business' experience while working with that company. This business experience is talked mostly in terms of warrants of Una's competence rather than tales of the processes by which she acquired her business expertise. In Turn 425 Una points out that the publication's owners – not knowing a lot about the business – were happy that "we continued to be profitable so that was fine, we were left to do our thing.": This shows that Una can do business but leaves its skills and competences within a black box. Still in Turn 425, there is a brief insight into a process of how Una acquired some business competence: "But that's when I learned to make a business case for things, and I showed them the freelance rates across the industry, showed them that we were paying not enough and weren't going to get the good quality, and they told that they were actually going to offer me a position on their board as a non-executive director". Note how the actual business process is quickly dealt with and we are soon back to an external assessment of Una as a competent business person – the offer to make her a board member (Turn 427). Her report of this external assessment of her as "having a good business head" is repeated and expanded in Turns 427 and Turn 429, warranting her business competence further. In Turn 429 the details of others' praise of her competence is reduced to "blah, blah" but it still remains "the first indication to that maybe I could do business", which amounts to a strong argument – by its very understatement – for her business competence.

Between the end of Extract UB 16 and the beginning of Extract UB 17 there is a gap of over a minute. During this time I ask Una about the size of this company she worked for in comparison to her own. She considers briefly but quickly answers with a tall and amusing tale, that I show my gullibility in taking seriously before I join in the laughter and the joke. While this passage is both amusing and could perhaps with full explication add to the interpretation that matters of company growth create difficulties for Una's talk (argued elsewhere in any case), the revealing nature of the joke for those involved precludes its full presentation here.

Extract UB 17 from an interview between Una and Brendan

440   Brendan: So you were- did you leave that to set up- (.) eh TronCom?

441   Una: >Yes, I <u>specifically</u> left that to set up TronCom. I left that and I was doing- in like autumn, September, October time, after having tried to leave in April, I <u>definitely</u> left in September/October and I was doing all these consultant reports and getting good references from web development companies- ((two names of large Irish companies with well-developed websites)) a lot of the big names, were getting me to write their strategy for where they should go down the road- not that I really knew, but I knew more about the internet than they did< (.) and I've seen over time they <u>have</u> implemented a lot of the suggestions I made,

442   Brendan: Mmm hmmm

443   Una: Em so em yeah, >we took material that I'd written for PaddyNet and a few other publications that I was writing for, and I used it to populate our website, and th- the people at PaddyNet said, hmm, I notice that you've done that, and I said you know, I'm a freelancer, you'd <u>never</u> given me a full-time job and it's my copyright<

444   Brendan: Yeah, yeah, so, tough.

445   Una: Yea

446   Brendan: <Em (5) In terms of, em, hmm working with the the folks at em, PaddyNet> was there anybody that you particularly learned from there, or was it a kind sss-

447   Una: MMm

448   Brendan: of jump in the deep end and swim?

449   Una: No, I went in as the top person on editorial. >It would have been <u>so much better for me</u> <if I'd been working under somebody (.) but I didn't. I learned things through my editors ((name of publication's location))

450   Brendan: That's in the [((name of publication))

451   Una: ((name of publication))], yeah. Em (.) About asking tough questions and (.) about asking <u>any</u> <u>question</u>, because I was given a press release and two hours later I hadn't made any phone calls on it, and he said what's up? And I said, well I don't know <u>anything</u> about this guy's company, I cannot ask, I cannot come up and not know anything, ask some stupid question. He said, there's no such thing as a stupid question, >you've the best job in the world↑-<because you can ask <u>any question</u> <u>you want</u> and he has to tell you everything.

452   Brendan: ((laughs))

453   Una: Your job isn't to know all about his business, <u>his job</u> is to know all about his business, you just ask questions. It was just my passport to <u>all</u> kinds of journalism because I (.) I found myself in the position where- writing for computer trade magazine when when I came here first

454   Brendan: Mmmh

455   Una: when I came back here as a freelancer, and I had to ask companies very, very basic questions and <u>they were so nice to me</u>. Not one person said,God! you should know this stuff (.) [You know?

456   Brendan: ((laughs))]

<u>Source:</u> Transcript from 44 minutes 59.7 seconds to 47 minutes 41.8 seconds of audio record of 76-minute interview between 'Una' and Brendan.

In Turn 441 another warrant is produced for Una's business strategic competence in the form of others' judgement of the consultancy reports she produced on internet strategy for large and successful companies. Again, this argumentation for her strategic competence is made in an evidence- or results-based way. Furthermore, this strategic competence seems to be in the area of producing strategic reports that are 'implemented' without any involvement by Una in the application of these plans. In Turn 446 I ask "was there anybody that you particularly learned from there, or was it a kind of sw- of jump in the deep end and swim?" Una's reply to this focuses purely on

journalism and neglects any possible business learning: "No, I went in as the top person in editorial." She then harks back to an earlier job where she did learn a lot as a journalist, and it is interesting to note that, as she talks about this learning, it is represented very differently from the evidence-by-results approach she has been using to talk about her business competence. Turns 449-455 are full of the process of how she learned journalism. She learns about the process of "asking hard questions and (.) asking any question" (Turn 451). Una then tells without any further prompting two stories of how this basic lesson of asking questions has been "just my passport to all kinds of journalism" (Turn 453). So, in Turns 418-455 at least, Una seems to use a different type of talk to discuss her journalism expertise from that which she uses to show her business competence. Journalism learning is reported in a much more process-oriented way whereas business competence is evidenced by achievement perceived by others. It is true that elsewhere in the interview the process of business lessons is discussed (Turns 349 to 365, Extract UB 13). It is also true that journalism is discussed in terms of others' perception of Una's product (Turn 164, Extract UB 7) where a reader is reported by Una as saying "'Wow, this is good'" but this proof of outcome is only *after* a telling of the process of writing the piece. However, where the process of business learning is discussed, this seems to concern much narrower areas and be briefer than where the journalism learning process is discussed. As a corollary, where evidence of journalistic competence is offered it is briefer, more confident and looser than the 'proofs' of business competence.

Figure 6.3 below portrays the ranking of journalistic, strategic and entrepreneurial learning that was at work so clearly in Extract UB 17.

Figure 6.3 Evaluation of journalistic, strategic & entrepreneurial learning

Journalistic learning, a joyfully discussed process of learning

        is more valued than

Strategic learning, defensively evidenced by warrants of outcome

        is more valued than

Entrepreneurial learning which is dismissed

Source: Abstracted by the author from an interview between 'Una' and Brendan

Figure 6.3 shows how Una constructs a kind of hierarchy in valuing learning for her business. At the top of this hierarchy is the profession of journalism, which is the first mentioned when questions are asked about learning the business. Next comes the organised, highly rational part of running a business that deals with issues and is expressed in a language that I have described as strategic. At the lowest level in the hierarchy is enterprise that in the extreme is declared as having nothing to do with business (Turns 371-373 of Extract UB 14), although the characteristics of enterprise discourse populate Una's talk. Indeed the ranking of journalism, strategy and enterprise portrayed in Figure 6.3 is only an aspect of how the discourse of strategy and enterprise are at play in Una's talk.

Figure 6.4 below provides a consolidated abstract of some of the features of the interview talk seen in Extracts UB 1 to UB 17.

Figure 6.4   Abstract of Extracts UB 1 to UB 17
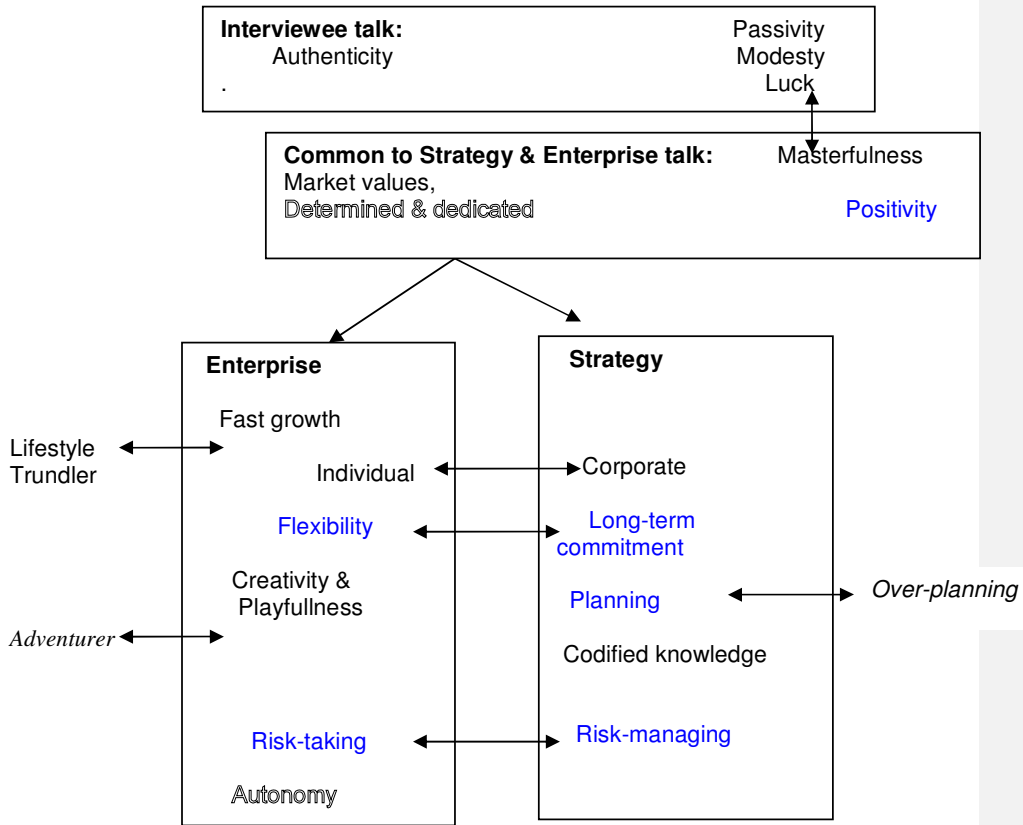
Interviewee talk:	Passivity
Authenticity	Modesty
.	Luck

Common to Strategy & Enterprise talk: Masterfulness
Market values,
Determined & dedicated   Positivity

Enterprise

Fast growth

Lifestyle Trundler ←→ Individual ←→ Corporate

Flexibility ←→ Long-term commitment

Planning ←→ Over-planning

Creativity & Playfullness

Codified knowledge

Adventurer ←→

Risk-taking ←→ Risk-managing

Autonomy

Strategy

Key to symbols in Figure

A is endowed with a particular flavour in this interviewee's talk (see discussion of figure).

A An italicised A means A is treated as undesirable or unapproved of.

Item in blue means this item is an interpretation from the latest extracts of this interview.

| A | ←→ | B | Means the A and B are in tension with one another

| A | → | B | Means B belongs to the more general category of A

| **A** B C | | Means B and C are characteristics of **A** |

Source: Abstracted by the author from interview between 'Una' and Brendan.

Many of the features of Una's talk highlighted in Figure 6.2 repeat themselves in Extracts UB 8 to UB 17. Despite the explicit denial of the business value of "entrepreneurial-ness" (Extract UB 14 Turn 371), features of enterprise talk are expanded and repeated. The 'Craftwork' flavour of Una's talk is strengthened as she uses the enterprise characteristic of autonomy to talk of the employees and freelancers that her company employs. In the literature and in Paul's interview, creativity is firmly located in enterprise discourse.As in the earlier extracts, the later ones seem to feature the shifting between dilemmatically related elements of enterprise and strategy discourse e.g. the switching between the importance of planning and the danger of over-planning.

6.5 The power of enterprise-strategy talk

Extract UB 18, following immediately on from Extract UB 17 above, illustrates *inter alia* the masterful nature of the strategy and enterprise discourses. It also constructs the autonomous nature of the entrepreneur.

Extract UB 18 from an interview between Una and Brendan

457   Una: Em, and gradually built up an expertise in IT journalism, but em the only lessons I ever learned from anybody working above me was, you know, in 1994 or 5, and I really would like the opportunity to work under somebody else because it's (.) TronCom is just a wider reflection of Una

458   Brendan: Mmm

459   Una:with all my flaws, and I'm not even able to spot or have a perspective on those flaws because I was never taught by anybody

460   Brendan: It's quite a lonely business isn't it, running one's own business?

461   Una: Mmmh↑- that's why I do love the fact that ((Charles)) and I (.) work together on it because he knows where I'm at, and also my ((sibling that advises on the business)), because she knows me as a person so well (.) em that people I love can share it with me

Source: Transcript from 47 minutes 41 seconds to 48 minutes 29.6 seconds of audio record of 76-minute interview between 'Una' and Brendan.

In Turn 457 Una's company TronCom, as she does not "work under somebody else … is just a wider reflection of Una". The entrepreneur, Una in this case, is therefore reproduced in the company and the company is 'just' that and presumably little else. Even Una's flaws will not be mitigated in the company since, in this discourse, the entrepreneur completely shapes the business: "with all my flaws, and I am not even able to spot or have a perspective on those flaws" (Turn 459) In this extract, this power to make the business a wider reflection of oneself seems unconstrained and unaccountable. Here too is an acknowledgement of how the personal and the business are intertwined, again a feature associated with enterprise discourse. With the personal we also have

passionate expression, another feature of enterprise discourse "...I <u>do</u> love the fact that ((Charles)) and I (.) work together on it because he knows where I'm at, and also my ((sibling that advises on the business)), because she knows me as a person so well (.) em that people I love can share it with me" (Turn 461).

Between the end of Extract UB 18 and the beginning of Extract UB 19 there is a gap of nearly two minutes. During this segment, not presented here, I generalise from Una's last remarks about the importance of trust in business. While Una politely agrees, she moves quickly to talk about getting in touch with a former employer from whom she learnt a lot. My interpretations of these turns match my interpretation of other shown segments that do not contain so much identifying information, so that segment is omitted.

Extract UB 19 from an interview between Una and Brendan

477 Una: Em (.) so they knew that I was in Ireland but I don't don't have contact with them I don't have any any kind of mentoring network or anything. Enterprise Ireland mentoring network that I got involved with, was <u>completely</u> useless to me (.)

478 Brendan: Was it? You found that totally unhelpful?

479 Una: Yeah, there was a (.) the mentor and I didn't really get along

480 Brendan: And was that just a happenstance in terms of bad matching or was the programme badly run?

481 Una: (.) Everything he said was right and I didn't believe him.

482   Brendan: (laughs)

483 Una: I just didn't want t- I didn't want to hear what he had to say, you know?

484 Brendan: So (.)(laugh)

485 Una: He was also my mentor at a time where we were <<u>practically</u> going out of business>

486 Brendan: Right

487 Una: and (.) we were in <u>major</u> survival mode (.) and (.) that would have been a good time for us to invest in the future if we had any money, but we didn't. He was suggesting things that would have made us have to spend money, we didn't have the money, but he was right, the things he said was right it was all about getting sales (proposed) . That's how I remember it anyway. I feel now that I'm putting in place his advice.

488 Brendan: Okay, so a couple of years later it's

489 Una: Yes

490 Brendan: it's of some use?

491 Una: Yes. I've also been supported twice by ((the local)) City Enterprise Board, which I consider <u>great</u> (.) percentages. Both times we applied we got funding tightly but em had an interview with a guy back then, a month or two ago, before I knew that I had the money, and he kind of made me feel like shit about my business, because he said it's a lifestyle business, your profits are too small, you're just keeping yourself busy, you don't really have more of a business, that's what [he said

492 Brendan: (laughs)]

493 Una: And I kinda wondered why I walked out of there feeling <u>bad</u>, but em (.) he was just saying, you're going to have to work harder or find some way to make more money. And I'm sure that conversation also fed my my attitude about getting a salesperson which is scary and expensive, and it's going us have a loss this year, but if we don't do it, then all of the experts- we have to listen to at some stage, say that you don't have a future unless you invest in sales by a sizeable amount not just a little amount

494 Brendan: And you talked about your ((sibling)) being good on the issue like HR. Em, what kind of HR issues (.) you know come up or work out

495 Una: Staff wanting raises, staff wanting time off to do (.) em <u>degrees</u> like Masters degrees, in the middle of the work week.

496 Brendan: Right!

497 Una: Em, moving to ((reference to Una moving her residence outside Ireland)) would , giving this guy-making this guy, this other guy director, responsibility that I'm conveying to him, away from myself em (.) managing expectations, eh firing people eh (.)

498 Brendan: Right, And she's been through that or at least [worked

499 Una: Ya, ya ,

500 Brendan: in a companies] with good systems on that?

501 Una: Well she's been in ((sibling's current company)) for a long time (.) …

<u>Source:</u> Transcript from 50 minutes 6 seconds to 53 minutes 34.5 seconds of audio record of 76-minute interview between 'Una' and Brendan.

        In Extract UB 19 Una continues her enterprise talk about learning from others.

She volunteers in Turn 477 that she does not "… have any any kind of mentoring network

or anything. Enterprise Ireland mentoring network that I got involved with, was <u>completely</u>

useless to me (.) …" This negative evaluation is unusual in the normally positive

enterprise talk. Notice how, in a move more typical of autonomous enterprise talk,

Una takes control and responsibility for this experience making an issue for her: it was she that "... got involved with... the mentoring" that turned out to be " ...completely useless to me ... " (Turn, 477). An indication of how marked this "to me" is in Turn 477 may be the fact that, in the first transcription I did, this last phrase was erroneously transcribed as "… completely useless to be honest". This mistranscription indicates that it was unexpected for an evaluation of complete uselessness to be so personally 'owned' by a speaker. This personal responsibility is again enacted in Turn 481 when Una sums up this bad mentoring experience with: "(.) Everything he said was right and I didn't believe him." This quick reconstruction of what was announced initially as "completely useless" is a repair to the break with the inherent positivity expected in any business discourse. The repair is elaborated in Turns 485-487. There is an air of the confessional about this repair, with Una making a good confession and expecting the appropriate absolution for her previous, in business discourse terms, sin of being negative about the mentor. This temporary invocation of the spirit of confession (see the discussion of Table 3.3 above) in the interview allows a return to the dramatic report of what was happening in her business. Here there is also a rising of strategy talk while enterprise falls away. Una remarks: "He was also my mentor at a time where we were <practically going out of business>" (Turn 485). Notice how there is a shift from 'my' at the start of this turn to 'we' at the end; for the next few turns the collective pronouns are more frequent. The talk here is strategic as, first, it analyses the circumstances of the time where "we were <practically going out of business>" (Turn 485) and "we were in major survival mode" (Turn 487). Secondly, this turn, too, reevaluates the mentor's advice as good for the longer-term (a very strategic time horizon) situation of the company; an analysis of conditions meant it was "a good time for us to invest in the future" (Turn 487). This strategic talk includes some element of accountability for Una as she is able to say: "I've also been supported twice by ((the local)) City Enterprise Board, which I consider great (.) percentages." (Turn 491). Una also shows that she feels accountable to such outside agencies as she tells of an advisor from the enterprise board who "...made me feel like shit about my business, because he said it's a lifestyle business, your profits are too small..." (Turn 491). That Una feels accountable on such accusations is warranted by her report of feeling negative about the comment and by sensitivity when I mentioned lifestyle business earlier in the interview. This accountability is also evident in Una partially attributing to the remark of the advisor from the enterprise board her new "...attitude about getting a salesperson which is scary

and expensive, and it's going us have a loss this year ..." (Turn 493). While she clearly has some concerns about this move, she justifies in a way that fits strategic discourse: "...then all of the experts- we have to listen to at some stage, say that you don't have a future unless you invest in sales by a sizeable amount not just a little amount ..." (Turn 493). As I change topic to ask about her sibling, Una talks of the sibling's administrative expertise partly due to the sibling being in the same company for a long time. This appreciation of long service is closer to strategy than enterprise discourse.

Between the end of Extract UB 19 and the beginning of Extract UB 20 there is a gap of over three minutes. During this segment, not presented here, Una describes in detail the specific organisation her sister works in , we briefly talk about the new director in much the same way as elsewhere in the interview and about peculiar difficulties and advantages Una felt she had as a journalist, again in ways done similarly elsewhere in the interview.

Extract UB 20 from an interview between Una and Brendan

526   Brendan: Eh, it's (.) Your, your <with your ((sibling)) and the new director and your ((Charles)) em (.) you have formal board meetings as such>

527   Una: em, em

528   Brendan: Do you find it easier in terms of getting really good advice or good helping thing to do, are the one-to-one meetings with those better than the group meetings?

529   Una: Actually, the best thing for the company is our the staff meetings where <u>everybody</u> goes.

530   Brendan: OK

531   Una: My ((Charles)) comes over for them once a month, this guy who's going to be the new director plus myself, plus our accounts payable- the new accounts payable lady who joined us a couple of years ago, we all meet and our outside technical guy who's a contractor but he's the only guy who knows about programming, so he always comes, those are the very best things for this company and for our strategic direction because everybody really does give their two cents. I I will say that it's not management by committee, because it kind of sounds like it is but I do feel that we end up taking direction that's best for the company and I make the decision but taking everybody's input

532   Brendan: Mmm

533   Una: And I think I'm quite good at managing a meeting and finding out what she thinks and finding out what he thinks, and everybody has their say.

534   Brendan: Mmm

535   Una: One thing, just one thing that is very <u>clear</u> from our <u>big</u> reassessment meeting we had back in February, when we seriously aired the idea of OK let's drop the website, let's drop the news service, let's just do corporate stuff, just to see what people would say, and I knew that we probably would never do that, but just to see what the ramifications were. <u>Nobody</u>, none of us, want to write for a company who are <u>just</u> writing brochures and case studies and news- corporate newsletters for people. We think that what we do on the news side of TronCom is noble and important and valuable for this country, good for Ireland, good for business

536   Brendan: Mmm

537   Una: Eh <u>we're all very proud of it</u> (.) And none of us would put in the kind of oomph that we do put into this company if there- if the news weren't included

538   Brendan: Mmm

539   Una: Plus, it has a serious value as a news brand that the longer and the older it gets when it's in the cask, you know (.)

540   Brendan: Right

541   Una: Once we've been around for 200 years, we'll, ya know

542   Brendan: Ya, ya

543   Una: command the kind of circulation and ad rates that dailies do, <u>but</u> (.) I- even just watching in the dot com thing, br- companies boom and bust now we're at nowhere near as big as Napster, but you might remember the Napster

544   Brendan: Yes

545   Una: completely went out of business and then went bankrupt and then was bought by somebody else, but the <u>name</u> is, and will be important as long as you will keep it alive, and we're only getting better and better and better at the coverage that we do, but just back to the fact of the staff meeting the group collaboration and seeing what people think, and be able to air their views. It's very clear that none of us want to give up the news part of the website and we never will, but it's also a great mix of skills because the techy says what is technically possible, he even comes up with ideas, and you know, techies don't talk

546   Brendan: (laughs)

547   Una: eh with- and so it's very exciting to see him contribute.

<u>Source</u>: Transcript from 56 minutes 44.8 seconds to 59 minutes 59.6 seconds of audio record of 76-minute interview between 'Una' and Brendan.

Extract 20 opens with me asking about formal board meetings and their usefulness. Una remarks that "Actually, the best thing for the company is our the staff meetings where <u>everybody</u> goes" (Turn 529). This kind of emphasis on the entire firm

being involved is the characteristic holistic overview common to strategy and enterprise talk. These planned regular meeting "... are the very best things for this company and for our strategic direction because everybody really does give their two cents...." (Turn 531). Despite everybody having a say at these meetings. Una reminds us of her power when she asserts "...,I will say that it's not management by committee ...." (Turn 531). Furthermore, although everybody in the company contributes to the meeting, it is Una who leads this teamwork: "...I'm quite good at managing a meeting and finding out what she thinks and finding out what he thinks, and everybody has their say" (Turn 533). Again, Una seems to introduce notions of a craft-like inherent value in the work as she reports of a company meeting where it was clear that "...<u>Nobody</u>, none of us, want to write for a company who are <u>just</u> writing brochures and case studies and news- corporate newsletters for people. We think that what we do on the news side of TronCom is noble and important and valuable for this country, good for Ireland, good for business" (Turn 535). As the last tripartite flourish makes clear, this valuation of the work involves an appeal to patriotism and to business values but also regards the work as noble in itself. The entrepreneurial spirit that might often be seen as animating a company with passion is linked here more with a pride in the Craftwork of the job being done for, without this pride in the journalistic side of the work, Una remarks, "... none of us would put in the kind of oomph that we do put into this company if there- if the news weren't included" (Turn 537). The craft of newsmaking is likened to a craft such as wine-making where value grows: "...the longer and the older it gets when it's in the cask" (Turn 539). This involves a kind of longer-term perspective than is usual in business, even in the more long-term discourse of strategy: "...Once we've been around for 200 years, we'll, ya know" (Turn 541). Despite this flavour of craft it is hard not to hear that Una is very much its strategic leader. As this topic concludes, Una brings us "...just back to the fact of the staff meeting the group collaboration and seeing what people think, and be able to air their views..." (Turn 545). It is Una who ensures that this meeting works (recall Turn 533's claim by Una that she was good at managing meetings) as without her it is doubtful that the team members would contribute: "...because the techy says what is technically possible, he even comes up with ideas, and you know, techies don't talk" (Turn 545). Though argued with a lot of Craftwork notions intertwined, it is hard to miss that Una's interest –it is so "...very exciting to see him contribute" (Turn 547) – is more business-focused.

Extract UB 21 follows Extract UB 20 immediately.

Extract UB 21 from an interview between Una and Brendan

548   Brendan: In terms of- you were talking about the boom and bust which was so marked, it's actually one of the reasons I really like this sector

549   Una: Uhmm

550   Brendan: because you really have been a true rollercoaster in the last six or seven years,

551   Una: Uhmm

552   Brendan: how do you think your thinking has changed over that time? I mean, you talked about being in survival mode

553   Una: Uhmm

554   Brendan: was that eh, something limited your vision or was it something that vision wasn't important, it was just a matter of keeping it afloat? Or do you think it had an effect on you?

555   Una: The boom?

556   Brendan: The boom and the bust, yea

557   Una: The boom and the bust affected us because our original market disappeared <u>overnight</u>. Our original market was selling- reselling our news content to other people (.) and attracting advertising sponsorship revenue (.) on the news side <u>and</u> working with marketing departments of government and and commercial organisations to do do newsletters and brochures and things for them. When everybody <u>stops</u> spending money on advertising and sponsorship <u>overnight</u>, and when website portals collapse because they've spent 250 million on content

558   Brendan: mmm

559   Una: the news licensing disappearing was a huge blow to us because we were making, you know, >two, three, four< grand a month just from news licensing in 2000 and zero now, well not zero,

560   Brendan: [ya, ya

561   Una:Like we're very small] now, and that was a big revenue stream that paid two salaries right

562   Brendan: Right

563   Una: from us- right from the getgo em so the earthquake just completely swallowed us, or could have swallowed us, if we didn't have the other revenue stream because news licensing <u>completely</u> disappeared

564   Brendan: Right

565   Una: but we had a much bigger kind of sister- we call it - not a sister publication, but we used each other's content, we had this publishing agreement with ((name of foreign publishing company)) they went through the same exact thing we did, they were making <u>millions</u> from news licensing and then they were making <u>hundreds.</u> They they hired more journalists and then they fired them and just kept a few core ones and we had to go through the same thing. Em. What saved us is our ability to (.) get- well we had the corporate streams going. Yes, corporates cut down on their ad and marketing spending but em one of our clients was in the government and then we got another government client and they never stopped spending really, so that was helpful for us. But the boom and bust also gave us a quick tutorial in business because we were able to (.) em chart the rise and rise and rise↑ and fall↓ and failure↓ of company after company and kind of look at the mistakes they made. For example, when I was talking to my righthand man here, saying that I wanted him to move into more corporate stuff, I knew he didn't love the idea, I knew he loved writing news but even he recognises - and he said to me, '(Una) if corporate stuff is really going to be the core revenue earner of this business, I do not want to be in the fringe

566   Brendan: (laughs)

567   Una: revenue area of this business because I've seen what companies do with their (.) fringe businesses; they scale them down, they sell them off, they get rid of them eventually, <u>if</u> if there's not room in the family for everything. I do not want to be fringe, I want to be in the centre of this business.' And he's only learned that by <u>watching</u> what's happened so we had the exceptional advantage of having learned so much about business just by writing about it. So.

<u>Source:</u> Transcript from 59 minutes 59.6 seconds to 63 minutes 19.2 seconds of audio record of 76-minute interview between 'Una' and Brendan..

Extract UB 21 opens with me asking, over several turns, strategic-type

questions about the effects of the boom and bust in the sector on the company's

vision. Initially these questions are responded to by just 'Uhmms' that may be communicating or thoughtfulness. Una does respond more fully in Turn 557 with a reasonably analytical description of dramatic changes in the sector. These dramatic change are part of the external environment to which strategy pays so much attention and are referred to by Una as an "earthquake" (Turn 563) that affected not only TronCom but also "a much bigger kind of sister- we call it - not a sister publication" (Turn 565) in another country. This external strategically analysed difficulty meant that Una's company was under threat but "... What saved us is our ability to (.) get- well we had the corporate streams going" (Turn 565). This strategic response is now contrasted with the talk of loving the craft of writing as Una tells the story of a particular employee who "... loved writing news but even he recognises- and he said to me '(Una) if corporate stuff is really going to be the core revenue earner of this business, I do not want to be in the fringe… … revenue area of this business because I've seen what companies do with their (.) fringe businesses; they scale them down, they sell them off, they get rid of them eventually, if if there's not room in the family for everything. I do not want to be fringe, I want to be in the centre of this business...'" (Turn 565-567). Here cold strategy talk deals with the passion of Craftwork.

Between the end of Extract UB 21 and the beginning of Extract UB 22, there is a gap of nearly three minutes. During this segment, not presented here, we discuss some details of Una's career during which it becomes explicit in what I say that I regard Una's past as unusual for an entrepreneur. Though much of this segment contains details that would identify Una (and thus the segment's exclusion from publication here) the following quote from Una is worth noting:

It seems quite (.) sensible to me. …. and I didn't get enough work, and what was always in the back of my mind was, >I want to write< this isn't really doing it for me, I want to write. I was lying in bed one night, thinking, what if this is my death bed, and I knew that I could feel myself falling asleep now what if this was me actually dying, losing my strength and dying, and the first thing that occurred to me, this was in 199(.)2/3, was, oh my God, I've never published anything. And the first thing, I swear that is exactly what happened. (Brendan: That's fascinating) I had this death-bed epiphany, kind of dress rehearsal one night
(Turns 581-583)

This self-described 'death-bed epiphany', reminiscent of some of Paul's talk (e.g. Extract PB 7),   arose as I sought from Una a more typical entrepreneur performance. As I ask about the unusual nature of her entrepreneurial background, there is a rare example where Una performs authenticity to such a level that she talks of "me actually dying" (Turn 581) and goes so far as to "swear that is exactly what happened" (Turn 581). Although this authenticity fits well with the discourse expected of an

interviewee, it does not have the New Thought flavour of Paul's talk that might link it more with features of enterprise; it is rather central to her performance as an open and honest interviewee, revealing her passion for the craft of writing, as illustrated by the refrain of ".... >I want to write< .... I want to write…" (Turn 581).

Extract UB 22 from an interview between Una and Brendan

588   Brendan: It's interesting. I suppose it it's seems a very logical move, having spotted the opportunity of TronCom. Em. I suppose as a kind of management researcher (.) antecedents of entrepreneurs are an interesting sort of topic, and it's fascinating to come across, eh no standard text

589   Una: Um-h

590   Brendan: book explanation in your case! [(laughs)

591   Una: Yes.] I did. I will tell you about a pattern in- that I've noticed in my life that might partially account for this. When I do a job, I I can do it, and then I start wondering why they don't do it better? Why the management hasn't thought better way to do this. So I was working in typing pools in ((an insurance company in a USA city)) when I was 18, and we had these typewriters and every day we would type out Form Letter B, which is what you type to the guy who put in a claim for his car insurance because he was in a car crash, and did nobody ever notice that you could store information in these typewriters? You could store up to like 3 paragraphs of text. So I just showed them how to program in the Letter B, and then you could just go like this every time, and they're like (.)

592   Brendan: ((laughter))

593   Una: And before that, when I was working in a florist, at the age of 15, 16, 17, I was getting to the stage where I was leaving high school and I wasn't going to be there anymore and I said to Dick, who owned the company, you've never written down how you do anything, you've never said okay, this is how we do funeral arrangements, this is how we do whatever, and I guess I I so I spent two months in the back room writing up a little manual of how this company works. And then with I think maybe that's what happened when I worked for dot.ie. And then I started working in the publishing industry, and I was writing about technology, I was writing for two, three, four technology publishers, or people who publish technology stuff, none of these publishers were using any of the technology that we were writing about, for their own industry, and I was like

594   Brendan: ((laughs))

595   Una: Why aren't any of you running a website, or running an email newsletter? And they you know, don't want ta erode our revenue streams, why would anybody buy the publication if we had a website. And I was like, <I think to have to look at the big picture here>

596   Brendan: yea yea

597   Una: So, I thought, some- there should be a publisher who uses all of this technology to build a publication from nothing, and I wanted to create an Irish version of ((USA publishing company))

598   Brendan: Right, right

599   Una: and that was very explicitly what I was trying to do with TronCom.

600   Brendan: OK

601   Una:And I think that that's where that comes from, as soon as I'm able to do something, I always wonder why the management didn't do it better, and then when I have the tools and the ability and the knowledge, I I did end up doing it myself.

602   Brendan: Like a bigger picture from what you're doing on a day to day basis?

603   Una: Yeah. I like, em. If I'm If I'm doing a job for someone else, I can't help thinking how they could do it better, and I think that's why maybe I did do pretty well in my- those internet strategy reports because I was able to look at ((job involving two big Irish companies)), and say this is, you should think about

604   Brendan:Right.

605   Una: doing XYZee but em (.)

Extract UB 22 opens with me asking once more about any entrepreneurial aspect of Una's business. Though I mention the logical side of business, I do so in a grudging sort of way that seems to be seeking another sort of answer: "I supposed it it's seems logical" (Turn 588). The kind of answer that I'm seeking seems clear from my language: "spotted the opportunity" and "antecedents of entrepreneurs" (Turn 588). Una's response gives no weight to this entrepreneurial approach and instead she talks "....about a pattern in- that I've noticed in my life that might partially account for this. When I do a job, I I can do it, and then I start wondering why they don't do it better? Why the management hasn't thought better way to do this...." (Turn 591). This accounting for patterns represents a rising up of strategy talk. The holistic overview common to strategy and enterprise talk is also present in: "....And I was like, <I think to have to look at the big picture here>" (Turn 595), and in the stress on creating codified knowledge in a formal-planning sort of way, such as spending "... two months in the back room writing up a little manual of how this company works..." (Turn 593). This categorisation of her talent as strategic and analytical is backed up by her pointing out that the same talent was at work when she did "... pretty well in my- those internet strategy reports because I was able to look at ((job involving two big Irish companies)), , and say this is, you should think about" (Turn 603).

While the interview continues for over six minutes after the end of Extract 22, the discussion in this period was a winding down of the interview, with both of us checking that the other did not want to raise anything else, with me asking Una for permission and information for me to contact her other directors, and general pleasantries on concluding the interview. This last segment is therefore not presented here.

Figure 6.5 below summarises the foregoing analysis of Extracts UB 18 to UB 22 and includes with this the findings of the earlier analysis of UB 1 to UB 7, and of UB 8 to UB 17.

Figure 6.5   Abstract of Extracts UB 1 to UB 22

Interviewee talk:	Passivity
	Modesty
Authenticity	Luck

Common to Strategy & Enterprise talk:	Masterfulness
Market values	Positivity
Holisitic overview	Determined & dedicated

Enterprise

Fast Growth

Lifestyle Trundler

Individual ⟷ Corporate

Flexibility → Long-term commitment

Patriotism   Planning ← *Over-planning*

Experience ⟷ Codified knowledge

Adventurer   Risk-taking ← Risk-managing

Creativity & Playfulness

Autonomy ⟷ Accountability

Strategy

Key to symbols in Figure

𝔸 is endowed with a particular flavour in this interviewee's talk (see discussion of figure).

A An italicised A means A is treated as undesirable or unapproved of.

Item in blue means this item is an interpretation from the latest extracts of this interview.

| A | ⟷ | B | Means the A and B are in tension with one another

| A | → | B | Means B belongs to the more general category of A

| **A** |
| B |
| C | Means B and C are characteristics of **A**

Source: Abstracted by the author from interview between 'Una' and Brendan.

In Figure 6.5 above, new elements from extracts UB 17 to UB 22 have been rendered in blue to show their more recent origin. Elements of Figures 6.2 and 6.3 have been repeated and rearranged where the later analysis of Extracts UB 17 to UB 22 and/or the overall analysis of the interview now available warranted it. Figure 6.4 thus serves as a consolidated summary of my interpretation of UB 1 to UB 22.

The upper box of Figure 6.5 contains the same features of interviewee talk illustrated by Paul, as these features again emerged during the interview between Una and me: in the various extracts, Una performed as a good interviewee, showing her talk to be authentic, willing to be passive in letting me lead the interview, illustrating modesty and showing the role of luck in her therefore more credible story. Again, as with Paul, at times passivity, modesty and luck were at tension with the masterfulness – illustrated in Figure 6.5 as being a common characteristic of strategy and enterprise talk. Other common characteristics that occurred when strategy and enterprise were being performed were: the demonstration of the importance of a holistic viewpoint (really only evident late in the interview with Una, in Extract UB 20 and UB 22); the ultimate valuation of things by the market; and the importance of dedication and positivity. In contrast to Paul, Una seemed more tolerant of negativity, never explicitly condemning it as Paul did, and sometimes even allowing herself to express negative appraisals (e.g. the initial evaluation of the role of the mentor in Extract UB 19). However, Una did stick to the positivity common to enterprise talk, working to repair and place in an overall positive context any negative assessments.

The dilemmatic relationship, evident in the interview with Paul, between those features of talk exclusive to enterprise and strategy, is again noticeable in the interview with Una. This is illustrated in Figure 6.5, in a manner similar to Figure 5.4, where I have listed in separate boxes – headed by enterprise in the left-hand box and strategy in the right-hand box – features peculiar to the performance of enterprise and strategy talk respectively. Again, as with the interview with Paul, the features exclusive to enterprise and strategy discourse tend to occur in dilemmatic pairings. Some of these dilemmatic pairing are the same in the interview with Una as they are with Paul (e.g. risk-taking and risk-managing); others are at least more clearly expressed in one interview than another view. For example, the tension between flexibility and long-term commitment is clear in the interview with Una but not in the interview with Paul. In a contrasting example, in the interaction with Una there was

no clear tension between Una's enterprise talk of playfulness and any element of the strategy talk, whereas Paul's playfulness seemed in a clear balance with a calculative element of strategy. Unlike in my interpretation of Paul's talk, there are some elements peculiar to strategy (e.g. the formal nature of strategy) and enterprise (e.g. playfulness) talk, where the dilemmatic opposite of the feature is not clear from the talk. This may be due to the fact that the 'Craftwork' flavour of Una's talk does not suit enterprise-strategy as well as the 'New Thought' flavour of Paul's talk.

In Figure 6.5 I have highlighted certain words **(authenticity, determined & dedicated, autonomy,** and **patriotism)** that have a Craftwork flavour to them. Though it was clear that creativity and patriotism were elements of Paul's enterprise talk, this was not as apparent in Una's talk where their heavy flavouring of Craftwork made it ambiguous. Lacking such clear evidence in this interview, I therefore leave creativity and patriotism outside the enterprise-strategy talk in Figure 6.5.

Again, as with Paul's interview, there were some extremes beyond enterprise-strategy talk that were disapproved of but highlighted what was acceptable in enterprise-strategy discourse. For example, Una makes clear that being a lifestyle trundler in the sense of just having a small non-growing company is disapproved of in enterprise talk where fast growth is the desirable attribute.

6.6 Conclusion

One of the advantages in presenting the interview with Una is that it has a strong flavour of another discourse that is at times almost hostile to enterprise. This Craftwork flavour is central to the way Una talks about her work. The craft of journalism is something she holds in high esteem. On the other hand, she seems at times contemptuous of enterprise. The strategy element of business seems to be held in higher regard (Turns 371-373 of Extract UB 14 show respect for such 'serious' business). Despite the low regard she shows at times for enterprise, Una performs her discourse in such a way as to secure her identities as both an entrepreneur and a strategist. In her coupling of an explicit disregarding of enterprise with a *virtuoso* performance of its discourse, Una was not alone in the interviews carried out during this project. Another woman whose interview is not presented here did the same thing, ending an interview with what might be described as a passionate polemic against

entrepreneurialism despite her almost flawless demonstration of all the entrepreneurial attributes to which she seemed deeply committed (O'Rourke & Pitt, 2006).

CHAPTER 7 THE INTERVIEW WITH EOIN

7.1 Introduction

In this chapter I provide a detailed analysis of the last of the three interviews selected for presentation. This interview again shows the creativity with which the discourses of strategy and enterprise are used.

The interview analysed here is with 'Eoin'. The next section of this chapter gives a brief overview of the interview including a breakdown of it into three parts for further analysis. The third, fourth and fifth sections of this chapter provide the analysis of each of these three parts in turn. At the end of each of these sections, cumulative abstractions of how the discourses of strategy and enterprise are deployed are given in graphic form (Figures 7.2, 7.3 and 7.4). The final section of this chapter provides a commentary on the operation of discourses throughout the interview.

7.2 Overview of interview

Eoin is the founder and owner-manager of Diverse Media. Eoin and I had not met each other previously. An email sent to Eoin prior to the interview declared that the "research is about strategic thinking" and involved "unstructured face to face interviews with directors of small to medium sized-enterprises".

It took a number of attempts to get to talk to Eoin, with various contacts being made over a five-month period. When I eventually spoke with Eoin, he was very businesslike and professional and said it would suit him to call to my office since he had a business meeting nearby. On the morning of the interview he arrived a little (less than 30 minutes) late, apologised and was keen to proceed with the interview in a friendly but business-like way. Eoin declined the offer of coffee and we sat opposite each other with the recording device placed on my desk between us. In contrast to Una, Eoin's style was generally understated; changes of tone and body language were quite subtle. He seemed easygoing compared with Paul, about letting the interview, on the whole, take its own course and was content for a certain formality between us to be maintained.

The analysis, and so verbatim transcript, of nearly 54% of this interview is presented here. The remaining 46% of the interview is not presented here. Figure 7.1 shows the 22 extracts analysed here in blue and shows in red the 12 segments of the

interview of which analysis is omitted. The sequence in which the extract or segment occurred can be read from the horizontal axis and the length of the extract or segment as a percentage of the total interview can be read from the vertical axis.

Figure 7.1 An overview of the interview between Eoin and Brendan
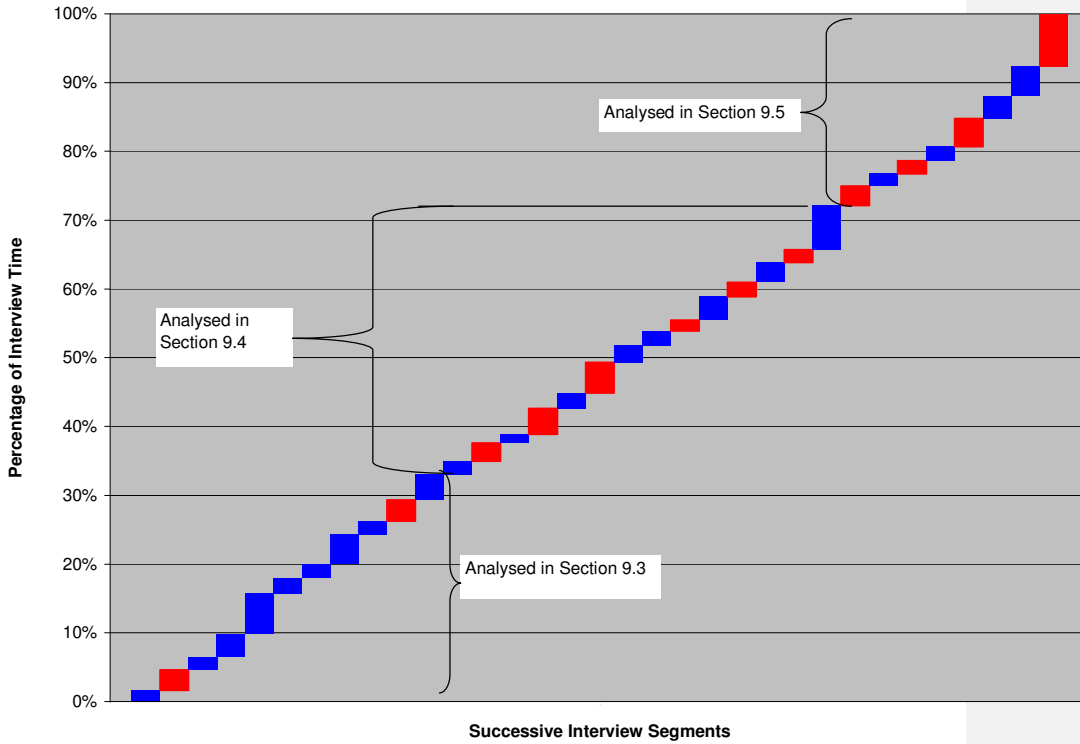
Legend ■ Extract shown i.e. a segment analysed later in this chapter

■ Omission i.e. a segment, analysis of which is not shown

Source: Derived from transcript of the 66-minute interview between Eoin and Brendan.

7.3 Introducing Eoin the businessman

The presentation of this interview begins just one minute into the interview and the relevant extract is displayed in Extract EB 1 below.

Extract EB1 from an interview between Eoin and Brendan

9 Brendan: Fair bit of crisis there, was there?

10 Eoin: (.) Emm, in what respect? (.) [Eh, towards the end?

11 Brendan: Did it] nearly go bust [then wa

12 Eoin: To] Towards the end yes, em, I mean the magazine itself would have, there was a number of magazines, ((name of magazine)) being the flagship.

13 Brendan: Yeah.

14 Eoin: We were heavily dependent on IT advertising

15 Brendan: Right.

16 Eoin: And after 9/11 the bottom fell out of the market and you know a lot of eh publishing companies and media companies in general were badly hit that year. And eh, RTE ((Irish State-owned semi-commercial broadcaster)) for example eh, lost I think it was 40 million, the Irish Times lost 26 million in 2001.

17 Brendan: Mm.

18 Eoin: So it was pretty horrendous.

19 Brendan: Yeah, yeah

20 Eoin: But I suppose around that time the the various shareholders that I, you know, I was a small shareholder, the various shareholders made the decision that they wanted to sell anyway which was

21 Brendan: Right, right.

22 Eoin: and you know sell to a larger partner

23 Brendan: Right, right.

24 Eoin: em, one that had deep pockets. Em I suppose it was a kinda (.) kneejerk reaction to circumstances eh they found themselves in at the time, you know, facing panic

25 Brendan: Panic

26 Eoin: Everyone goes into a panic, yeah. I kind of, I made my own mind up anyway because I was with ((name of company)) for far too long, anyway and I wanted to do my own thing, my father died, my marriage broke up and all that kind of stuff

27 Brendan: Oh right. So this was change year.

28 Eoin: Yeah, yeah. This is the em, the year that I wanted to make that eh move, so and it kind of, well while I lost money, the money that I invested in the company eh, it was probably worth it in the end because it meant that em, that I had an exit mechanism

29 Brendan: Right, right, yeah.

30 Eoin: And eh, so it worked out quite well in that respect. And then I took what about six months off, em travelled a bit, relaxed and em.

31 Brendan: Right, right.

32 Eoin: Em, so there are whole load of things there but it was (.)

33 Brendan: Had

34 Eoin: EDUCATIONAL

Source: Transcript from 54.4 seconds to 2 minutes 33.9 seconds of audio record of 66-minute interview between 'Eoin' and Brendan.

The initial unshown nine turns involve a quick overview by Eoin of his career, from graduating in the mid-1980s with his Master's through the various respected media companies he worked for, up to and including his last employer. Here, at least until the later years of his previous employer, Eoin describes himself as a journalist. These turns provide a lot of identifying information and have been excluded from presentation here.

In Turn 9, I rather undiplomatically ask if there had been – in a firm Eoin had been running – a "Fair bit of crisis there, was there?" (Turn 9). After some hesitation (perhaps indicating a difficulty with this question) Eoin asks: "(.) Emm, in what respect? (.) [Eh, towards the end?" (Turn 10). It is usually the interviewer not the interviewee that asks questions, but Eoin's question here is, at least explicitly, a rather passive one, merely asking for a clarification. I clarify my question: "Did it] nearly go bust [then wa" (Turn 11). The overlapping of talk and the hesitations show these turns to be troubled, but we continue, with Eoin accepting the topic. He carefully explains the difficulties of the title he was managing in terms of two factors beyond his control. The first concerned the September 11th World Trade Center bombing and how " a lot of eh publishing companies and media companies in general were badly hit that year. And eh, RTE ((Irish State-owned semi-commercial broadcaster))for example eh, lost I think it was 40 million, the Irish Times lost 26 million in 2001" (Turn 16). The second factor, again beyond his control, explaining the failure of the firm was the reaction of the shareholders generally who – in "a kinda (.) knee-jerk reaction to circumstances eh they found themselves in at the time, you know, facing panic" (Turn 24) – decided to sell. Eoin in these passages has made the crisis of the firm explicable using both factors internal and external to the firm. This is typical of strategy discourse for, as Knights & Morgan (1991:263) point out, in strategy talk "... everything is explicable in the end" (see also Grandy & Mills, 2004: 1157-1158). As soon as strategy's job is done, some of its effects must be countered; in explaining the outcome as caused by factors beyond his control, Eoin violates the autonomy of the entrepreneur (Down, 2006). Thus his strategy talk falls away and enterprise talk of autonomy rises up. Eoin manages to find at least some matters controlled by him and tells of making his "own mind up anyway" mid this crisis, stressing how he wanted to do his own thing: "I made my own mind up anyway because I was with ((name of magazine)) for far too long, anyway and I wanted to do my own thing" (Turn 26). He uses the crisis as "an exit mechanism" (Turn 28) that

"worked out quite well" (Turn 30) and was "<u>EDUCATIONAL</u>" (Turn 34). Note how Eoin has turned what I described negatively as a "Fair bit of crisis… " (Turn 9) into a much more positive "exit mechanism" (Turn 28). Positivity, as Nelson (2000) points out, is a feature of business discourse, including strategy and enterprise.

Extract EB2 from an interview between Eoin and Brendan

35   Brendan: Had you kind of em, had you determined to set up on your own, or did you not know what you were going to do or?

36   Eoin: Em I wanted to take things easy because my marriage broke up in whatever it was, '9X and I'd been working too hard.

37   Brendan: Right, right.

38   Eoin: And em you know the long hours and eh early mornings and stuff, so I wanted to take things a little bit easier, only do things that I wanted to do.

39   Brendan: Right.

40   Eoin: I enjoyed, I always enjoyed writing.

41   Brendan: Right.

42   Eoin: So I did a lot of stuff. You know I did some stuff for Business Week (.) em did some stuff for the Financial Times(.)

((3 turns excluded for reasons of confidentiality))

46   Eoin: And em so, you know assignments that I wanted to do

47   Brendan: But nice, nice and gently.

48   Eoin: You know, take it easy and I had a few bob in the bank and you know, so I was comfortable. And then I <u>came back</u> em, when I came back from Australia I decided em, you know, okay, what am I going to do? And I love sport.

<u>Source</u>: Transcript from 2 minutes 39.7 seconds to 3 minutes 36.9 seconds of audio record of 66-minute interview between 'Eoin' and Brendan.

Extract EB 2 follows immediately from Extract EB 1 above. It opens with a question by me that offers Eoin a dichotomy of being either determined or confused about his future plan: "Had you kind of em, had you determined to set up on your own, or did you not know what you were going to do or?" (Turn 35). Eoin does not passively accept these alternatives and rejects this choice: he was neither confused nor determined to set up a business but he "… wanted to take things easy because my marriage broke up ((identifying details deleted)) and I'd been working too hard" (Turn 36). Eoin thus firmly asserts that he is a master of his own destiny, which is typical of both enterprise and strategy discourse, while demonstrating that he is prepared to reveal his authentic self as a good interviewee by mentioning the personal and probably painful event of his divorce. Perhaps his description of the various pieces he wrote as 'stuff' for quite a few prestigious publications might be interpreted as an expression of modesty but in context it seems more a casual demonstration of his ability than modesty: "did a lot of stuff. You know I did some stuff for Business Week (.) em did some stuff for the Financial

Times(.)" (Turn 42). The "wish to take things easy" (Turn 36), while adding to the authenticity of the interview, seems to sit a bit uncomfortably with 'dedicated and determined' enterprise or strategy discourse. However, in the context of the extract, this phase of taking it easy is in some ways contrasted with both his previous work as a manager and his future identity as an entrepreneur. Furthermore, this taking things easy is connected with his enjoyment of writing (Turn 40) and means that in any case he "did a lot of stuff" (Turn 42) for impressive publications (Turns 42-45). So even this 'taking things easy' – already accounted for by his having previously worked too hard and by his marriage break-up (Turn 36) – is mitigated by his activity in writing. Clearly, being comfortable and taking things easy needs to be justified. Eoin also specifies his passion for activity in this period of relative inactivity: "I enjoyed, I always enjoyed writing" (Turn 40). This declaration of love for writing is reminiscent of Una's (see Chapter 6 above) passion for writing, but seems not to have the same heavy Craftwork flavour to it. The transition from this clearly disapproved-of comfortable time is completed in Turn 48 where the change from taking it easy and being comfortable of the first sentence of the turn is marked by the second sentence's "...And then I came back em..." (Turn 48). However, while comfort and easiness might be disapproved of, passion is not for the answer to the masterful question "...I decided em, you know, okay, what am I going to do?..." (Turn 48) "...And I love sport" (Turn 48) is where, instead of the easy enjoyment of unfocused writing, a passionate love of sport is introduced.

Extract EB 3 follows immediately from Extract EB2 and the 'coming back' talk continues to the move from the passionate and the entrepreneurial to the strategic.

Extract EB 3 from an interview between Eoin and Brendan

49 Brendan: Right.

50 Eoin: Eh, so the em, General Secretary of the ((Irish organisation for Sport X)), of the ((Irish organisation for Sport X)) at the time, Ciaran Murphy ((pseudonym)), who was an old pal of mine he used to write for me in ((Business Magazine 1)).

51 Brendan: Ahmm.

52 Eoin: Ciaran is ((business related)) by profession so he used to write So I was talking to him and you know em he suggested that, you know, well they were <u>looking</u> to do something around the ((major event in Sport X)) in 200X.

53 Brendan: Right, yeah.

54 Eoin: And em so he asked me would I be interested in putting together a magazine for them.I said yeah great, I love ((name of a particular sport)) it's a bit of fun and

55 Brendan: hope[

56 Eoin: Y]ea. So we did and it turned out to be extremely profitable and the ((Irish organisation for Sport X)) were delighted and I was happy. So I said, I looked around at the various kinds of publications here in Ireland so I decided we'd, Sport would be one

57 Brendan: Mm.

58 Eoin: area that we would develop. I had set up Diverse Media, yeah while you know

59 Brendan: 200X or something.

60 Eoin: 200X, early in the year 200X. And em sport was an area that we were going to develop because I found the market, while it was well catered for in mainstream media, wasn't particularly well catered for in the magazine sector

61 Brendan: Right.

62 Eoin: even though there are lots of magazines em out there, sporting magazines be it soccer, rugby I felt the <u>quality</u>

63 Brendan: Mm.

64 Eoin: was pretty poor and they didn't necessarily have the same sort of commercial eh(4) incentives

65 Brendan: Mm.

66 Eoin: that would have existed in the type, like for example ((Business Magazine 1)).

67 Brendan: Mm.

68 Eoin: And a lot of them are sort of one man and their dog eh, operations you know. So we developed a couple of products for the ((Irish organisation for Sport X)) and then the ((Irish organisation for Sport Y)) came along and said we like your stuff

69 Brendan: Mm.

70 Eoin: blah, blah, blah, can you do this for us? So, so it kind of developed a sort of eh, a sports publishing arm [into our business

71 Brendan: Ahem, mm   mm]

72 Eoin: I mean the, the bread and butter of our, our business was always going to be business eh, that's my background

<u>Source:</u> Transcript from 3 minutes 36.9 seconds to 5 minutes 26.8 seconds of audio record of 66-minute interview between 'Eoin' and Brendan.

In Extract EB 3's Turn 50, Eoin points out how a key figure in a sports organisation turned out to be "an old pal" (Turn 50). This personal connection and the individual "And I love sport" (Extract EB 2's Turn 48) seem to turn this passion and connection into a situation that Eoin's company finds an "extremely profitable" (Turn 56) activity with which clients are "delighted" (Turn 56). Eoin may be portraying an element of luck in being a friend of a person in a sport organisation, but he seems to

attribute this connection to his network that developed through his experience in the sector. Throughout the interview, Eoin frequently talks of his connections as he describes how he does business. The sports publication fits in with the company 'Diverse Media' he has been setting up in parallel (Turn 58). Sport publications would now be one of the company's sections that would out-compete the poorer-quality alternatives (Turns 62-64) because "...they they didn't necessarily have the same sort of commercial eh(4) incentives" (Turn 64). Thus the passionate love of sport "has kind of developed a sort of eh, a sports publishing arm into our business" (Turn 70). Note how the first-person singular in "I enjoyed, I always enjoyed writing" (Turn 40, Extract EB 2) and "...And I love sport ..." (Turn 48, Extract EB 2) contrasts   with the plural in the "...So we did and it turned out to be extremely profitable ..." (Turn 56) and the "...we would develop ..." of Turn 58. Eoin's contrasting use of   the individualistic entrepreneurial 'I' and the more strategic collective and corporate 'we' is seen too in Turn 60's "...sport was an area that we were going to develop because I found the market ..." and in Turn 72's "I mean the, the bread and butter of our, our business was always going to be business eh, that's my background". Eoin's talk here shifts from the individual passion behind the entrepreneurial move of doing the first sports publication, to the more strategic talk of converting it "into our business". This shift has been achieved by Eoin through a number of skilful turns where the activity has been portrayed as orientated more to profit than to passion. The other arm of the business – "the bread and butter of our, our business" (Turn 72) – is more understandable, than the sports' arm, in strategy terms. Eoin points out that "our business was always going to be business " (Turn 72) but again shows a shifting from the personal 'I' to the collective 'we'.

Between the end of Extract EB 3 and the start of Extract EB 4, we discussed in detail a lot of the products Eoin's company produces. During this segment (not shown here) he shows great knowledge of Irish business. He also illustrates the impressive nature of his business, mentioning the successful run of one his publications ("And essentially it's eh a 70, 80, thousand print run", Turn 78, segment not shown). Whereas this segment is full of details and proper names that make it awkward to present verbatim here, it is worth noting that it illustrates Eoin's knowledge of Irish business. Extract EB 4, below, is still on the same topic and provides a good representation of this whole stretch of talk.

Extract EB 4 from an interview between Eoin and Brendan

121 Brendan: Did you cover things like First Tuesday as well, that [kind of?

122 Eoin: We] touched on First Tuesday em, First Tuesday used to be more aimed at, it's now called something else.(duh, duh, duh).em...yeah..em...Invest something or other Investnet or something like that, it's out in DCU. First Tuesday, you know the halcyon days of First Tuesday were I suppose, in the height of Dotcom [bubble

123 Brendan: Mmm]

124 Eoin: And you had venture capitalists flooding to every meeting, and they were all queuing up.

125 Brendan: It's a bit quieter now, [ha, ha.

126 Eoin: Now] now they're not. You have to be invited and then they check their diaries and you know 'mm. I don't know about this, you know.

127 Brendan: Yeah, yeah.

128 Eoin: Then they were beating a path to the door, eh and you know I was at a few, a few First Tuesday meetings and you know when Denis O'Brien was speaking at them and the place would be jammed

129 Brendan: Yeah, yeah, yeah.

130 Eoin: packed and you know you had to book your tickets months in advance, you know.

131 Brendan: Right, yeah.

132 Eoin: Not anymore.

133 Brendan: I think they invite me now, so I'm not surprised, ha, ha, ha.

134 Eoin: I still get invites and stuff like that

135 Brendan: Sign of desperation.

136 Eoin: So em, yeah, we would have covered you know any kind of initiative that was aimed at raising you know, awareness of funding in the, in the Irish

137 Brendan: Right, yeah.

138 Eoin: marketplace. So em, like some of the initiatives down in the em National College of Ireland

139 Brendan: Mmm

Source: Transcript from 8 minutes 44.4 seconds to 10 minutes 0.9 seconds of audio record of 66-minute interview between 'Eoin' and Brendan.

In the turns before Extract EB 4, Eoin had been mentioning a lot of details of different businesses in Ireland so I, perhaps to show my knowledge, mention one of the few companies providing funding that he has not so far mentioned. He not only acknowledges it as one but gives more detail about it – it "used to be more aimed" (Turn 122) – as well saying it had changed its name though unusually he can't quite remember the detail of the new name. Eoin (Turns 122-132) illustrates how things have changed at the meetings of First Tuesday (a networking organisation formed in London in 1998 but rapidly spreading to other cities where information-technology entrepreneurs and venture capitalists could be matched) since its "halcyon of the Dotcom bubble" (Turn 122). Eoin gives example of a few packed First Tuesday meetings, typical of the halcyon days, where Denis O'Brien (a successful and well-

known Irish entrepreneur) was speaking (Turn 128) but points out that it is not like that any more (Turn 132). I jokily agree that it's not so hard to get to First Tuesday meetings now by quipping that "I think they invite me now, so I'm not surprised, ha, ha, ha" (Turn 133). Eoin observes in reply that he "still get invites and stuff like that" (Turn 134). The 'still' in Turn 134 and his lack of laughter skilfully exclude him from the conclusion to my deprecating turn: "Sign of desperation" (Turn 134). Rather Eoin, as this extract concludes, continues to illustrate his knowledge of Irish business, including knowledge of "... some of the initiatives down in the em National College of Ireland" (Turn 138) – as the National College of Ireland is one of the smaller colleges in Dublin, this shows the comprehensive nature of his knowledge.

Eoin here in Extract EB 4 is skilfully illustrating his knowledge of Irish business in a fluid and relaxed manner that is typical of this whole stretch of the interview (from the end of Extract EB 3 right up to the start of Extract EB 5), and of the interview in general. Between the end of Extract EB 4 and the start of Extract EB 5, there is a gap of over a minute. As remarked above, Extract EB 4 provides a good representation of this and the other elements of this stretch of talk; thus the next segment shown here is Extract EB 5, below, that begins as I switch topic back to talking about the period when Eoin was employed as the MD of the company in which he had a minor shareholding.

Extract EB 5 from an interview between Eoin and Brendan

161   Brendan: Can I ask you, you were saying em, you spent about two years as a, as a, as MD of ((Business Magazine 1)).

162   Eoin: Yeah.

163   Brendan: Was that a kind of hard transfer from being [a journo to..?

164   Eoin: It was], yeah. I was the editor and em, for what about three years and I suppose, I mean I didn't put myself forward as the MD, I was part of a management buy-out or a management buy-in team.

165   Brendan: Right.

166   Eoin: And em, you know really what I want to do was you know improve the magazine. I never saw myself em (.) slotting into the role as, as a Managing Director, CEO or whatever it was called.

167   Brendan: Mm.

168   Eoin: And em, but the board, em decided that I should be

169   Brendan: Mm.

170   Eoin: because I was the public face of the magazine.

171   Brendan: Right, yeah, yeah.

172   Eoin: I was doing radio interviews and you know em, doing the big stories, so I suppose I was quietly ((laughing)) chuffed

173   Brendan: Right.

174   Eoin:but I had no idea because ((the name of the company)) for many years was run as a lifestyle business for one of the, the shareholders, ((detail excluded to avoid identification)) and I had really no idea what I was getting involved in

175   Brendan: Right

176   Eoin: I liked the idea of having a slice of the action em, but when I realised, em you know, how bad things were, em I got a bit nervy

177   Brendan: Right

178   Eoin: But em, having said that when we worked hard for the first year and a half and the first year, we actually made, the first time that we made a profit, the first time the company made a profit in a number of years

179   Brendan: Right, yeah

180   Eoin: Basically the company was being raped by one of the shareholders and he had an extraordinary lifestyle

181   Brendan: Right.

182   Eoin: and you know was fond of his drinks

183   Brendan: Right.

184   Eoin: and long lunches and all that kind of stuff so, em.

185   Brendan: That was an interesting educative experience.

186   Eoin: It was yeah, it was, it was literally straight into the, into the frying pan and em, em but we tried to make it work and then, you know, we were dealing with, when we bought in, we were dealing with you know a company that had racked up significant losses.

187   Brendan: Mm.

188   Eoin: Em over you know a six, seven year period, to try and eradicate those losses in you know, a two or three-year period was very very difficult

189   Brendan: It was a tall order, to turn it around at all was an achievement

190   Eoin: And the money that we put in went nowhere near re-capitalising the company at all, em, eh, in fact, em the money that we put in went you know, a month or two later went out the backdoor again

<u>Source:</u> Transcript from 11 minutes 9.1 seconds to 13 minutes 28.5 seconds of audio record of 66-minute interview between 'Eoin' and Brendan.

Extract EB 5 begins with some hesitancy in my speech (Turn 161), perhaps explained by the awkward way I had raised Eoin's management of this business earlier (see interpretation of Extract EB 1 above). I suggest that the transfer (Turn 162) from being a journalist to being in management was difficult. Eoin quickly agrees (Turn 163). Although this quick agreement by Eoin might at first glance be taken as just politeness on his part – easing the discomfort of my disfluency – this impression is countered by the detail provided in Turns 166-190 illustrating Eoin's particular difficulties in transferring from journalist to manager. He describes that business as "lifestyle business" operated for the benefit of one of the shareholders (Turn 174). His comment that he "had really no idea what I was getting involved in" (Turn 174) could be read as modesty or self-criticism but it could also refer to the lack of transparency on the part of the board members. The talk that shows Eoin's competence and his achievements are much clearer. His achievement meant "we made a profit, the first time the company made a profit in a number of years" (Turn 178); however "the company was being raped by one of the shareholders" (Turn 180). These are strong words; and the word "raped" makes a living person, a distinct corporate entity, of the organisation. Despite Eoin's successes (acknowledged by me in Turn 189) it was not possible to make up for the fact that the company "had racked up significant losses… … over you know a six, seven year period" (Turns186-188), especially since "the money that we put in went you know, a month or two later went out the backdoor again" (Turn 190).

Between the end of Extract EB 5 and the start of Extract EB 6, there is a gap of over a minute. During this time Eoin talks of his achievements, despite the difficulties, in his management of Business Magazine 1, and names now well-known (but then unknown) business writers he got to write for the magazine. Again, this naming of connections seems important in Eoin's talk, but their reproduction here would damage his anonymity.

Extract EB 6 from an interview between Eoin and Brendan

211   Eoin: You know, I think in publishing you can spend too much time dwelling on the successes of the past.

212   Brendan: Right, yeah, yeah, yeah.

213   Eoin: I mean it's a cut-throat world and you know, bloody hell, you know, em.

214   Brendan: Mm, but it, it obviously didn't put you off managing though or (.)

215   Eoin: No, no, because for a simple reason that I didn't get the, the opportunity to manage the way that I wanted to manage

216   Brendan: Right.

217   Eoin: I mean management was effectively a boardroom em function, I mean the board effectively controlled the company and I would, would report to the board and certain key decisions that were made eh, that dictated the company's future were made not by me, but by a bunch of directors who'd been there and who were the majority shareholders you know.

218   Brendan: Right, yeah, yeah.

219   Eoin: So I mean I was just the boy that you know.

220   Brendan: Right, right.

221   Eoin: could eh string a sentence together. So em, yeah, it's, I felt that you know had they implemented some of the proposals that I eh put to them, the company would not have em, racked up the losses eh it did in that

222   Brendan: Yeah.

223   Eoin: particular year. You know one of the proposals that I em, made to the Board was cutting, we had a staff of 50 and I proposed to cutting it down to 26, 27 and it was deemed too radical, em by the board

224   Brendan: Right.

225   Eoin: You know, they were talking to em, potential partners, or em, potential purchasers and you know they found that if we did this em, you know it would send out all the wrong signals and I said well, you know, someone's going to come in and do it anyway.

226   Brendan: ((laughs)) 'We could do it for them'

227   Eoin: And there was a, you know, [they just didn't want kind of any kind of negative sentiment out there in the marketplace

228   Brendan: Yeah (.) yeah (.) yeah]

229   Eoin: about the magazine and about the company and I said well, you know it's going to happen anyway so

230   Brendan: Yeah, yeah, yeah let's do it.

231   Eoin: And they didn't want it on their beat basically.

<u>Source:</u> Transcript from 14 minutes 37.4 seconds to 16 minutes 19.1 seconds of audio record of 66-minute interview between 'Eoin' and Brendan.

Eoin described his period in Business Magazine 1 in such a way that by the beginning of Extract EB 6 I have acknowledged his achievements with that magazine and he is talking about his period there as one involving "successes of the past" (Turn 211). He cannot dwell on these successes because "it's a cut-throat world" (Turn 213). This construction, accepted by us both at this stage, of Eoin's period in Business Magazine 1 contrasts greatly with my initial, more negative construction of it (Extract EB 1's Turn 9): "Fair bit of crisis there, was there?" Eoin has used strategy discourse to successfully account for the period of his stewardship of Business Magazine 1.

With strategic talk having achieved the construction of his time as MD of Business Magazine 1, it begins to fall away and be replaced in its prominence by enterprise talk. Eoin, in Turn 215, discusses how he likes autonomy in managing. He tells of the difficulties he had the first time he acted as a CEO, when he was accountable to a board of directors. As a result, in Business Magazine 1 Eoin "... didn't get the, the opportunity to manage the way that I wanted to manage" (Turn 215). His lack of autonomy there was because " certain key decisions that were made eh, that dictated the company's future were made not by me, but by a bunch of directors who'd been there and who were the majority shareholders you know" (Turn 217). Eoin was "was just the boy that you know … … could eh string a sentence together" (Turns 219-221), whose radical proposals were not acted upon (Turn 223). These last turns might be read as self-criticisms or a display of modesty but, given the context, they are better interpreted as criticisms of the company's board for not taking Eoin's good counsel. The other directors seem to avoid wanting to make such radical decisions and were playing it safe, not wanting to make decisions that looked bad while they were in charge (Turn 231). This risk-avoidance is an extreme and a disapproved-of opposite to the risk-taking of the entrepreneur. Eoin's account shows these directors as poor ones and thus any inadequacies in Eoin's influence are, as can be interpreted from the overall context of these turns, made attributable to the lack of skill of this board.   How he manages without such a board of directors is discussed by us in Extract EB 7 that follows on directly from the end of Extract EB 6 above.

Extract EB 7 from an interview between Eoin and Brendan

232 Brendan: Right, right. So when you set up Diverse Media em, you kind of felt a little more in control I suppose

233 Eoin: Yeah, well I mean (.) eh publishing is not rocket science, em, you know maybe I'm over simplifying it but I mean, it about getting good content and em, you know a good commercial eh, revenue stream

234 Brendan: Mm.

235 Eoin: from your advertising and hopefully subscriptions

236 Brendan: Mm.

237 Eoin: or retail sales. And if you can produce good content and you know make it visually attractive

238 Brendan: Mm.

239 Eoin: you know, well you're half way there. If you can get advertising around it, em, you know all the better

240 Brendan: Right, yeah, yeah.

241 Eoin: You know and em it's, it's, it's, it's a hard em, it's very hard being a publisher because I tend to be very much a hands on

242 Brendan: Right.

243 Eoin: individual. I have certain standards em, in terms of like quality of editorial, in terms of how a product looks and in terms of, you know, how we sell it. So em, but I've had, I've always had these views

244 Brendan: Right, so it's helped

245 Eoin: Em, it's just a question of, of you know, implementing them now and I have that freedom to, I'm not, I'm not em (.) the font of all wisdom, you know

246 Brendan: Yeah

247 Eoin: when it comes to eh, determining what, you know, what our product looks like, but I mean I'd like to have a big input into it and I will, I <u>do</u> listen to, you know, our employees

248 Brendan: Yeah, yeah, yeah.

249 Eoin: you know, their, you know they think something, if a simple like, an example there this morning about a picture. We're doing a ((name of a particular team sport)) year book for the ((Irish association for that team sport)) and it's, it's a substantial undertaking insofar as it has never been done before and eh, one of the guys, one of our designers was tinkering with a picture on screen and you know I made a couple of suggestions to him, why was, why not move it over there

250 Brendan: Yeah, yeah, yeah

251 Eoin: moving the text to the lefthand side or the righthand side, all that kind of stuff, so I do keep a

252 Brendan: Yeah, you keep the hand in.

253 Eoin: Yeah I mean, I care about you know what our products look like and how they read

<u>Source</u>: Transcript from 16 minutes 19.1 seconds to 18 minutes 20.8 seconds of audio record of 66-minute interview between 'Eoin' and Brendan.

Extract EB 7 is full of enterprise talk. In Turn 232, I ask Eoin if he felt more in control when he started up his own firm. He answers in the affirmative but this admission is followed by the qualifying "... well I mean (.) eh..." (Turn 233). This seems to require some justification of his position by Eoin. Perhaps the interview situation makes it necessary that the unaccountability of entrepreneur is made accountable by an interviewee. First, he argues "that publishing is not rocket science" (Turn 233). This described lack of complexity in publishing presumably allows his job to be doable by just one, unaccountable person. Secondly, this lack of accountability is not just self-

indulgence: "...it's, it's, it's a hard em, it's very hard being a publisher because I tend to be very much a hands-on ... ... individual...." (Turns 241-243) The intimate interaction with the process (detailed in Turns 249-251) means that external accountability is not feasible. Thirdly, his unaccountability is not irresponsible because it relies on the moral integrity of the entrepreneur (Rose, 1992:150-151): "I have certain standards em, in terms of like quality of editorial, in terms of how a product looks and in terms of, you know, how we sell it" (Turn 243) and "Yeah I mean, I care about you know what our products look like and how they read" (Turn 253). Fourthly, the lack of accountability does not leave Eoin without the benefits of others' wisdom; he declares: "... I will, I do listen to, you know, our employees" (Turn 247). But now Eoin is the one listening rather the one who has to seek the ear of the powerful when he "would report to the board" (Turn 217, Extract PB 6) and submit "proposals that I eh put to them ((the board))" (Turn 221, Extract PB 6). Although Eoin takes time to justify it, this is very much the autonomy of the entrepreneur.

Extract EB 8 from an interview between Eoin and Brendan

254   Brendan: You must, I mean, you've got a fair few publications very quickly haven't you since 2002?

255   Eoin: Well [I mean

256   Brendan: it's grown] quite a lot

257   Eoin: Yeah, I mean, there's eh, we have eh four magazines a year with the ((Irish organisation for Sport Y)) plus a yearbook. Em we have the Handbook, which is with ((name of client)). Eh, we have Irish Business ProfessionX Magazine, which is monthly. We have Form Choices, which is, eh, we had a pilot issue in June/July, that's coming out twice in 2005 plus a Form Directory

258   Brendan: Right, yeah.

259   Eoin: Eh, we have PubMed.ie and Lookitup.ie em, what else, we have em, we're developing a product for Client A+ ((competitor with Client A)) Em, they approached us, they liked what we were doing with Client A so could we do something similar for ((them))

260   Brendan: Right, yeah.

261   Eoin: So em and we're also talking to the Client A++ ((another competitor with clients A and A+)) (laugh), which probably won't go down too well with Client A but, I mean, that's you know, it's a formula

262   Brendan: Right.

263   Eoin: That's all it is, just execute that formula, you know we have so much[

Source: Transcript from 18 minutes 20.8 seconds to 19 minutes 26.8 seconds of audio record of 66-minute interview between 'Eoin' and Brendan.

Extract EB 8, which follows immediately from EB 7 above, shows that, in addition to Eoin's personal and entrepreneurial virtuous concern with quality, there is another force that justifies his autonomy. This is the success of the business in the marketplace. Though I open this topic with a question that acknowledges the successful growth of his firm, Eoin goes to the trouble of evidencing this success by

mentioning six of his clients over the course of just two of his turns (257 & 259). He also stresses how a client selected Eoin's company: "...Em, they approached us, they liked what we were doing with Client A so could we do something similar for ((them))" (Turn 259, Extract EB 8). This supports the view that Eoin expends this trouble proving his market success because his admitted autonomy, which seems troubled in Turns 232-233, Extract EB 7 above, needs to be justified. His talk in Extract EB 8 not only serves to illustrate the growth of the business (thus justifying his autonomy) but also illustrates his autonomy from any one of his clients. He is happy with Client A and realises that they will be annoyed with his supplying two competitors - "which probably won't go down too well with Client A" (Turn 261). However this is business and the demand is there – "they approached us" – so Eoin is happy to sell his "formula" for this product on the market. His talk of market values has provided accountability for his autonomy.

Figure 7.2 below abstracts some of the features of the interview talk seen in the analysis of Extracts EB 1 to EB 8.

Figure 7.2   Abstract of Extracts EB 1 to EB 8
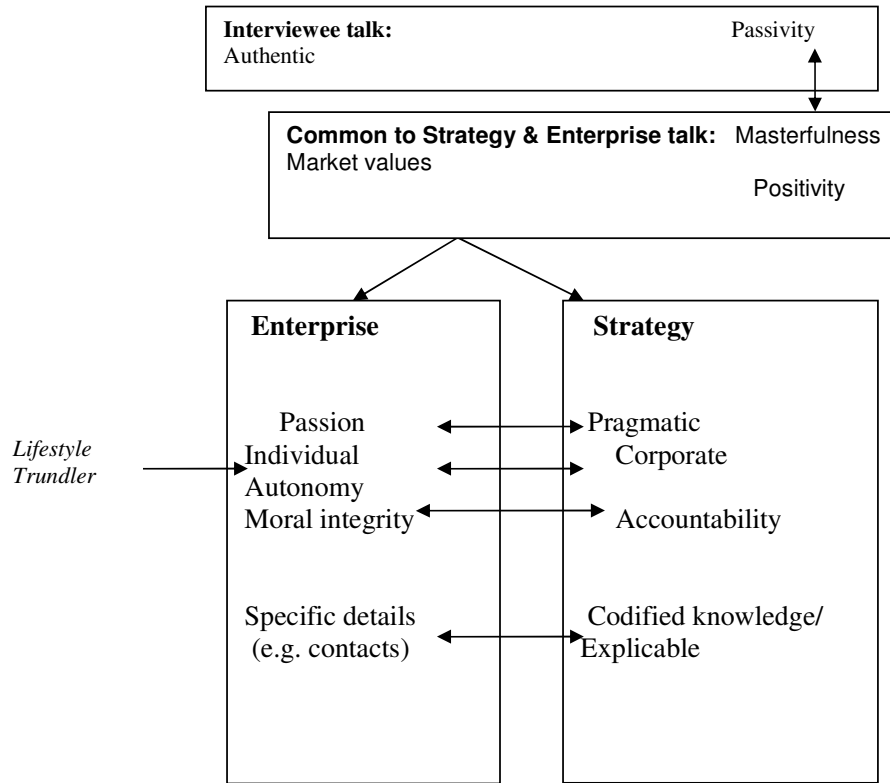
```
┌──────────────────────────────────────────────────────────┐
│ Interviewee talk:                           Passivity    │
│ Authentic                                        ↕       │
└──────────────────────────────────────────────────────────┘
        ┌──────────────────────────────────────────────────────┐
        │ Common to Strategy & Enterprise talk: Masterfulness │
        │ Market values                                        │
        │                                        Positivity    │
        └──────────────────────────────────────────────────────┘
```

Enterprise	Strategy
Passion ←→ Pragmatic	
Individual ←→ Corporate	
Autonomy	
Moral integrity ←→ Accountability	
Specific details ←→ Codified knowledge/	
(e.g. contacts) Explicable	

Lifestyle Trundler →

Key to symbols in Figure

𝔸 is endowed with a particular flavour in this interviewee's talk (see discussion of figure).

A An italicised A means A is treated as undesirable or unapproved of.

| A | ←→ | B | Means the A and B are in tension with one another |

| A | ——→ | B | Means B belongs to the more general category of A |

```
┌─────────┐
│ A       │      ┌────────────────────────────────────────────┐
│ B       │      │ Means B and C are characteristics of A     │
│ C       │      └────────────────────────────────────────────┘
└─────────┘
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Source: Abstracted by the author from interview between Eoin and Brendan.

As with the analysis of Paul (Chapter 5) and Una (Chapter 6), Eoin performs as a good interviewee, revealing personal details and unflattering descriptions, thus signalling that he is being authentic and letting me as interviewer lead him to discuss topics even if they are uncomfortable. Notable as absences from these extracts are any strong displays of modesty or of segments stressing the role of fortunate luck. This contrasts with explicit displays of modesty and the role of good luck early in the interviews with Paul and Una. Perhaps this is partly due to the need in this interview for Eoin to account for the crisis in the company that he had previously managed, as I explicitly raised this in a question early in the interview (Turn 9). While Eoin may show enough passivity, in explicitly addressing most of the questions I ask, to be a good interviewee, the masterfulness common to enterprise and discourse is illustrated in his style of answering questions, though the tension between these two positions is not as clear as it was in the interview with Paul. Other attributes shared in common by strategy and enterprise, and apparent from the literature, are deployed in Extracts EB1 to EB 8. Positivity and market values are all evident here. Like Una, Eoin weaves skilfully between the individualistic 'I' and the corporate 'We' of the company, though perhaps in Eoin's interview attributes such as passion, autonomy, tacit knowledge and moral integrity are tagged more to the entrepreneurial than is the case in Una's interview. Strategic attributes such as pragmatic business development and accountability arise as a replacement when the enterprise talk gets too prominent.

7.4 Eoin's entrepreneurial passion and connections

Eoin's approval of the open market (common to both strategy and enterprise) is also evident in Extract EB 9, which follows immediately from Extract EB 8, above.

Extract EB 9 from an interview between Eoin and Brendan

264 Brendan: And] are ye, are you all together now in the same office in

265 Eoin: Well

266 Brendan: what is it ((name of Dublin Street)) or?

267 Eoin: In ((name of Dublin Street)) yeah, we're in, we're all together now in ((name of Dublin Street)) There's what, twelve of us and we have twelve in the office, we've two people who work from home eh, one in ((continental Europe)) and one in ((west of Ireland town)).

268 Brendan: Okay right so

269 Eoin: The person in ((continental Europe)), Denise, she sells subscriptions em, and she can do it from from, she has a number that follows her.

270 Brendan: Oh right.

271 Eoin: And her telco charges or her telco costs are a fraction of what they are here. <u>The cost of living</u>, she lives about 10 miles outside ((continental European city)) and the cost of living obviously is a lot cheaper, you know, why wouldn't you?

272 Brendan: Yeah, yeah, why not.

273 Eoin: Nobody know, when somebody phones her they don't know they're phoning ((continental Europe)), em.

274 Brendan: So you have a fair stack of freelancers as well do you?

275 Eoin: And we have a panel of freelancers that do a lot of stuff for us, you know, eh, which is good because you know one of the things, you know in ((Business Magazine 1)) in particular that I realised that we were very top heavy in staff

276 Brendan: Right.

277 Eoin: Whereas I think in this business now there's a lot more people out there who for whatever reason, be it lifestyle, eh choice, prefer to work from home and em, so therefore they're always available for work.

278 Brendan: Right, yeah, yeah.

279 Eoin: I know quite a few people who have packed in fulltime journalism and you know and said okay, I prefer and I want to spend a bit more time with my kids whatever, so they're, they're working from home and they love it, it's the best decision they ever made, you know.

<u>Source:</u> Transcript from 19 minutes 26.8 seconds to 20 minutes 55.7 seconds of audio record of a 66-minute interview between 'Eoin' and Brendan.

The choice, flexibility and autonomy of the market is seen as a good thing for everybody. The first example given of flexible working arrangements is painted as almost idyllic – living in a warmer continental climate and enjoying a lower cost of living. Talking of one of two people who work from home, Eoin reports that the "telco charges or her telco costs are a fraction of what they are here" (Turn 271) which implies that she is not merely an off-site employee but more likely a contract worker of the type described by Storey et al. (2005). Indeed, when I construct the status of these workers a little more crudely as "a stack of freelancers" (Turn 274), Eoin recalls the failure of the previous enterprise due to its being "very top heavy in staff" (Turn 275).

He then goes on (Turn 277) to appeal to the choice of people to work on a freelance basis: "there's a lot more people out there who for whatever reason, be it lifestyle, eh choice, prefer to work from home". He observes "…so therefore they're always available for work" (Turn 277). This role of choice and preference – the individual of the free market – is emphasised and celebrated here even if these choices are "…lifestyle…" (Turn 277) ones. This positive evaluation is stressed through repetition by Eoin in his next turn. He talks of quite a few people who have given up full-time journalism and now work from home "and they love it, it's the best decision they ever made, you know" (Turn 279). Note that choice is stressed by his reference to the 'decision' they made. Referring to these people as people "who have packed in fulltime journalism" (Turn 279) counters any impression that these were people who had no other way to work. Flexibility through contract work is good for everybody as it allows them in a market to follow their values, even if they are lifestyle ones normally disapproved of in business talk. Eoin has shown here again the great advantage of market values. The solution in his discourse to the problem of employees is to make what he can of them into joyfully flexible cottage entrepreneurs, even if this flexibility means they're "…always available for work" (Turn 277).

Between the end of Extract EB 9 and the start of Extract EB 10, there is a gap of under a minute. During this time we finish talking about flexible working without adding much to what has gone before and I change topic by asking Eoin about another director – Marie (a pseudonym) – who I found on his company's documents, and her part in the business. Marie is Eoin's life-partner and, formally at least, a director of the company. Eoin describes a recent role he has "had her in doing" (Turn 291, segment not shown). The role played by Marie is more fully described in Extract EB 10 below.

Extract EB 10 from an interview between Eoin and Brendan

297   Eoin: … The vast majority of people, I suppose but the vast majority of our subscribers prepare, <u>prefer</u> you to invoice them

298   Brendan: Right.

299   Eoin: rather than to pay directly by credit card. Eh, so you have to go to the whole trouble of invoicing them.

300   Brendan: Right, yeah.

301   Eoin: And you get on to accounts department, they're looking for PO number, and 'sorry the client didn't give a PO'

302   Brendan: Right, admin, admin, admin

303   Eoin: So you know there is 60,000 em, outstanding on subscriptions alone, so I said OK right. Our credit controller in ((west of Ireland town)), Mary, focuses on em, the big stuff.

304   Brendan: Right, right.

305   Eoin: advertisements and stuff like that and Marie goes in and focuses in on the small

306   Brendan: Right, right.

307   Eoin: the small stuff, so she's, she's been, she said she wanted, our year-end is December so she wanted to get it in.

308   Brendan: Right.

309   Eoin: Get it over as soon as possible before the end of they year. because otherwise if you let these people, if you let people away with

310   Brendan: They get in the habit yeah, yeah

311   Eoin: And ,em (.) that's <u>money</u>(.)

312   Brendan: Ha, ha

313   Eoin: That should be in the bank.

314   Brendan: Yeah, yeah.

315   Eoin: You know, and unfortunately here in Ireland, I don't know what it is but em, in the States for example, if you take out a, I mean I subscribe to a load of magazines, they don't send me the magazines until I pay.

316   Brendan: Right.

317   Eoin: So I pay by credit card and I, and I always shopping around for better eh, value online,

318   Brendan: Yeah.

319   Eoin: so you go on to their website, for say National Geographic

320   Brendan: Yeah.

321   Eoin: you can usually save you know 20 or 30 per cent by paying online

322   Brendan: Yeah.

323   Eoin: which is (.) so we're we're we're about to go em, have a, set up an online payment facility em, for IBPXM, but I don't think that will em, solve the problem because it's a cultural thing more than anything

<u>Source:</u> Transcript from 21 minutes 37.7 seconds to 23 minutes 43.6 seconds of audio record of a 66-minute interview between 'Eoin' and Brendan.

The way Eoin describes the job Marie is doing is interesting because it shows his relationship as managing director with the other director. Eoin is able to call upon her to "go in", and she "focuses in on the small… … the small stuff" (Turns 305-307). Although Turn's 307 disfluent "so she's, she's been, she said she wanted" repairs this ever so slightly, Eoin clearly is the man in charge and the autonomy that this expresses is clearly part of enterprise talk.

The details of Eoin's description of Marie's role are also interesting in other respects. Eoin says this 'small stuff' needs to be dealt with "... because otherwise if you let these people, if you let people away with ... ... And ,em (.) that's money(.) ... ... That should be in the bank." (Turns 309-313). This is necessary because "...unfortunately here in Ireland, I don't know what it is but em,..." (Turn 315) – that is, Irish customers in contrast to those in the USA will not pay for their magazines upfront. While Eoin plans to enable Irish customers to pay upfront by credit card in the near future, he doubts this will have the desired effect "...it's a cultural thing more than anything" (Turn 323). As can be seen from later extracts, Eoin acknowledges the role of culture in business in an explicit way.

Between the end of Extract EB 10 and the start of Extract EB 11, there is a gap of over a minute. During this time we quickly (another two turns) finish talking about paying for magazines by credit card and I ask a question about company websites. This leads to a few turns where Eoin talks about his personal reliance on technology and about the various websites that he is involved with. This segment uses a lot of proper names, so being transparent about its meanings would betray Eoin's identity. The analysis of this unshown segment reinforces the lessons learned from Extract EB 10 (above), immediately before, and Extract EB 11 (below) after it.

Extract EB 11 from an interview between Eoin and Brendan

336   Brendan: Is] is, sorry, is that kind of brand building or are you making money through advertising there or?

337   Eoin: >We're not making any money on ((website of a company Eoin recently acquired)) whatsoever at all, at the moment<, but we have a couple of em, clients who have approached us now over the last em, month or two with a view to coming in and sponsoring certain sections and we've also we're going to have to taken on somebody there, she's starting next week just to work solely on, eh the commercial end of [((website of a company Eoin recently acquired))

338   Brendan: Right], right.

339   Eoin: Em, because it was kind of neglected em. Declan Jacobs set it up a couple of years ago.

340   Brendan: Right.

341   Eoin: And the whole idea was, at the time you know it was very good, you know you have an online site. There's no point in having, well in my view, it can complement your, your eh physical product, but if it's not going to make any money and if it's costing you money well then you're going to take the view, do we really need this?

342   Brendan: Right, yeah.

343   Eoin: But em, (.) you know on the one hand I love em, reading online publications but on the other hand, em if they're losing money I don't want to be part of one.

344   Brendan: ((laughs)) [yea.

345   Eoin: You know] I've, I've reduced our, our hosting charges considerably now by, you know, I'd say 70 or 80 percent this year, so it's not actually, it's you know costing us too much.>

346   Brendan: Right yeah.

347   Eoin: Em (.) so next year now I'll be looking for, em it will be a profit centre.

348   Brendan: Right, right, yeah.

349   Eoin: You know so.

350   Brendan: But it is a pretty good builder of, of, kind of

351   Eoin: Yes, em

352   Brendan: community and

353   Eoin: But I wouldn't em, surprising em, you know the industry that we work in em, you know our clients are predominantly in ProfessionX+, eh creative/advertising and ProfessionX managers em and ProfessionX directors whatever they're em, they're not as IT or as internet literate as we make them out to be.

354   Brendan: [Right.

355   Eoin: You know] em, yes they use email, em that's an essential tool, but when it comes to actually em, we find that the traffic that comes into our site, eh, most of it, the bulk of it comes from eh students from the third level colleges.

356   Brendan: Okay, right.

357   Eoin: We, we can tell.

358   Brendan: Right.

359   Eoin: where it's coming from right, em so that in itself is, you know interesting you know so one of the things we'd be looking to do with the new site in, in 2005, the, the revamped site will be have a more educational focus to it.

Source: Transcript from 24 minutes 58.8 seconds to 27 minutes 25.9 seconds of audio record of a 66-minute interview between Eoin and Brendan.

Whereas Extract EB10 had stressed Eoin's autonomy and so can be read as a continuation of Extract EB 9's enterprise talk, Extract EB11 sees the rise of strategy discourse once more.

Extract EB 11 opens with me asking about whether the website was there as brand builder or to get money through advertising. Eoin clearly points out that the website is not making any money, though this may be about to change due to the approach of a few potential sponsors. This state of not making money is not acceptable to Eoin, which he makes clear as he talks of it being due to "neglect" (Turn 339). He constructs himself as someone who can see through the 'niceness' of having a site – "...And the whole idea was, at the time you know it was very good, you know you have an online site ..." (Turn 341) – "...to ask do we really need this?" (Turn 341). Notice the collective 'we' of strategy. The unacceptability of not making money is reinforced over the next few turns and culminates in the economistic: "...you know on the one hand I love em, reading online publications but on the other hand, em if they're losing money I don't want to be part of one" (Turns 343). Eoin is very clear that he wants not just to satisfy clients but also to at least not lose money. This does not mean he is automatically going to give up on the website but rather that his dedication has meant he can boast that "...I've, I've reduced our, our hosting charges considerably now by, you know, I'd say 70 or 80 percent this year" (Turns 345) and that by next year "...it will be a profit centre" (Turns 347). Again, though Paul is acting in an individualised way ("...I've, I've reduced"), this is for the collectivity of the corporation ("our, our hosting charges"). Where I reintroduce the idea that a website "...is a pretty good builder of, of, kind of ... ... community and" (Turns 350-352), Eoin comes back with own his counterpoint: "But... you know the industry that we work in em ... they're not as IT or as internet literate as we make them out to be" (Turns 353). His hardheaded and informed analysis of the situation does not lead him to abandon the website. Rather he tackles the issue in a pragmatic and strategic way; he makes clear its future direction: "...the revamped site will be have a more educational focus to it" (Turns 359). This, and the analytical nature of the talk (Crouch & Basch, 1997) that leads to this focus, signals a shift to strategic discourse while the enterprise talk seems to have fallen away.

Between the end of Extract EB 11 and the start of Extract EB 12, there is a gap of over a minute. During this time we continue to talk about websites in much the same manner as above but mentioning lots of identifying details – this segment is therefore excluded.

Extract EB 12 from an interview between Eoin and Brendan

380 Brendan: Yeah, yeah. Did you find, you know em, taking over IBPXM, that was a sort of different operation from setting up a new (.) em

381 Eoin: Culturally?

382 Brendan: yea

383 Eoin: yes. Em well I would have known the directors beforehand and would have done Declan in particular

384 Brendan: Mm.

385 Eoin: And one of the directors Kevin, who worked for me in ((Business Magazine 1)). So (.) again it was a publishing business that was run as a lifestyle business.

386 Brendan: Right, right.

387 Eoin: You know I could see where the problems, I'd seen them all before

388 Brendan: Right, yeah.

389 Eoin: Em and I knew how to solve them and em, so yes, it was and you know there is still some cultural eh, change

390 Brendan: Mm.

391 Eoin: needs to be implemented with the, the staff that I inherited

392 Brendan: Mm.

393 Eoin: Em, but you know, I'm working on that and em, em. You know for the first time in, in its whatever 30, 30 years em, it's actually making money now.

394 Brendan: Right, right.

395 Eoin: It's em, it hadn't made money for certainly the last six, seven years.

396 Brendan: Right.

397 Eoin: So now it is making money and next year will be a very, very good year for IBPXM

Source: Transcript from 28 minutes 48.9 seconds to 29 minutes 58.4 seconds of audio record of 66-minute interview between 'Eoin' and Brendan.

Extract EB 9 begins with me changing the topic from the discussion of websites to Eoin's experience of taking over another company, here called IBPXM. Again he explicitly talks about business culture: he labels the problems in the company his company has recently bought (IBPXM) as 'cultural', suggesting the word 'cultural' when asked the fairly open question "Did you find, you know em, taking over IBPXM, that was a sort of different operation from setting up a new (.) em". He also talks of the need for cultural change (Turn 389). Eoin is drawing here on enterprise as a culture, as described by Burrows (1991). Furthermore, in Eoin's description of IBPXM – : "again it was a publishing business that was run as a lifestyle business" (Turn 385) – the "again" seems to refer to the company discussed as a lifestyle business (in Turns 174-190 of Extract EB 5 above). Note how having a lifestyle business is considered to be a problem by Eoin (Turns 387). While there is still need for change, he points out that IBPXM "is making money and next year will be a very, very good year for IBPXM" (Turn 397).

In Extract EB13, which follows immediately from Extract 12 above, Eoin builds himself up as fast-growth, rather than consolidation, orientated.

Extract EB 13 from an interview between Eoin and Brendan

398   Brendan: I mean it's been a very hectic couple of years, I'd imagine eh, since you set up Diverse Media, has it?

399   Eoin: Yeah.

400   Brendan: Are you keen to kind to keep the momentum going or are you keen to kind of(.)

401   Eoin: y[es

402   Brendan: con]solidate a bit or.

403   Eoin: em, well I don't know any other way of surviving, you know, I

404   Brendan: Right.

405   Eoin: I em, I wouldn't like to work in a bank you know.

406   Brendan: Okay yeah.

407   Eoin: You know, I've been offered jobs in public relations before and no, I wouldn't like that em, I've been offered jobs

408   Brendan: Mmm,

409   Eoin: equity analysts, stock broking firms, no.

410   Brendan: Yeah, yeah.

411   Eoin: So this is a business that I enjoy and like em, and you know we have a couple of other em bits and bobs which we are looking at, not looking at, it's gone beyond that stage where event management is one area that we're, we're em going to get into in 2005.

412   Brendan: Right.

413   Eoin: And em with ((name of a particular professional association in Ireland))

414   Brendan: Right, right, yeah

Source: Transcript from 29 minutes 58.4 seconds to 30 minutes 53.2 seconds of audio record of 66-minute interview between 'Eoin' and Brendan.

The enterprise talk of fast growth rather than consolidation starts in Turn 398 when I ask the personal question: "Are you keen to kind to keep the momentum ((of the last hectic couple of years)) going or are you keen to kind of(.)" (Turn 400) Eoin responds with a quick "Yes" (Turn 401). His answer overlaps with the less growth-orientated alternative in the second half of my question, but it is clear from the following turns that Eoin is saying yes to fast growth. He does not "know any other way of surviving, you know" (Turn 403) and "wouldn't like to work in a bank you know" (Turn 405). In Turns 407-411, he shows that he has had opportunities to do other things but "this is a business that I enjoy" (Turn 411), indicating the passion of enterprise talk. He goes on to tell of the various developments for more diverse activity in the business. Here he is building up his identity as an autonomous entrepreneur who chooses growth – since "Those who choose a model of 'small and stable business' (called trundlers) over a

model of 'fast growth business' (called gazelles) are less likely to be recognised and accepted as entrepreneurs." (Lewis & Llewellyn, 2004:7)

In Extract EB 14, below, which follows immediately on from Extract EB 15, above, there is initially more evidence presented that Eoin is a true growth-oriented entrepreneur although there is then a shift to more strategic talk.

Extract EB14 from an interview between Eoin and Brendan

415   Eoin: We'll run a ProfessionX+ conference, em, we're going to have a couple of one day seminars, ProfessionX+ related, ProfessionX+ / ProfessionX related seminars.

416   Brendan: Right, right.

417   Eoin: Em and we've also, we're in the process of setting up a company which, em (2.0) I don't know if you're familiar with a concept called …

((Turns 418 to Turn 434 are excluded to avoid identification and disclosure. They describe plans for a future venture in a sector related to publishing))

434   Brendan: Right.

435   Eoin: And em, you know and they're, ((firms in sector)) are looking at all kinds of different ways at cutting their costs at the moment. The vast majority of them are you know, owned by multinationals, you know so, the phone call comes in on Friday, you know every Friday afternoon from Paris or London, whatever 'we're looking at your figures this week, you know, we need to..'

436   Brendan: Right, yeah.

437   Eoin: you know to start saving a few bob here and there.

438   Brendan: Right.

439   Eoin: So that's the reality. So this is a service that, you know, and we've made presentations to the bigger ((firms in sector)) and they all, they're all on board

<u>Source</u>: Transcript from 30 minutes 53.2 seconds to 32 minutes 44.8 seconds of audio record of 66-minute interview between 'Eoin' and Brendan.

In Turn 415 Eoin lists various conferences and seminars to different markets that he plans. This performance as an energetic entrepreneur continues into Turn 417 where he tells of another company he is involved in setting up. In explaining the rationale for this new company, Eoin shifts to the more strategic language of cost-saving and the structure of the sector (Turns 434- 439). Using this strategic talk, he makes himself accountable and credible to the bigger firms in the sector: "So that's the reality. So this is a service that, you know, and we've made presentations to the bigger ((firms in sector)) and they all, they're all on board" (Turn 439).

In Extract EB15, below, following directly from Extract EB14, the shift in Eoin's talk from enterprise to strategy discourse continues.

Extract EB15 from an interview between Eoin and Brendan

440 Brendan: So you, and you obviously get a buzz out of spotting those kind of things

441 Eoin: Eh, yeah, well I mean the (2) eh (.) the (.) in terms of what we do, in terms of you know publishing, I would never get into a market that had more than two players in it, [you know.

442 Brendan: Right]

443 Eoin: In terms of products.

444 Brendan: Right, right.

445 Eoin: I think niche has to be the way forward for us

446 Brendan: Okay

447 Eoin: Okay, market, not in the case of IBPXM, but we have ProfessionX News, now I know James Dwyer, an old friend of mine, that's two players and the market is big enough for the two of us

448 Brendan: Yeah, yeah.

449 Eoin: Right, eh I think we're number one but eh

450 Brendan: Ha, ha.

451 Eoin: But em, you know in terms of what we do in Sport Y and em, Sport X or em business funding or franchising

452 Brendan: Mm.

453 Eoin: I would try to see if there is, you know a niche em, in the market place and go for it

454 Brendan: Right, yeah.

455 Eoin: And you know we are looking at a number of other products, em for 2005. Em magazines, you know monthly magazines and stuff like that, but and they all are cater- will, will, deal with em markets where there are no other Irish publications

456 Brendan: Right, right, yeah.

457 Eoin: covering them, so.

Source: Transcript from 32 minutes 44.8 seconds to 33 minutes 54 seconds of audio record of 66-minute interview between Eoin and Brendan.

In the first turns of Extract EB 15, my comments in Turn 440 position Eoin more as a creative entrepreneur than as a strategist. This is responded to initially with some hesitation: " Eh, yeah, well I mean the (.) eh (.) the (.)" (Turn 441). These hesitations can be interpreted as a sign of a troubling area in the talk; perhaps the trouble is that is that enterprise talk has already fallen away and strategy talk cannot response easily to my enterprise comment. Eoin recovers fluency in the latter part of Turn 411: "I would never get into a market that had more than two players in it". This general abstract rule of thumb is a codified bit of knowledge that is more in line with strategic discipline than the playful buzz of enterprise. There follows two uses of the strategic term "niche" (Turns 445 & 453), and particular businesses are used as examples of general strategic principles (Turn 447's "not in the case of IBPXM" and Turn 451's "in terms of what we do in Sport Y"). As an aside, it is interesting to note that Eoin again talks of "an old friend of

mine" (Turn 447), demonstrating the importance of personal contacts and an element of connectedness.

In Extract EB 16, below, again immediately following Extract EB 15, strategy talk falls away and is replaced by enterprise talk.

Extract EB16 from an interview between Eoin and Brendan

458 Brendan: In terms of em, you have Marie on the board of directors, do you have anybody else on the board or?

459 Eoin: Well.

460 Brendan: >do you prefer to keep it quite tight?<

461 Eoin: Yes. Well he, he, it's not up on CRO yet, but Ray Wollen ((a pseudonym))

462 Brendan: Okay.

463 Eoin: is my sales and marketing eh director, he's eh a director and he's a small shareholder

464 Brendan: Okay, so it's eh(.)

465 Eoin: I'm the, I'm 70 per cent and Ray is 30

466 Brendan: Right, yeah.

467 Eoin: So, Ray is brilliant, he's the best sales guy I've ever come across.

468 Brendan: Yeah, it's a rare skill isn't it. Yeah.

469 Eoin: So eh, he's eh, he works with me on all our new product development and stuff like that.

470 Brendan: And have you known Ray for long?

471 Eoin: He worked for me in ((Business Magazine 1)), em in a freelance capacity in advertising sales and he em, we became friends and stuff like that he em. When I set up DiverseMedia I had him specifically in mind

472 Brendan: Right, yeah, yeah.

473 Eoin: to handle the sales so eh, but he <u>is</u> eh, like I said he is brilliant. Other shareholders, maybe (.) em down the line, it's not (.) it's not entirely eh (.) I've had offers of people wanting to invest.

474 Brendan: Mmm.

475 Eoin: All that kind of stuff, but em, we don't need the money.

476 Brendan: Right, yeah, yeah, yeah.

477 Eoin: Again, ownership is a, is a big thing.

478 Brendan: You've had unpleasant experiences before.

479 Eoin: Yeah, I had a ten percent share in a company, and okay, that's all I paid for, but I mean em, ownership, not just in terms of equity but in terms of em, you know, control em, is important for me.

Source: Transcript from 33 minutes 54 seconds to 35 minutes 30.2 seconds of audio record of 66-minute interview between 'Eoin' and Brendan.

The shift from strategy to enterprise discourse takes place early in the turns of Extract EB 16. In Turn 458, I ask a strategy-based question about the 'board of directors' to which Eoin responds with much that stresses his entrepreneurial autonomy. Boards of directors are formally concerned with managers accountable which (as was pointed out in the literature review) may have been a reason for the

emergence of strategy discourse. To this question Eoin answers with a non-committal "Well." (Turn 459). Evidence that this response was a little uncomfortable is shown in my hurried response of Turn 460 that asks a supplementary question, acknowledging that perhaps it would be understandable if Eoin preferred to keep it "tight" (Turn 460). He then responds much more expansively. He names Ray Wollen as a director though his status as any sort of independent monitor to whom Eoin has to be accountable is quickly undermined. Ray is not yet registered with CRO so he has no official status yet (Turn 461) and is described as belonging to Eoin: "my sales and marketing eh director" (Turn 463). While acknowledging him as "eh director" (Turn 463), Eoin stresses that he, Eoin, is "70 per cent and Ray is 30" (Turn 465). He goes on to emphasis Ray's functional specialty: "he's the best sales guy I've ever come across" (Turn 467). He stresses his personal connection with Ray: "He worked for me in ((Business Magazine 1)), em in a freelance capacity in advertising sales and he em, we became friends ...." (Turns 471). When Eoin "...set up DiverseMedia I had him specifically in mind... .... to handle the sales" (Turns 471-472). This characterisation of Ray as a specialist acts to legitimate Eoin as the only one with the holistic overview. Eoin also shows his acceptance of the economic order of market valuation – that also legitimates his greater power in the firm – in Turn 479 by acknowledging his tough experience in a previous company: "Yeah, I had a ten percent share in a company, and okay, that's all I paid for". Eoin is very explicit in acknowledging that "ownership, not just in terms of equity but in terms of em, you know, control em, is important" for him (Turn 479).

Again while this control is important to Eoin, he is keen to account for this unaccountability. This accounting carries over to the next extract, following immediately from Extract EB16.

Extract EB 17 from an interview between Eoin and Brendan

480   Brendan: Mm.

481   Eoin: And em I would not like- you know I <u>do</u> have good advisers you know

482   Brendan: Okay so you would have a broader range

483   Eoin: Yeah, absolutely you know and people who do, you know who are friends of mine in the industry, you know for example, Seán Leader , the Chief Executive of ((well known Irish media company))

484   Brendan: Right.

485   Eoin: He set up the ((well known media brand)) here.

486   Brendan: Right.

487   Eoin: He's eh like a mentor to me. Nick Firms who's the chairman of ((name of a large state company)) is a good friend, mentor

488   Brendan: Right.

489   Eoin: You know has advised me an awful lot down through the years. And then, you know, my own auditors ((name of a well known firm of accountants)) eh, the audit partner in there, we grew up together

490   Brendan: Right, so you can

491   Eoin: so we're 25, 30 years you know.

492   Brendan: You can talk to him with a great degree of confidence.

493   Eoin: Yeah and I mean I'm not afraid to ask for advice, you know, you know 'cos like I said I'm not the font of all wisdom, when it comes to publishing or matters business you know, and you know. While I might not agree with the advice that I get

494   Brendan: Mm.

495   Eoin: you know at least I'll listen to them. Eh, but 9 times out of 10(.) you know I would take on

496   Brendan: Mmm.

497   Eoin: board suggestions from other people you know.

<u>Source:</u> Transcript from 35 minutes 30.2 seconds to 36 minutes 33.2 seconds of audio record of 66-minute interview between 'Eoin' and Brendan.

At the beginning of Extract EB 17, Eoin cuts short his remark "I would not like-" (Turn 481). Perhaps it could have been completed with "I would not like <u>you to think I was completely unadvised and on my own</u>". However, even without such speculation, the knowledge of the listener (witness the two 'you knows' in Turn 481) that Eoin draws on advisors is judged by Eoin to be worth spending his time on, and, "While I might not agree with the advice that I get" (Turn 493), the interviewer must "know at least I'll listen to them. Eh, but 9 times out of 10 (.) you know I would take on" (Turn 495) that advice. Again Eoin stresses the importance of his personal contacts in talking of Seán Leader and Nick Firm (both pseudonyms).

Over Extracts 16 and 17, Eoin has deployed his discourse to portray himself as an autonomous but responsible and sensible person who seeks out connections for advice in conducting his affairs.

Figure 7.3 below provides a consolidated abstract of some of the features of the interview talk seen in Extracts EB 1 to EB 17.

Figure 7.3 Abstract of Extracts EB 1 to EB 17
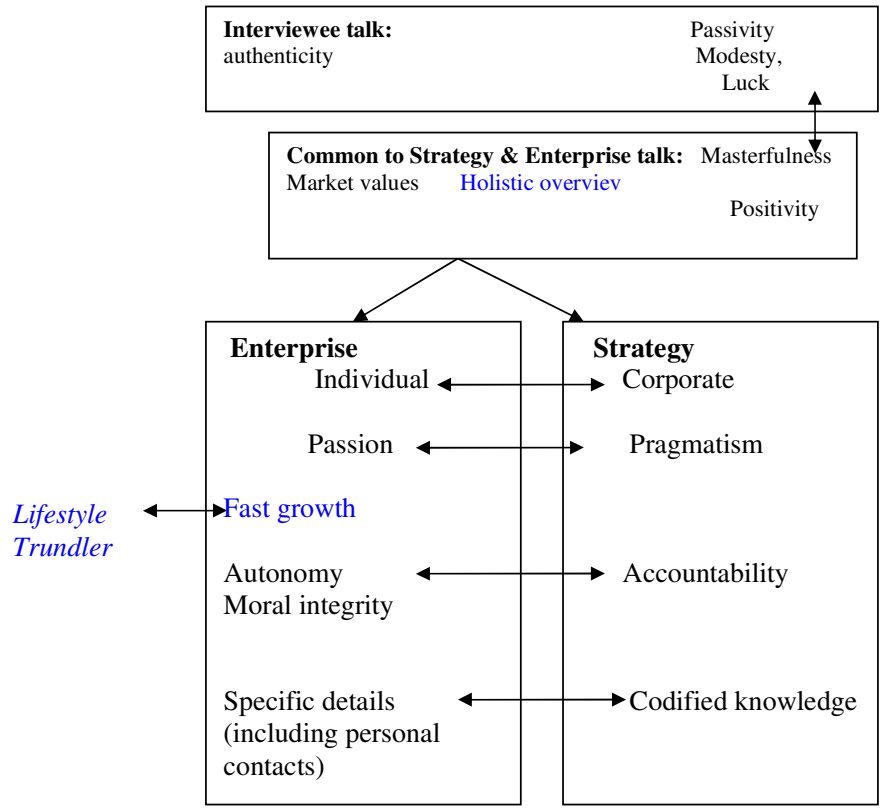
Interviewee talk:	Passivity
authenticity	Modesty,
	Luck

Common to Strategy & Enterprise talk:	Masterfulness
Market values Holistic overviev	
	Positivity

Enterprise	**Strategy**
Individual ← →	Corporate
Passion ← →	Pragmatism
Lifestyle Trundler ← → Fast growth	
Autonomy Moral integrity ← →	Accountability
Specific details (including personal contacts) ← →	Codified knowledge

<u>**Key to symbols in Figure**</u>

𝔸 is endowed with a particular flavour in this interviewee's talk (see discussion of figure).

A An italicised A means A is treated as undesirable or unapproved of.

Item in blue means this item is an interpretation from the latest extracts of this interview.

[A] ← → [B]   Means the A and B are in tension with one another

[A] → [B]   Means B belongs to the more general category of A

| **A** B C | Means B and C are characteristics of **A** |
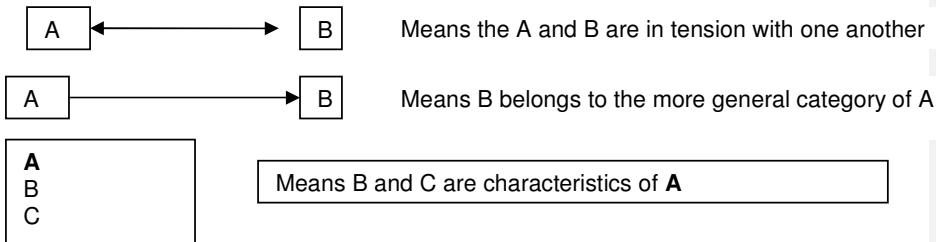
<u>Source:</u> Abstracted by the author from interview between Eoin and Brendan.

Many of the features of Eoin's talk highlighted in the earlier Figure 7.2 not only form a background for subsequent interview segments but repeat themselves in Extracts EB 9 to EB 17. Respect for market values is reinforced and used to talk about freelance workers. The separate entity and collective nature of the firm is reinforced. To the passions for sport and writing is added another affect – the enterprise culture's love of fast growth to balance the pragmatic development of business. The autonomy of the entrepreneur is accompanied not only by moral integrity but also by an embedding with personal contacts that not only extends the entrepreneur's store of tacit knowledge of specific details but also provides a sort of resource for accounting for the lack of accountability. Eoin contrasts his holistic overview with his partner's more specialised expertise and thus enhances his status as strategist and entrepreneur.

7.5 Eoin – the astute business leader

Between the end of Extract EB 17 and the start of Extract EB 18, there is a gap of nearly four minutes. During this time we initially continue our discussion concerning advisors and directors. In particular I question Eoin on detailed information about the directors of the firm. I then ask a general question about the strategic questions facing the company. Eoin responds at first by talking about the need for more subscriptions, better credit control and particular advertising targets that he'd like to meet to keep pace with the expected growth of his competitors. He also talks about getting the company he has taken over to work more effectively with the company he started himself. It is this latter topic that is the subject at the start of Extract EB 18 below.

Extract EB 18 from an interview between Eoin and Brendan

541   Eoin: Yeah, you know what I mean, paying two, two rents so. Little things like that. But em one of the <u>biggest</u> problems em that I've, that I encounter, you know I suppose on a daily basis is dealing with the staff that I, eh acquired em along the line and getting them to sort of, you know change their mindset because

542   Brendan: Right, yeah, yeah, yeah.

543   Eoin: they come from a fairly easy background, you know there was no real pressure in terms of

544   Brendan: Right, yeah.

545   Eoin: you know, hitting targets and stuff. Everything was done

546   Brendan: [Lax

547   Eoin:by the seat of their pants], lax, yeah. So I've been working on them, you know in terms of a, em you know, how can <u>I</u> help them and how, you know can we work together and boost, whatever productivity and boost you know, our, our sales revenue em (.) I, I'm, while I like to think of myself as a, as a <u>leader</u>,

548   Brendan: Mm.

549   Eoin: em, you know whatever, a prefect at school and captain of the team, the school Gaelic ((football)) team and all that kind of stuff, when it comes to you know, leading people in business and leading your staff, that's the bit I find <u>really</u> daunting.

550   Brendan: Right.

551   Eoin: You know, getting them motivated you know without upsetting them

552   Brendan: Yeah, yeah, yeah.

553   Eoin:without pissing them off and standing on too many toes

554   Brendan: Right, yeah.

555   Eoin: em, when I have fairly exacting standards.

556   Brendan: Right, yeah.

557   Eoin: You know and I think everybody should have my standards (laughing) but it's not always the case.

558   Brendan: Yeah, yeah, yeah.

559   Eoin: Em, and that's the bit that I've, I've got to deal with them, you know and I've thought about it myself and maybe you know, I should go off and do an IMI ((Irish Management Institute)) course or something

560   Brendan: Yeah, yeah, yeah.

561   Eoin: And try to develop my leadership skills you know

<u>Source:</u> Transcript from 40 minutes 7.9 seconds to 41 minutes 43.4 seconds of audio record of 66-minute interview between Eoin and Brendan.

In responding to my general question about the strategic issues facing the company Eoin has, as described above, gone over a few issues, such as "paying two, two rents" (Turn 541), but these seem to be minor problems compared to an issue of enterprise culture. Eoin states that "one of the <u>biggest</u> problems" he has had with the staff he acquired is "getting them to sort of, you know change their mindset". He points out that the employees he inherited "... come from a fairly easy background, you know there was no real pressure, you know there was no real pressure in terms of... ... you know, hitting targets and stuff." (Turn 543-545). This talk is reminiscent of Paul's preference for employing

those who have had it tough (see discussion of Extract PB 8 in Chapter 7 above). So we have Eoin here again stressing the importance of a tough culture for enterprise.

In Extract EB 18, Eoin says that he likes to think of himself as a leader (Turn 547) and he provides some warrant for so thinking as he was "a prefect at school and captain of the team, the school Gaelic ((football)) team and all that kind of stuff…" (Turn 549). Despite these evidences of leadership, he admits that "… when it comes to you know, leading people in business and leading your staff, that's the bit I find really daunting." (Turn 549). Eoin is displaying himself as a modest and authentic interviewee. Here, too, he constructs an identity for himself as a person with "fairly exacting standards." (Turn 555). He thinks "everybody should have my standards (laughing) but it's not always the case" (Turn 557). His construction of his identity shows a contrast with others and fits the entrepreneurial characteristic of being an agent with moral integrity. The locus of control is not, however, allowed to drift away from the strategist/entrepreneur that Eoin is. Simply because others aren't as ethical as he is provides no excuse for him not to act. He states that he should act on this matter and "go off and do an IMI ((Irish Management Institute)) course or something… … And try to develop my leadership skills you know" (Turns 559-561). Thus Eoin's masterfulness is maintained.

Between the end of Extract EB 18 and the start of Extract EB 19, there is a gap of nearly one minute. During this time we talk about Eoin's lack of formal business education and he also begins talking about his family background. He describes in a fairly factual manner the details of the businesses two of his siblings are involved in. Some of his description of his parents' involvement in business is much richer and this is therefore presented in Extract EB 19.

Extract EB 19 from an interview between Eoin and Brendan

577   Eoin: Dad wasn't a particularly (.) <u>good</u> businessman, you know.

578   Brendan: Right.

579   Eoin: He tried hard but you know, I think he eh,

580   Brendan: (laughs)

581   Eoin: no he wouldn't have been in the Dermot Desmond ((well known successful Irish business man)) category or (laughing) anything like that.

582   Brendan: (laughs)

583   Eoin: But(.) And it, no, I don't have any hang-ups or anything like that, he just wasn't particularly

584   Brendan: Yeah, yeah.

585   Eoin: astute, he was too soft.

586   Brendan: Right, right, right.

587   Eoin: And em, you know, I suppose he had his priorities right, his family came first, you know.

588   Brendan: Right, right, yeah.

589   Eoin: You know so we had a good childhood in that respect. Em, (.) fond memories, but eh Mum was you know, I suppose, I got, one of Dad's business went bust and Mum out of necessity had to em, sort of rejoin the workforce and she was quite, she would, her father would have been eh quite wealthy and he would have had a number of pubs and em shops and farms and stuff like that back in the 40's and 50's.

590   Brendan: Right so there's

591   Eoin: So she wasn't eh, in anyway eh put off by it, having to go back to work and stuff like that, so, so she bought a shop ((in an area in Dublin city)) and she bought another one in ((another area in Dublin city))

592   Brendan: Right.

593   Eoin: and em keep them ticking over for a number of years, you know.

<u>Source:</u> Transcript from 42 minutes 41.6 seconds to 43 minutes 45.6 seconds of audio record of 66-minute interview between 'Eoin' and Brendan.

In talking of his father as not "a particularly (.) <u>good</u> businessman" (Turn 577), Eoin accomplishes some work on the identity of what is a good 'businessman'. Although his father tried hard (Turn 579) he was no Dermot Desmond (a wealthy and well-known Irish businessman). Eoin's father "just wasn't particularly… …astute, he was too soft" (Turn 585). By implication, a good 'businessman' is wealthy, astute and hard. There's a hint, in this passage at least, that the dedication of a business person is more a matter of values (being hard) than of effort (trying too hard) . Furthermore Eoin supposes that his father "had his priorities right, his family came first," (Turn 587), whereas elsewhere he has admitted that his own priorities had not been right (see Turn 36, Extract EB2 and the interpretation above where Eoin talks about the breakdown of his first marriage and his dedication to work). In contrast Eoin's mother had wealth in her background – "her father would have been eh quite wealthy and he would have had a number of pubs and em shops and farms and stuff like that back in the 40's and 50's" (Turn 589).

260

Furthermore, unlike his father who tried hard (Turn 579), his mother "wasn't eh, in anyway eh put off by it, having to go back to work and stuff like that" (Turn 591) and established two shops that she kept "...ticking over for a number of years" (Turn 493). In the quick (two shops in half a turn) way Eoin conveys his mother's achievement and in the phrase 'ticking over', there is a suggestion of ease in these achievements. Again, the dedicated nature required in strategy/enterprise may be less concerned with effort and more a sort of psychic determination.

Between the end of Extract EB 19 and the start of Extract EB 20, there is a gap of a little over one minute. During this time we finish our discussion of Eoin's family's involvement in business – two of his siblings are owner-managers. This leads to talk about advice he gets from his siblings, and it is in this context that I raise the issue previously raised by Eoin (see Extract EB 18 above) of leadership and managing people that is dealt with in Extract EB 20.

Extract EB 20 from an interview between Eoin and Brendan

608   Brendan: if] if you acquire people is (.)

609   Eoin: That's

610   Brendan: is an issue.

611   Eoin: Yeah for me I think that's an area that I need to work on. Eh, I mean I can understand a balance sheet and I can understand profit & loss account and you know and margins & all that kind of stuff, that's the easy part of it. It's dealing with people is the hard one, we're a people business

612   Brendan: Right, yeah.

613   Eoin: You know? We're as good as the people em, we have working for us, you know.

614   Brendan: Right, yeah.

615   Eoin: On all fronts, be it in editorial, be it in sales and em that is something that eh, you know, it would be different if it was just a, if we had a production line and we're just

616   Brendan: Yeah, yeah, yeah.

617   Eoin: you know sticking & stamping stuff on & letting it go. But because, we're out there talking to people or <u>interviewing</u> people and <u>writing</u> about people, or <u>selling</u> to people it's so important that we have the right

618   Brendan: Right, yeah, yeah.

619   Eoin: balance and skill sets.

620   Brendan: And would that put you off, em kind of taking over another place, I mean would you?

621   Eoin: No.

622   Brendan: No.

623   Eoin: No because (.) you can always buy talent.

624   Brendan: Right, yeah yeah, yeah.

625   Eoin: You know, you can get good people in em (.) now they may not think the same as you but you know that they can give 100 percent.

626   Brendan: Yeah.

627   Eoin: And I just felt you know that (.) that people that I inherited because they had it so easy for a couple of years.

628   Brendan: It's very hard to unlearn that, isn't really it?

629   Eoin: Yeah, very difficult & these are people who are in their 30's & you know, sometimes you just need to put a, put a bomb under them, people to make them move, you know. And I'm not, I'm not heavy handed or anything like that, I mean, I, you know I make my views quite clear on certain things but em (.) you know maybe, I have had to fire people in the past & you know I wouldn't like to do it again.

630   Brendan: Mm.

631   Eoin: An unpleasant eh thing, but you know, I have another opportunity here to develop something and you know develop it I will and em, I am quite single minded when I want to be.

632   Brendan: You're not scared of

633   Eoin: No.

634   Brendan: making the tough decision.

635   Eoin: No, no, no no, no, you know, em it's, I'd rather not have to do it

636   Brendan: Yeah, yeah.

637   Eoin: but I mean when it comes to it yeah, absolutely. And you know at the end of the day <u>I don't</u> have any reason at the moment to fire anybody, just because they don't think like I do or

638   Brendan: Yeah, yeah, yeah.

639   Eoin: you know where I need to spend a little more time is, is, you know bringing them around.

<u>Source:</u> Transcript from 44 minutes 54.5 seconds to 47 minutes 10.7 seconds of audio record of 66-minute interview between 'Eoin' and Brendan.

At the start of Extract EB 20 I take the initiative of declaring that, "if] if you acquire people..." (Turn 608), leading and managing people is an issue. Eoin responds modestly to the raising again of this issue by saying: "Yeah for me I think that's an area that I need to work on" (Turn 611). This could be seen as a concession to my raising of the issue, but viewing this purely as an accusation raised by me would be to ignore its prior introduction by Eoin in Extract EB 18 above, and the manner in which he elaborates on the topic in the rest of this extract. Eoin is not merely being modest in general here as he "can understand a balance sheet and I can understand profit & loss account and you know and margins & all that kind of stuff, that's the easy part of it" (Turn 611). He is specifying a particular problem area in this type of business that soon becomes objectively (and not just personally) difficult, since "It's dealing with people is the hard one, we're a people business" (Turn 611). He explains that this type of business is different from a production line (Turn 615) where what is involved is merely "you know sticking & stamping stuff on & letting it go" (Turn 617). Rather, the activities of his business, Eoin stresses, involve people because "we're out there talking to people or interviewing people and writing about people, or selling to people..." (Turn 617). Una, too, was very concerned with the skill of the employees and the people-centred nature of the business (see analysis of Extract UB 6 in Chapter 8 above) but, in contrast to Una who stressed the Craftwork involved in journalism, Eoin has referenced the importance of a mixture of crafts as " it's so important that we have the right ... ...balance and skill sets" (Turns 617-619), including a specific reference to selling (Turns 617). In contrast, while Una discussed sales as essential, it was much more distanced than in Eoin's talk from the writing skills that Una celebrated so much.

The importance of not having an easy life, so stressed by Paul (Extract PB 8 in Chapter 7 above) is also stressed here by Eoin. He is not put off taking over another company because "You know, you can get good people in em (.) now they may not think the same as you but you know that they can give 100 percent" (Turns 625). Rather what he does raise as a difficulty is: "that people that I inherited because they had it so easy for a couple of years." (Turns 627). This comfort means that "you know, sometimes you just need to put a, put a bomb under them, people to make them move, you know." (Turns 629). Though he does not want to have to fire people, as he did before, he is not too soft but is dedicated and determined: "...I have another opportunity here to develop something and you know develop it I will and em, I am quite single minded when I want to be" (Turns 631).

The 'tough decision', as I put it, will not be made lightly or self-indulgently because "you know at the end of the day I don't have any reason at the moment to fire anybody, just because they don't think like I do or … … you know where I need to spend a little more time is, is, you know bringing them around" (Turns 637-639). The attributes of toughness and dedication are thus established as important for both Eoin and his employees.

Between the end of Extract EB 20 and the start of Extract EB 21, there is a gap of nearly two minutes. During this time we quickly finish talking about managing employees and I ask about Eoin's intentions as regards the related enterprise he has started. He takes time to describe this new venture in reasonable detail that implicitly contrasts its simple, low-skilled nature with the people-centred nature of his publishing business. The detail would identify that business and there is nothing in it that would trouble my interpretation so I have excluded this segment from presentation. In this omitted segment I also start drawing the interview to a close as I tell Eoin how conscious I am of the time he has spent with me. This closing move by me continues in the next Extract, EB 21, discussed below.

Extract EB 21 from an interview between Eoin and Brendan

674 Brendan: Em is there anything obvious about the strategy of the firm or anything else that I've left out of, of

675 Eoin: Well I mean the big issue facing publishing here in Ireland and it's an issue that I've thought about long and hard over the last couple of years. The market is, is em, highly fragmented for a start, but there are >far too many publishers< eh, in this country. Eh, mainly kind of one man and their dog type operations

676 Brendan: Right.

677 Eoin: I think the market is going to have to sort of take a view, you know, 'listen

678 Brendan: Yeah, yeah.

679 Eoin:we're going to have to consolidate here' and that's going to entail some of the bigger companies getting together

680 Brendan: Ri

681 Eoin: Nobody's addressed this issue because eh (.) as you know yourself in merger situations there's politics and personal politics and em eh, eh you know egos are at stake and whatever so. But to me that's, that's not em, that would <u>not</u> be an issue for <u>me</u>. Em and if I thought that em as a shareholder I can extract more value by merging with somebody em and I would, I've a couple of companies in mind. Be- You know and I know that the, the MDs in those companies would be like-minded as well. Em yeah, I think it going to happen.

682 Brendan: Right, yeah, that's interesting.

683 Eoin: Yeah and I think you know, after that if you can create a sufficient eh, scale, you know some of the other companies might be willing, you know to join forces as well. It happened in the UK back in the 60's and I think, em there was a lot of fall out and consolidation of the sector and you know the magazine publishing industry is, is concentrated in the hands of about six main em, publishers Emap, National Mags, Futura, eh, two other ones that of em, have grown fairly rapidly over the last four or five years, eh, can't think of. That's going to happen here.

684 Brendan: Right.

685 Eoin: You'll see, yeah here in Ireland em, you got ((name of an Irish publishing company)), which used to be ((old name of that Irish publishing company)), you got ((name of an another Irish publishing company)) and then there's a raft of other smaller

686 Brendan: Yeah, yeah, mm.

687 Eoin: And em, so you know, I would certainly be looking at em(.) merging with another company over the next 2 or 3 years.

688 Brendan: Right.

<u>Source:</u> Transcript from 48 minutes 59.1 seconds to 51 minutes 21.3 seconds of audio record of 66-minute interview between 'Eoin' and Brendan.

Extract EB 21 opens with me addressing Eoin as a strategist: "is there anything obvious about the strategy of the firm or anything else that I've left out of" (Turn 674). His response involves a resurgence of strategy talk in contrast to the enterprise discourse about comfortable mindsets and easy lives. In Turn 475, Eoin responds by raising "an issue that I've thought about long and hard". Clearly this has been an analytical process demanding a commitment of much effort and time. Eoin identifies what he sees as the inevitability of consolidation (e.g. Turn 679's "going to have to") in the Irish publishing industry. Analysis and inevitability are features of strategy discourse. This consolidation, Eoin argues, is coming as a result of impersonal market forces acting on Irish publishers. Despite its impersonal nature, the market apparently has a view

and talks to publishers: "I think the market is going to have to sort of take the view, you know, 'listen we're going to have to consolidate here' and that's going to entail some of the bigger companies getting together" (Turn 679). This personalisation of market forces is necessary to address the consolidation because "as you know yourself in merger situations there's politics and personal politics and em eh, eh you know egos are at stake and whatever so" (Turn 681). For serious players like himself this is not a problem: "But to me that's, that's not em, that would not be an issue for me. Em and if I thought that em as a shareholder I can extract more value by merging with somebody em and I would, I've a couple of companies in mind. Be- You know and I know that the, the MD's in those companies would be like-minded as well. Em yeah, I think it going to happen" (Turn 681): because Eoin, and other MDs like him, focus on extracting value – and not being lifestyle entrepreneurs – they can escape putting their egos at risk. However, while the ego may not be helpful, the personal is still needed because consolidation is an issue that "somebody has to address and you know. Somebody's got to take initiative and whether it's me or whether it's ((A. Someone)) in ((Business Title)) or whether it's ((A.N. other)) in ((Sectoral Title)) or whatever." Eoin, the impersonal strategic analyst is, at work here and the importance of market values in the overall discourse is clear.

Between the end of Extract EB 21 and the start of Extract EB 22, there is a gap of over four minutes. During this time the impersonal strategic talk of Extract EB 21 continues. Further advantages to the sector of consolidation and other people who might lead that consolidation are mentioned. As my interpretation of this segment is much the same as my interpretation of Extract EB 21, I have not displayed it here and instead present Extract EB 22 below.

Extract EB 22 from an interview between Eoin and Brendan

753   Eoin: Em so (2) PERSONALLY issues going forward eh (3) Well I'm ((early forties)) (.) em by the age of 50 I would have liked, would like to have you know taken a back seat

754   Brendan: Right, right.

755   Eoin: Em, although I would like, ha, and I've been saying this for years, I'd like to write a book, I'd li- a novel

756   Brendan: Right, yeah, yeah.

757   Eoin: Eh, I started about 3 years ago now and eh got into about 3 or 4 chapters but that was it.

758   Brendan: You've been a little busy since (laughs)

759   Eoin: I've a floppy disc somewhere under the bed you know so

760   Brendan: (laughs)

761   Eoin: But eh, no, I'm enjoying what I do and you know and I'd like to continue to grow the company and em but, I could not see myself doing anything else.

762   Brendan: Yeah, yeah, yeah. I, I, it's an interesting, I mean the merger thing you had, you had that take-over of IBPXM and you're workin' you know with PX++AI ((A professional association)) as well and also is it em Forms Ltd.

763   Eoin: Yeah.

764   Brendan: you've hooked up with as well? So you, you're quite merger minded in a way aren't you?

765   Eoin: Well if it's going to provide you know, eh (.) associations with you know reputable organisations you know, for example ... ((Eoin then takes the conversation away from the issue of consolidation of the sector in Ireland to a discussion of the details on one of his particular joint ventures))

Source: Transcript from 55 minutes 38.4 seconds to 57 minutes 6.2 seconds of audio record of 66-minute interview between 'Eoin' and Brendan.
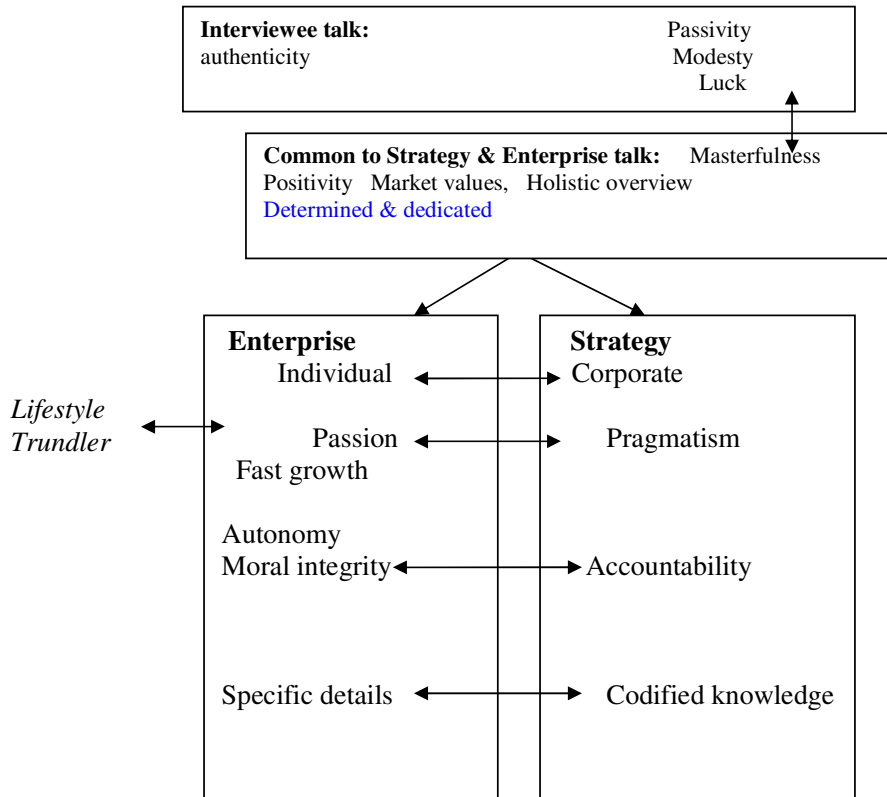
At the very start of Extract EB 22, strategy discourse falls away from its prominent position. Eoin shifts from the impersonal strategic analytical talk of the earlier Extract EB 21. This shift is evidenced by "Em so", the extended pause and the loudness of "PERSONALLY" of Turn 753 . Eoin is returning to answer the question of Turn 674 where I asked if I had left any obvious questions out of the interview. In turning to the personal, Eoin reflects: "... Well I'm ((early forties)) (.) em by the age of 50 I would have liked, would like to have you know taken a back seat ... ... Em, although I would like, ha, and I've been saying this for years, I'd like to write a book, I'd li- a novel" (Turns 753-755). This reflection would support the earlier contention, although Eoin does not make any explicit link between this and his earlier contention, that for him there would be no ego involved in consolidation (Turn 681 of Extract EB 21 above). It also reinforces Eoin's identity as an authentic interviewee willing to share personal details modestly, even poking fun at his own ambition to write a book (Turn 753). There is also a hint that he won't necessarily be making a great effort in directly driving the business: "... Well I'm ((early forties)) (.) em by the age of 50 I would have liked, would like to have you know taken a back seat" (Turn 753) Shortly afterwards, however, there is a passionate commitment that might well lead to trouble for him in the case of an industry consolidation that would buy him out: "But eh, no, I'm enjoying what I do and you

know and I'd like to continue to grow the company and em but, I could not see myself doing anything else" (Turn 761). The "I could not see myself doing anything else" harks back to Eoin's claim that he did not "know any other way of surviving, you know" (Turn 403, Extract EB 13) than as a fast-growth entrepreneur, and so can interpreted as enterprise talk.

After Extract EB 22 we continue talking for a short time about details of specific projects – including some planned conferences related to the magazines Eoin publishes. However, the majority of the remaining nearly nine minutes of the interview involves me thanking Eoin for his time and asking for his help in getting to talk to Ray, his minority shareholder. Again, Eoin praises Ray's gifts as a sales person in a manner similar to the praise he gave previously for Ray's particular and narrowly defined skills (see discussion of Extract EB 16 above). As this closing segment contains nothing that is in tension with the interpretations so far it is excluded from presentation here.

Figure 7.4 below provides a consolidated abstraction of some of the features of the interview talk seen in Extracts EB 1 to EB 22.

Figure 7.4   Abstract of Extracts EB 1 to EB 22

Interviewee talk:	Passivity
authenticity	Modesty
	Luck

Common to Strategy & Enterprise talk: Masterfulness
Positivity   Market values,   Holistic overview
Determined & dedicated

Enterprise	**Strategy**
Individual ← → Corporate	
Lifestyle Passion ← → Pragmatism	
Trundler Fast growth	
Autonomy	
Moral integrity ← → Accountability	
Specific details ← → Codified knowledge	

Key to symbols in Figure

𝔸 is endowed with a particular flavour in this interviewee's talk (see discussion of figure).

A An italicised A means A is treated as undesirable or unapproved of.

Item in blue means this item is an interpretation from the latest extracts of this interview.

| A | ← → | B | Means the A and B are in tension with one another |

| A | → | B | Means B belongs to the more general category of A |

A		Means B and C are characteristics of **A**
B		
C		

Source: Abstracted by the author from interview between Eoin and Brendan.

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Again, many of the features of Eoin's talk that were highlighted in Figures 7.3 and Figure 7.4 not only form a background for subsequent interview segments but repeat themselves in Extracts EB 18 to EB 22.   Eoin behaves as a good interviewee by authentically and modestly answering questions, yet he also demonstrates his masterfulness as a strategist and entrepreneur. The entrepreneurial passion for business is reinforced as are the high moral standards of the entrepreneur. Eoin's strategic ability to analyse the forces acting on a business is also demonstrated. Another matter that arises in these extracts is how great effort seems to be not an essential part of being a good businessperson – indeed it seems that trying too hard may even be a counter-indication; what is required and is common to both enterprise and strategy talk is to be 'determined and dedicated'.

7.6 Conclusion

In this chapter the workings of the strategy and enterprise discourses in my interview with 'Eoin' have been analysed.

There were important differences in the way the enterprise and strategy discourses were used, compared to the interviews with Una and Paul. There were strong flavours of New Thought and Craftwork in the interviews with Paul and Una respectively that ran throughout their interviews alongside enterprise and strategy. On the other hand, while Eoin could talk of interests not contained by enterprise and strategy discourses (e.g. his interest in sports and in writing a novel), there was no one overall flavour to his very skilled use of the enterprise and strategy discourse. Eoin tended to talk of leadership and the differing business cultures he was familiar with more than Paul. While Una talked of her career most consciously as a journalist and writer, Eoin, while looking forward to writing a novel, was more explicitly a business person.

Similarly to the interactions with Paul and Una, the enterprise-strategy discourse dominated Eoin's talk and it seemed to have the same dilemmatic structure as in the previously presented interviews, with the analysis showing a shifting between the dominance of enterprise and strategy talk.

 The next chapter analyses some more contrasts in the discourses of the three interviews and synthesises the learning from the three interviews on how the enterprise-strategy discourse operates.

CHAPTER 8 REDEPLOYMENT OF ENTERPRISE AND STRATEGY BY THREE SMALL-FIRM PROPRIETORS

8.1 Introduction

This chapter aims to further analyse the three interviews by comparing them and it also aims to synthesise what has been learned from the analysis in the previous four chapters. In so doing this chapter addresses the research aim of examining *how* enterprise and strategy discourses are used by the owner-managers of small firms and the three questions that elaborate that aim:

> 1) How are the grand discourses of enterprise and strategy, as described in the literature, relevant to the talk of owner-managers of small firms?
>
> 2) How, if at all, does the way owner-managers talk of strategy and enterprise vary?
>
> 3) How will the discourses of enterprise and strategy be used in relation to each other?

During both the methodology and analysis it became increasingly clear that in order to understand how strategy and enterprise discourses are used by small-firm owner-managers it was necessary to understand the context in which these discourses were deployed and how that deployment related to those contexts. In this chapter therefore, my focus widens in order to give the reader an overall feel of how the enterprise-strategy operates in the interviews, and to consider how context relates to that operation. This will necessarily entail some blurring of the details to focus on an overall view. This overall view provides some powerful insights.

To achieve the overview desired, I have divided the chapter into five further sections. The next section looks at how this research provides confirmatory evidence of the importance of both the strategy and enterprise discourses as described in the literature. This shows how the grand discourses of enterprise and strategy, as described in the literature, are very relevant to the talk of owner-managers of small firms, and so begins to address the first elaboration of my research aim. That question of how the grand discourses of strategy and enterprise are relevant to the talk of owner-managers of small firms will be further addressed in the sections of the chapter that follow. The next section, Section 8.3, examines how the strategy and enterprise

discourses were deployed concentrating in its first subsection on variation between and within the interviews. This clearly addresses the second question elaborating the overall aim of the research question (i.e. How, if at all, does the way owner-managers talk of strategy and enterprise vary?) and it also elaborates on how the macro discourses of enterprise and discourses are related to the talk of the owner-managers. The second subsection of Section 8.3 addresses the third elaboration of the research aim i.e. How will the discourses of enterprise and strategy be used in relation to each other? My answer to this question is that there is what Billig (2001) might call a dilemmatic unity to the way enterprise-strategy is used in the interviews I conducted with small-firm owner-managers. This view of how the enterprise and strategy discourses are used by small-firm owner-mangers brings into sharper resolution how my analysis addresses the research aim and all three of its elaborations. Section 8.4 then addresses the significant of various aspects of the context in which the discourses analysed were created, as the issue of context became more significant both in developing the methodology *bricologe* specified in the research and in analysing the data arising. This explication of the significance of context in the use of enterprise-discourse allows me in Section 8.5 to put forward a descriptive model of how Enterprise-Strategy is used knowing that that even such a modest generalization needs to be read with the kind of knowledge of the 'sending' context that has been provided (Seale, 1999). The chapter closes with a conclusion section.

8.2 Confirming the importance of strategy and enterprise discourses

This research set out to see how enterprise and strategy discourses were deployed by small-firm proprietors. In the initial reading of my transcriptions, I was reminded of Mazzarella's (2003:58) *déjà vu* type of experience due to the familiarity (from the academic press and business media) and the prevalence of strategy and enterprise discourse, in the interviews. My experience in relation to the interview material in this study related more to strategy and enterprise academic literatures. However, these discursive resources were far from merely duplicated by the interviews but rather deployed skillfuly and creatively by the interviewees. Nevertheless, when reading the interviews, it is easy to feel the swirl of being caught in the circulation of discourses between academia, media, practice and back again.

I was, perhaps naively, initially surprised by the prevalence of enterprise discourse in the interviews, though I had expected and sought strategic discourse from the outset. Soon after my initial interview encounters I decided that strategy and enterprise discourses were to be the focus of the study, so that the evidence of their prevalence has to be treated as of the confirmatory kind. On the other hand, the evidence is strengthened to the extent that the reader is satisfied by the coherence of the account I provide of the interactions. This account, after all, was provided using strategy and enterprise discourse as a guide and supplementing this by an awareness of the interaction as an interview. As was clear in the analysis of the interviews, there was plenty of intertextuality between the grand discourses of enterprise and strategy and the talk of the interviews. Furthermore, as can be seen from the analysis, I was not oblivious to seeing elements in the interactions other than enterprise and strategy discourse. After careful consideration of the material, I concluded that these elements could be seen as 'flavours' subsidiary to, rather than supplanting, enterprise-strategy discourse as the main way of talking about business. Overall this work, then, can be seen as providing confirmatory evidence of the relevance of enterprise and strategy discourse for some small-firm owner-managers in research interviews. However, the main question addressed by this work was not whether or not strategy and enterprise discourses are relevant for small-firm owner- managers but *how* these discourses operate.

8.3 How the strategy and enterprise discourses were deployed

From the analysis of the data, I can now make some more overall observations about how strategy and enterprise discourses were deployed. There was clearly much intertextuality between the macro-discourses of strategy and enterprise discussed in the literature review and the talk of the interviews. However, the strategy and enterprise discourses were not simply witlessly recited as unchanging monoliths. Rather, they were used creatively, with variation within and between interviews. This creativity was constrained by, and nurtured in the protection of, the overall dichotomous unity of the enterprise-strategy discourse. I will return to the dilemmatic nature of this dichotomous unity shortly. I will first address some of the variation in the deployment in the discourses.

8.3.1 Variation between and within interviews

Between and within the three interviews presented, there was clear variation in the strategy and enterprise talk. Such differences were commented on as they became apparent in the chapters that dealt with individual interviews. Here it is opportune to provide a reminder of, and further reflection on, some of these differences.

It will be recalled that in Section 4.4 of Chapter 4 above, when deciding which three interviewees to use as topic for discourse analysis, various insights from the literature were used (e.g. Stanworth & Curran's, 1976; Samartseva & Fomina, 2002; Westhead & Wright, 1998). These writers certainly help explain some differences between interviewees but like Pitt's (1998:402) script-based elaboration, my discourse analysis here "provides a more subtle, richer and contextually grounded explanation", for variation not only between interviews but also within interviews.

In the interviews with both Paul and Una the strategy and enterprise discourses were strongly, and differently, flavoured; in Eoin's talk they were not. Stanworth & Curran (1976) might point to Una 'artisan identity', to Paul's 'classical entrepreneur identity' and to Eoin's 'manager identity' to help explain these differences. This approach would indeed do some explanatory work, particularly in the case of Una's talk but would not explicate the differences between her talk and Eoin's less flavoured talk (both had managerial experience). Nor would they explain the function of Paul's more flavoured talk. In the case of Una, gender-based explanations such as that of Heilbrunn (2004) or Samartseva & Fomina (2002) would bring us a little further but as Samartseva & Fomina (2002: 77) themselves point out further explanation is dependent on the particular situations involved.

In the interview with Paul, I noted a strong New Thought flavour to his talk. I use the term New Thought as Paul's talk seemed to share many elements in common with the New Thought religious and spiritual movement of 19th century America (e.g. Wattles, 1996, orig 1910). According to the New Thought movement, thoughts are powerful things and mental visions can create reality. New Thought ideas were kept alive in the 20th century by various writers, often popular with business readers (e.g. Peale, 1966, orig. 1952). Since the start of this century New Thought has seen something of a revival, including in the form of Byrne's (2006) *The Secret.* New Thought talk complemented the enterprise discourse in Paul's interview and strengthened his commitment to the planning element of strategy. As Paul's formal

education level was low, this confounds the expectation given by both Hitt & Tyler (1991:341) and Lee & Tsang's (2001:596-597) studies that those with a higher level of education are more disposed to elaborate planning. Understanding the importance of planning in New Thought, and so in Paul's, discourse explains the prominence of planning in his talk.
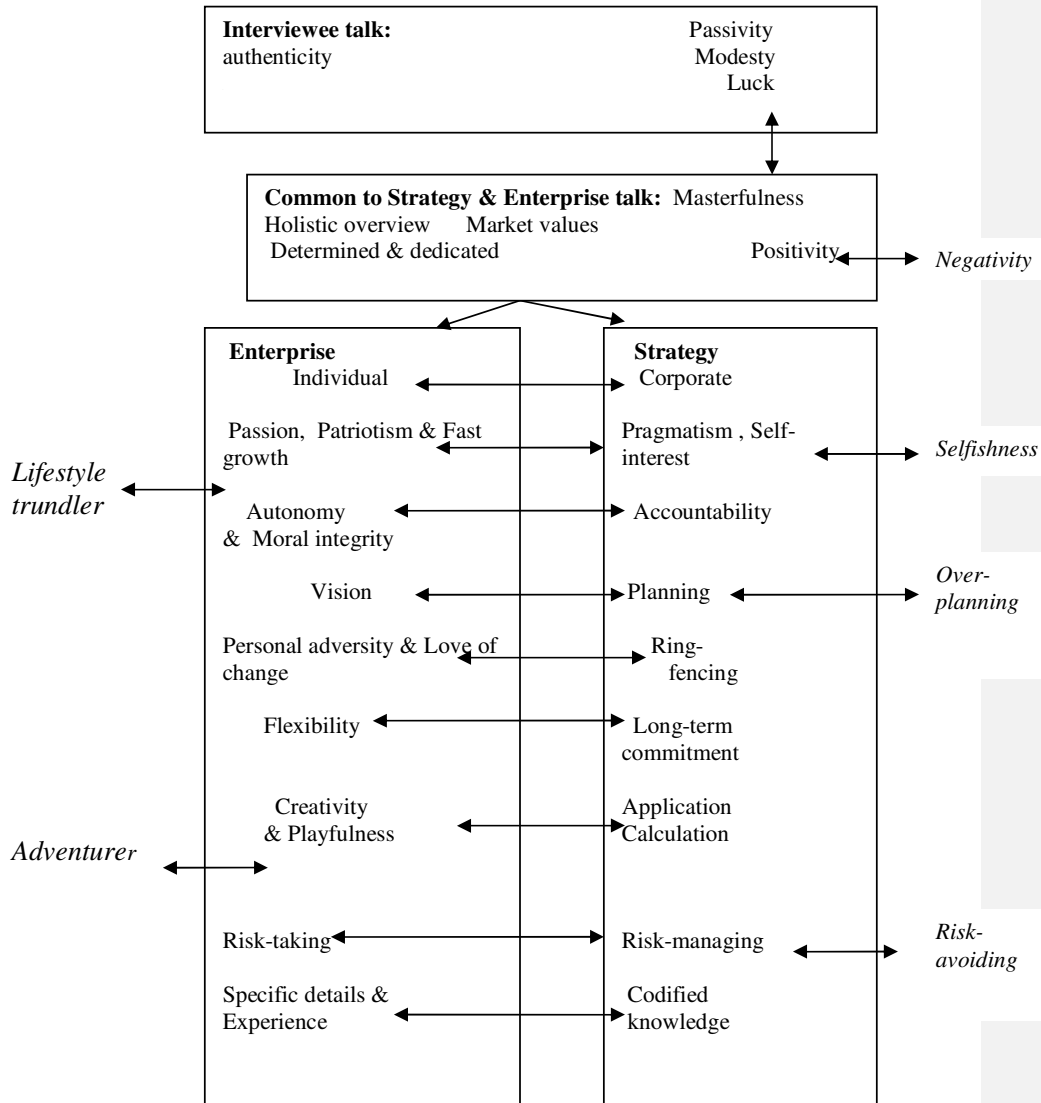
Despite the strong flavours in the interviews with Una and Paul demonstrating the creativity in the interviews, the basic discourses of strategy and enterprise seem to be at work in their interviews as in the interview with Eoin. Yet there is also great variation within each interview. Una's denial of 'entrepreneurial-ness' might be explained by the kind of tendency amongst women entrepreneurs to have different values shown by Samartseva & Fomina (2002)'s statistical work. However, when this denial of 'entrepreneurial-ness' is coupled with her virtuoso performance as an entrepreneur in the same interview, what is illustrated by my work, is the variety of the, and at times contradictory, use of enterprise discourse. Discourse analysis can explicate such variation *within* each interview for "What distinguishes discourse analysis, however, is that we also study variability in linguistic *content* in relation to function and give this a priority" (italics in original) Potter & Wetherell (1987: 38). The flavour added to strategy and enterprise talk in Una's interview I labeled Craftwork. Sennett (2008:9) represents the essence of the Craftwork flavour well when he writes: "Craftsmanship names an enduring, basic human impulse, the desire to do a job well for its own sake." In Una's talk, Craftwork provided a different rationale for some of attributes usually associated with enterprise. This allows Una to exhibit enterprise discourse while at the same time allowing her to declare at one stage: "I don't think that entrepreneurial-ness has anything to do with … having a business or being about business" (Extract UB 14 Turns 371-373). Within-interview variety was also evident in Eoin's interview (e.g. the tension between his strategic view that he would not stand in the way of consolidating the industry and his entrepreneurial passion to stay in the business) and in Paul's interview (e.g. the strategic inevitability of the growth in digital media coupled with the entrepreneurial need for passion to make it happen). Such variation in talk is to be expected by the discourse analyst who sees language as something that is wielded to achieve a function, rather than merely as a transparent description of a consistent reality.

However, there seemed in the interactions studied in this work to be a further structure to the variation, even contradictory elements, within the talk of each interview. The next subsection addresses the structure in the way the enterprise and strategy discourses were used.

8.3.2 The dilemmatic unity of enterprise-strategy discourse

The strategy and enterprise discourses were deployed in a dilemmatic relationship with each other (Billig et al., 1988; Billig, 2001). Specific attributes of enterprise (or strategy) discourse were used often in close proximity to balance the dilemmatic opposite of the strategy (or enterprise) discourse. Frequently, as the talk in these interviews went near the extreme of one pole of the dilemma, there would be a compensating switch back towards the other pole. This intertwining of the strategy and enterprise discourses occurred to such an extent that it is useful to label them jointly as Enterprise-Strategy discourse. Billig's dilemmas are specifically *ideological* dilemmas (Billig et al, 1988; Billig, 2001). The dilemmas found in my data do not seem to be as explicitly ideological as might be expected given both Billig's adjective and the politics involved in enterprise and strategy (see Lavoie and Chamlee-Wright, 2000 Armstrong, 2005 and others as discussed in Chapter 2 above). For this reason, though wishing to recognise Billig's notion as providing me with insight into the dilemmatic structure of the enterprise-strategy discourse, I am reluctant to describe the dilemmas as I have described them as 'ideological'. Indeed having acknowledged my debt to Billig, the word 'dichotomy' describes the way the enterprise-strategy discourse is structured just as well as the word 'dilemma' and removes any impression that I have exposed their ideological nature in full, as using Billig's phrase might imply. The details of how the enterprise-strategy discourse was deployed in a dichotomous unity are illustrated in Figure 8.1, below, which provides a consolidation of the abstractions from the interviews analysed in detail in the previous three chapters.

Figure 8.1 Consolidating the abstractions of the three interviews

Interviewee talk:
authenticity

Passivity
Modesty
Luck

Common to Strategy & Enterprise talk: Masterfulness
Holistic overview   Market values
 Determined & dedicated

Positivity

Negativity

Enterprise
Individual

Strategy
 Corporate

Passion, Patriotism & Fast growth

Pragmatism , Self-interest

Selfishness

Lifestyle trundler

Autonomy
& Moral integrity

Accountability

Vision

Planning

Over-planning

Personal adversity & Love of change

Ring-fencing

Flexibility

Long-term commitment

Creativity
& Playfulness

Application
Calculation

Adventurer

Risk-taking

Risk-managing

Risk-avoiding

Specific details &
Experience

Codified knowledge

Key to symbols in Figure

A   An italicised A means A is treated as undesirable or unapproved of.

A ⟷ B   Means the A and B are in tension with one another

A ⟶ B   Means B belongs to the more general category of A

A
B
C

Means B and C are characteristics of **A**

Source: Interview Analysis of Chapters 5, 6 and 7

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Figure 8.1 is composed of four boxes. The first box, at the top of Figure 8.1 represents the 'interview talk' within the interaction i.e. the elements of the talk that seem to address most directly the immediate interactional aims of a researcher-involved dyadic interview. Thus 'authenticity' in the interview was an important effect produced in the interviewees, e.g. Paul's declaration that "I 'm I'm] just telling warts and all here." (Turn 289, Extract PB 9, Chapter 5) and his willingness to tell tales of him running around like an idiot (Turn 14, Extract PB 1, Chapter 5). Such authenticity is closely related to other attributes of the interviewee such as passivity, modesty and luck, all analysed in the chapters on the individual interviews.

Figure 8.1 illustrates *how* the discourses of strategy and enterprise were deployed in the interviews. The first point worth noting again is that enterprise and strategy were deployed together and not separately. This was partially because the discourses shared common attributes. These common attributes are listed in the second box, from the top, in Figure 8.1. There was a masterfulness on the part of the speaker, portraying the entrepreneur-strategist as in control of their environment. Analysis of the interview with Paul showed how this masterfulness could clash with the attributes expected of interviewee, (see the analyses of Extracts EB 9 and EB 10 in Chapter 5 above), and this oppositional relationship is shown by the double-headed arrow linking some of the attributes of interviewee talk with masterfulness.   A holistic overview of the business was attributed to the entrepreneur-strategist in contrast to a functional and partial perspective of the narrow specialist e.g. Eoin's discussion of his "sales and marketing eh director" Ray Wollen (Turn 463, Extract EB 16, Chapter 7). An acceptance of the market as the ultimate judge on matters of value, (for example the use of market value as the justification for reasonable working conditions and practices in Extract UB 6, Chapter 6), was part of both enterprise and strategy discourse. Both discourses shared an optimistic, upbeat outlook, describing everything with great positivity. As was discussed in Chapter 5, Paul explicitly ties the need to be positive to enterprise: "I think people who are entrepreneurial have to be positive all the time" (Turn 1064, Extract PB 20) and shows the positivity of strategy by declaring "If you have a plan there's a way out always" (Turn 1132, Extract PB 22). Both entrepreneurs and strategists in these interviews were portrayed as determined and dedicated, as demonstrated by the discussion of Eoin's declaration that "...I have

another opportunity here to develop something and you know develop it I will and em, I am quite single minded when I want to be" (Turns 631, Extract EB 20, Chapter 7).

However, it was not only because enterprise and strategy discourse shared commonalities that I regarded them as being deployed as a unity. Rather, the real binding between enterprise and strategy was in the way they disagreed with and even contradicted each other: there was a dilemmatic quality to the tensions between the aspects of enterprise and those of strategy. This can be clearly seen in the way in which Una went from an entrepreneurial stress on her individual autonomy "I was] never of an employee anywhere, I was always on my own" (Turn 40, Extract UB 2) to the very strategic and quickly more collective and corporate "But from the very beginning I want to make clear that, well what TronCom does is we publish a series of publications under our brand and under our client's brand" (Turn 60, Extract UB 2) which, is more fully described in Chapter 6. Thus the two boxed columns beneath the 'Common to Strategy & Enterprise' box, labeled 'Enterprise' and 'Strategy' are represented, by the single-headed arrows going from the Strategy & Enterprise box to each of them, so indicating them both to be part of that general Enterprise-Strategy discourse. The double-head arrows between elements of the Enterprise and Strategy boxes represent these elements as being in tension with each other. When an aspect of strategy, e.g. pragmatism, self-interest, had been talked about a lot, the talk would suddenly flip to an opposing aspect of enterprise, e.g. passion & patriotism. This is made clear, for example when Paul contrasts the current strategic pragmatic self-interested stance of the company's need to "just take care of ourselves... ...let's make sure we get paid first" with his previous more entrepreneurial passion and patriotism : "in the last couple of years I was very passionate about that, about the whole Irish thing" (Turns 155-161, Extract PB 6) . Such deployments of various aspects in dilemmatic tensions are illustrated in Figure 8.1. It was as if talking in a strategic way about one of these aspects would almost inevitably flick a switch that would catapult the conversation to an enterprise opposite of it. For example, the switch in the way Eoin shows his mastery of strategic accountability to a profligate board, who were 'racking up losses' despite his well-planned reports and proposals (Turns 217 and Turns 223 in Extract EB 6, Chapter 7) to the enterprise talk of having high personal standards of moral integrity and valuing autonomy (Turns 243 and 245 in Extract EB 6, Chapter 7). Note how both these elements: strategic accountability on the one hand and autonomy with moral

integrity on the other, are in tension with each other but are both approved of. Figure 8.1 also shows some unapproved or undesirable elements in *italics* that are in a relationship of tension, though not in a dilemmatic one, with the main discourses being used. Thus *negativity* (located to the left of the common strategy-enterprise box in Figure 8.1) is a disapproved opposite of positivity. This disapproval of negativity can be seen in the way in Extract UB 19 Una rapidly repairs her initial negative appraisal that the "Enterprise Ireland mentoring network that I got involved with, was completely useless to me " (Turn 477) by quickly moving to say of the mentor involved that "(.) Everything he said was right " (Turn 481).

It is interesting too that enterprise-strategy discourse did not operate its dilemma through a synthesised middle group. This lack of middle-ground in the way the enterprise-strategy discourse is used is represented by the gap between the boxes in Figure 8.1 representing the enterprise and strategy elements that are in tension. The commonalities between enterprise and strategy stand apart, as represented by the common strategy- enterprise box above the columnar boxes, from the fray of their tensions; there is no happy medium common to both horns of the dilemma, only a dichotomous flipping between the two. This can be illustrated with an example of the next pairing in the columanar enterprise and strategy boxes of Figure 8.1: vision and planning. In Extract PB 19 Paul stresses the need for vision "Eh you've got to be able, you've got to be able to visualise it. You've got to be able to see it" (Turn 943) and how, somewhat mysteriously, for an idea to succeed it needs faith "it's not a question of belief, it's, it's above that- … …It's a different level. It's knowledge. It's absolute one hundred per cent knowledge. That that's what that's going to be " (Turns 959-961). Yet very quickly this entrepreneurial vision is replaced by the fairly mundane strategic activity "to close the gap right between that vision and where you're at now, work backwards" (Turn 965), and that work is planning (Turns 951 & 955). There is a clear contrast between the dreamy almost mystic entrepreneurial vision of the future and the mundane everyday work of planning in the present.

8.4 The significant of context

Whereas the LUCID-DA principles by which this research was guided stressed the context-constituting nature of the work, what is apparent from the analysis is the importance of context in influencing the discourse.

There are many ways of looking at context and the analysis chapters in this work attempted to capture the particular ways context was made relevant in the detailed interactions of the interviews. In order to reflect on these insights I have structured this discussion of the significance of context by first talking about the interview context of the discourse, then the context created by the particular people involved in those interviews, followed by the particular sectoral background of the interviews, before looking at the late celtic-tiger Ireland nature of the context and then finally commenting on the Irish-English variant of English in which the interviews took place. It is tempting to see these incrementally expanding layers of context as comprehensive. However, my detailed analysis of the interactions, also reveal more nuanced aspects of context. It is also tempting to see the consecutive nested layers acting as filters to previous more 'micro' contextual layers, rather than seeing the contextual layers interact in a myriad of ways (O'Rourke & Pitt, 2003). Provided these temptations are resisted the following account of the contexts should serve as reminder of the complexity of contexts involved rather than as a denial of their importance.

8.4.1 The interview context

The interview was the research instrument used to create and gather the data used for this research. Three arguments were put forward in Chapter 3 for using the interview. The first was that strategic and entrepreneurial discourse might be hard to find as 'naturally occurring' discourses. The second reason was that an interview in one sense is a complete interaction, a single event that is discrete and bounded in time. The third argument was that both methodologically and in the life-world we, as researchers and researched, are familiar with the interview.

Analysis of the interviews provided some confirmation of arguments for its use. The openness and richness of the interviewees, even in discussing troublesome matters, was clear in all three interviews. While it is impossible to know from my research if these kinds of issues would have surfaced in other data-creation and collection methods, the research interviews did raise lots of issues amenable to strategy and enterprise talk. Much variation within the interviews and the balancing of impressions across the entire interview, (e.g. Paul's portrayal of himself as an idiot benefiting from good luck being balanced by the evidence he provides of his skill and determination), was observed. Such observations yield support for the view that

interviews were sufficiently complete to allow each interviewee to risk one-sided impressions at different times during the interaction, confident in the knowledge that these one-sided impression could later be repaired.   The familiarity of the interview meant that its own discourse could be analysed and this knowledge could then be used as an analytical resource.

Various vernacular models of the interview that might be available to both interviewer and interviewee were discussed in the methodology chapter. These included the health-care interview, the Great Man interview and the report interview. Sometimes the model of the interview at work is made apparent. For example, Una seems to invoke the model of the interview as Roman Catholic confession when repairing the sin, in business discourse terms, of being negative about and seeming to blame one of her mentors (see discussion of Extract UB 19 in Chapter 4 above). Primarily these vernacular models of the interview were sensitising concepts discussed to inform the practice and the analysis of the interview. Using these, it was easier to identify the elements of passivity, modesty, luck and authenticity in operation in the interviews.

Interview talk functions to portray interviewees and interviewers as competent performers of those subject positions. Figure 8.1 above portrays passivity, modesty, luck and authenticity as key elements associated with interviews that were found to be at work in the empirical material examined here. Knowing that passivity, modesty and luck were in tension with the masterfulness and determination common to enterprise-strategy discourse made sense of a number of troubled sections of the interview material. Of course, the importance of the research interview as the type of interaction in which discourse was generated cannot be entirely confined to a single box. For example, enterprise talk tended to be more explicit than strategy talk, particularly in the earlier parts of the interviews. Perhaps this greater explicitness is a product of the fact that the interviewees could talk enterprise, with relatively greater authority, to me as I was not positioned as an entrepreneur but as a strategy academic. This too might explain why, in Figure 8.1, there are only two disapproved-of elements on the enterprise side while there are three on the strategy side.

The analysis and conduct of the interview also made use of my role as an active interviewer. At times, analytical use of my activity was essential to understanding what was being done with the talk. For example, in analysing Extract

EB 1 (Chapter 7) in the interview with Eoin, my action in raising the troubling issue of the company Eoin had previously managed is essential in understanding the less modest talk, (than at similar stages in the other interviews), that follows. A more passive approach to such an issue by an interviewer might have made the matter less transparent in the discourse.

8.4.2 The context of the particular participants

Since the unit of analysis in discourse analysis is the discourse or talk itself rather the individual or individuals involved in such discourse, in some senses it is easy for a discourse analyst to downplay the impact of the particular people involved in the creation of the discourse being studied. After all, at a theoretical level discourse analysts have been keen to undermine the central role in the social sciences of apparently fixed personal attributions such as attitudes (e.g. Potter & Wetherell 1987). However, following LUCID principles, I provided more than a thin gloss on the people involved in this study. I have, within the limits of anonymity, documented important details (see Chapter 4 above) about the people involved in the interviews examined and presented in my work. This sensitivity to the personalities involved has included being reflexive too about my own background as an Irish male born in the late 1960s, a strategy academic and a person who had gained some familiarity with the sector being studied. I have also noted the style of the particular interviewees and the general 'feel' of the interviews in the analysis chapters. As might be expected with discourse analysis' 'hyper-empirical' nature, the way the detail of the interaction has demonstrated the importance of these personal factors has been particularly noted, (e.g. the particular way in the interview with Paul, I worked on protecting my identity as an academic – see the interpretations of Extract EB 9 in Chapter 5). Whereas the details of my analysis demonstrates the importance of such matters in particular contexts, the reader of my interpretations needs to keep in mind the impact of gender, age and other personal attributes of the interviews' participants.

8.4.3 The context of business magazines

Magazine publishing, the sectoral context of this study, is a strategically challenging activity, for as was discussed in Chapter 4, the advertising revenue on which it relies is particularly dependent on the overall state of the economy, there is and continues to be a great impact on the sector from technology changes and the supply chain is

particularly complex. It was also noted in Chapter 4 that magazine firms operate in a context that might be deemed particularly entrepreneurial due to the small and falling size of the firms involved, the industry circumstances which encourage a 'churning' of firms and the innovation and creativity shown in the magazine sector. Perhaps the particular strength of entrepreneurial and strategic forces operating with the sectoral context of the interviews in my study might explain the comprehensive with which enterprise-strategy discourse could account for the data. A quieter more stable sector might return a very different interpretation.

The focus of the owner-managers studied in my work in general business magazines is also worthy of note. This context might mean the strength and sophistication in the discourses of enterprise and strategy that were described in this study might be connected to the important role business magazines play (Van der Wurff, 2005) in circulating business knowledge and the likely familiarity the interviewees here had with such discourses.

8.4.4 The context of late celtic-tiger Ireland

Another element of the Irish context that was anticipated as an important background for this study is that it took place in what I have described in Chapter 4 as the fourth phase of Irish economic development since political independence. I labeled this phase the 'Globalization of Irish Enterprise'. This period (1973-2008) is generally agreed to be one of high growth rates, social partnership, internationalization and adoption of an enterprise culture. Within this rather long and diverse period I further specified the time in which the interviews for this research took place as during the late celtic-tiger period (2000-2007). During this period the economic continued to do well, recovering well from the setbacks of the collapse in the value of internet-based companies (the 'dot-com bomb') and the airplane attacks on New York's World Trade Center twin towers ('9/11'), though there was a feeling of foreboding in Ireland as economists warned of a switch from reliance on exports to a reliance on a property boom to fuel the growth.

It was interesting to note in the discourses studied here how patriotism seemed to be an element of, particularly, enterprise discourse. This link is not unknown in the literature - I noted in Chapter 2 how Margaret Thatcher referred to "the British sense of enterprise and initiative" (cited in Carr, 2000a:3). Grey (2004:11) has noted how in UK context the New Right has managed at times to weld together in a political agenda

enterprise, patriotism and other "quite disparate elements… [but that] … these elements are not just disparate but also contradictory". However the patriotic element of enterprise was quite strong in my interviews with small-owner managers. This might well relate to the Irish cultural context as was discussed in Chapter 4: there has long been an enterprising self-sufficiency associated with Irish nationalism (e.g. the rugged self-sufficiency of the Irish Gaelic phrase *Sinn Féin* was noted). The use of the word 'enterprise' in Irish economic policy to refer to indigenous, as opposed to foreign-owned businesses, was also discussed in Chapter 4.

8.4.5 The context of Irish-English

The discourses being studied were clearly Irish in nature and the discussion of contexts in Chapter 4 anticipate some of the significance of this. Most obviously this was present in the form of the variety or dialect of English used. Irish-English or Hiberno-English does have some marked characteristics of its own (Barron & Schneider, 2005). Colourful language is frequently used and as Farr (2008:219)'s analysis of a large corpus of Irish-English show "provides ample illustrative evidence of how swearing and profanity are far from ephemeral in nature and seem to be strongly rooted in this variety of English." The use of swearing in these interviews might be interpreted by speakers of some other varieties of English as indicating aggression or rudeness that might not be heard or intended by a speaker of Irish-English. The colourful nature of Irish-English might have also affected the way in which enterprise and strategy discourses were used – flipping from one extreme to another. Those using the enterprise-strategy discourse in the context of a less colourful language variety might be less inclined to structure their discourse into such extremes.

8.5 A descriptive model of owner-manager use of the Enterprise-Strategy discourse

Payne & Williams (2005) point out how difficult it is for any researcher, including an interpretative one, to avoid generalising and argue that appropriately modest generalisations are both viable and valuable. Seale (1999), too, argues that generalisation is desirable. This work has been carried out with the goal of deriving learning from the empirical materials that can be of use more generally. I am not

putting forward abstract laws that can be procedurally applied to determine outcomes in any situation selected. Rather, I am suggesting how the discourses of strategy and enterprise may operate, given similar contexts. To know what contexts might be similar I have provided a "rich, detailed account of the 'sending' context" Seale (1999: 118) that will facilitate any potential user of this work to judge what lessons from it may apply elsewhere. Such knowledge of the particular interactional form and specific contexts from which the empirical material of this research was drawn helps in being appropriately rigorous and cautious about the abstractions I offer.

Following the discussion of the interview element in the above material, it is now possible to suggest a model of how enterprise and strategy discourses are used by small-firm owner-managers both within and beyond interview situations. This model is presented in Figure 8.2 below.

Figure 8.2 A Seesaw Model of the Operation of
Enterprise-Strategy discourse

Enterprise Pole		Strategy Pole

Lifestyle-Trundler

Individual ◄——————————————► Corporate

Passion ◄——————————————► Pragmatism & Self-interest — *Selfish*

Autonomy & Moral integrity ◄——————————————► Accountability

Vision ◄——————————————► Planning — *Overplanning*

Personal Adversity & Love of change ◄——————————————► Ring-fencing

Creativity & Playfulness ◄——————————————► Application & Calculation

Adventurer

Risk-taking ◄——————————————► Risk-managing — *Risk-avoiding*

Experience & Specific details ◄——————————————► Codified knowledge

Flexibility ◄——————————————► Long-term commitment

Positivity

Holistic overview   Masterfulness

Market values   Determined & dedicated

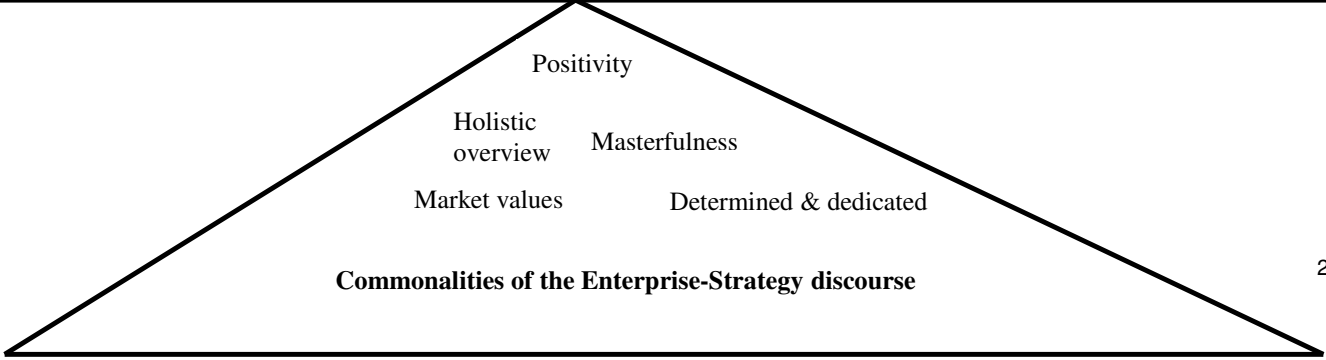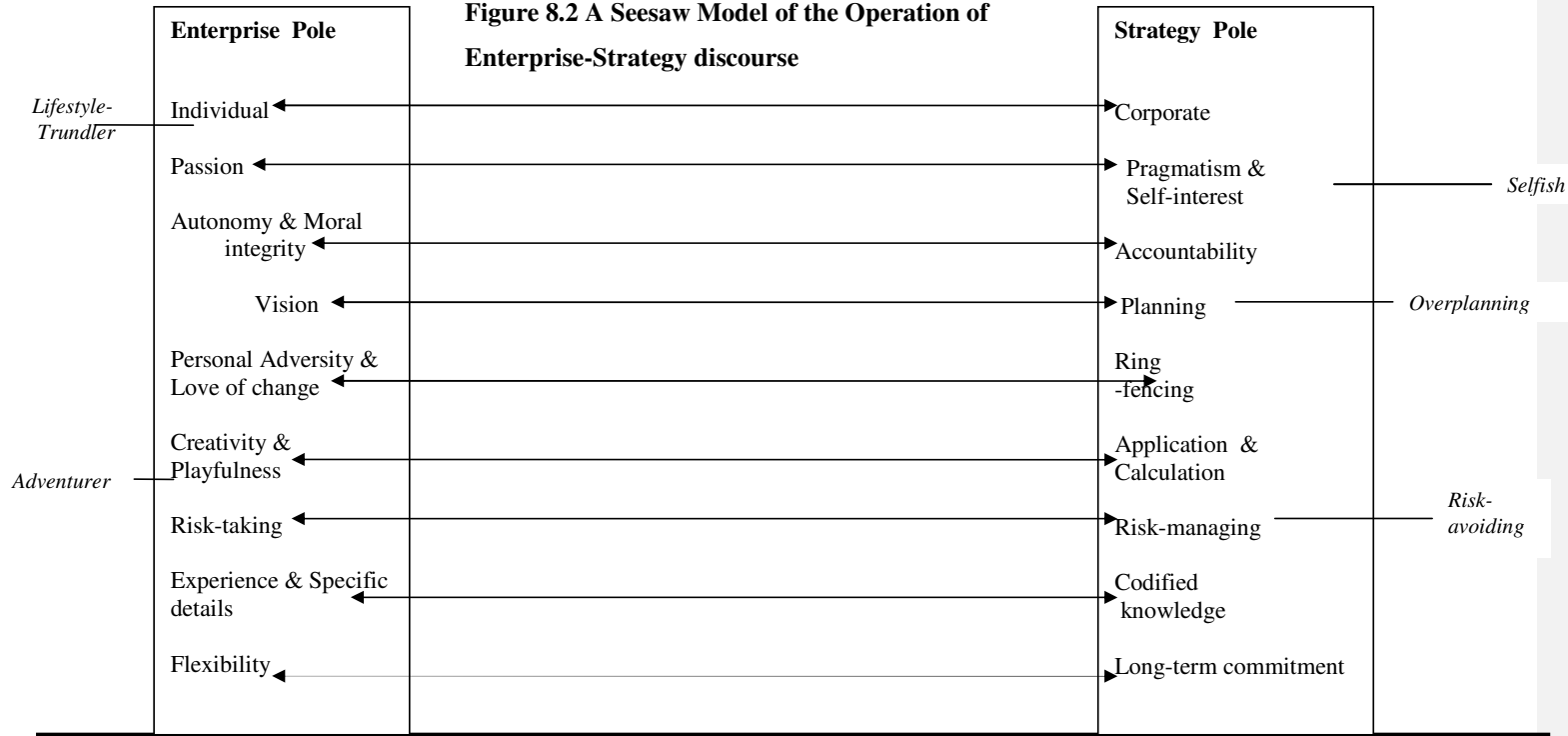**Commonalities of the Enterprise-Strategy discourse**

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Figure 8.2 is designed to portray enterprise-strategy discourse as operating in a way analogous to a seesaw. The figure gives a lateral view of the basic seesaw structure. The play of the seesaw involves one child pushing up and thus the opposite child going down, followed by the action of gravity and of the opposite child taking a turn in pushing up and the first child being pushed down. Much amusement can be had in the action-reaction cycle as it persists. The seesaw provides a good metaphor for the way elements of enterprise-strategy discourse were found to operate in this research: when particular elements of enterprise discourse were raised (i.e. occurred) in an interviewee's talk, they would soon decline to be replaced by the raising of an 'opposite' from strategy discourse.

As with the seesaw, strategy and enterprise discourses, even when going in opposite directions, seem to operate as part of the same structure. The enterprise and strategy discourses certainly share some elements in common, which are portrayed in Figure 8.2 as being analogous to the base that forms the triangular base of the seesaw. The elements of the enterprise-strategy discourse are listed in the base triangle of Figure 8.2. However, there are also elements of the strategy and enterprise discourses that seem, like the seesaw, to move in opposite directions, and (as reported in the earlier analysis chapters) invoke their opposite in response. For example, when the risk-taking talk of enterprise surfaced, the strategic talk of risk-managing seems to submerge, only to rise again a short time later in a seemingly compensatory fashion.

Note how the seesaw works as an analogy better than, say, an elastic band: the response of a rise in enteprise talk is not to snap back into shape but rather to evoke an almost opposite response in the strategy pole.

The precarious nature of the seesaw also highlights the fact that the roles that small-firm owners are often asked to play can result in them experiencing discomfort if these roles are not kept in the required balance. Such owner-managers can find themselves like a child hitting the ground hard, then being flung into the air (with the accompanying exhilarating and/or frightening feelings and the danger of a rough landing) if the work is applied in an unbalanced way.

While the poles of the seesaw are where all the action happens (Figure 8.2), the base as the fulcrum plays a vital role. So it is with enterprise-strategy discourse. Since the up and down between the enterprise and strategy poles generates the

discourse, it's all down to the firm foundation of the common elements of enterprise-strategy that have been built and are further secured during the interaction.

Enterprise-strategy discourse operates too like a seesaw in the sense that the further out from the centre the work is done, the bigger the effect on the opposite. Seesaws are, after all, first-class levers. In the case of enterprise-strategy discourse, the equivalent of an extra push from outside on one side of the lever is when an extreme version of either an enterprise or strategy pole element is talked about. For example, when an owner-manager goes so far with the enterprise element of playfulness as to suggest a trickery of the kind that might be beyond entrepreneurial morality, there needs to be a greater and heavier switch to the accountability talk of strategy. These extremes beyond the enterprise or strategy poles are like those that hang onto the ends of a seesaw.

Like an old playground seesaw, there were times when enterprise-strategy creaked (in discourse-analytical terms, exhibited cruces of the type described by Fairclough, 1992: 230) more than at other times. As was seen in the detailed analysis of Chapters 5, 6 and 7, a particular area for such creaking or 'crucing' was in talk of the values of employees and the values of the market. Una used enterprise-strategy discourse with a Craftwork flavour to show how both employers and free-lancers were in a very equal market. Good freelance writers had deeper and more solid skills that were valued in the market because a "a journalist who can craft beautiful copy and obey deadlines is gold dust" (Extract UB 15, Turn 391) . This construction contrasts sharply with other constructions in similar markers. Storey et al (2005: 1048) studied freelancers in a much more broadly defined media sector where skill seems to be considered a more transient reason for being in demand, leading to freelancers developing skills that were constructed as "…'an inch deep and a mile wide' …" (Storey et al., 2005: 1048) and where the market was portrayed as far from equal. My point here is not to question either construction but to point to the evidence in the discourse that shows this is a topic where much effort seems to be put into the enterprise-strategy discourse.

The seesaw analogy is also useful in that it highlights that to keep the whole enterprise-strategy seesaw moving requires work on both sides. This work can result in mere amusement, as in the seesaw as a plaything. In the details of the analysis, I have been particularly careful to notice how the enterprise-strategy talk produced

might have been particularly shaped by the 'playground' context of the interview. However, the enterprise-strategy seesaw is more like those seesaws that are put to work converting the up-down forces generated by the activity at their poles to drill wells, pump water and generate electricity. The work of the enterprise-strategy seesaw that can be seen in the detailed analysis of the interviews included the generation of plausible roles for owner-managers; the positioning of employees, other directors and firm outsiders in relations with the owner-manager; the justification of value distribution, and the representation of the societal function of the firm concerned.

There are, of course, ways in which the enterprise-strategy seesaw is not like a seesaw. Indeed the machine metaphor of the seesaw is somewhat at odds with the general metaphor at work in this thesis. The overarching discourse-analytical metaphor is to read the objects of study whether they be organisations, cultures, conversations or entrepreneurs as 'texts' (Pitt, 1998). The idea of interpretative 'repertoires' draws out the metaphor of viewing people as actors presenting themselves while drawing on and creatively adapting repertoires (Goffman, 1959). However, to point out the limits of the seesaw metaphor for enterprise-strategy discourse is not to say the metaphor is wrong but rather that it enhances its power by allowing us to see anew both similarities and differences. As Oswick et al. (2002) point out, it is in awareness of dissimilarity that creativity can often occur. It is clear that, being machines, seesaws are not like the interactions between humans no matter how stable the 'repertoires' those humans draw on to interact. Humans are creative agents and, in contrast to the determined nature of a teeter-totter, their use of discourses is open.

In contrast to the seesaw, each interviewer often provided the work required at both ends of the enterprise-strategy pole, alternating between ends during the interview. At times I as interviewer provided counterweight, but generally the up-and-down movement was between elements of the talk rather than between individuals.

The seesaw analogy also breaks down in so far as the individual elements that make up the poles of enterprise and strategy seem to have links to particular elements in their polar opposite, as I have illustrated with dashed lines in Figure 8.2. For example, a concentration of entrepreneurial passion seems to invoke a response not just of strategic pole elements in general but, in particular, from the polar strategic element of impersonality. Likewise, talk of risk-managing seems to provoke not only

polar enterprise talk in general but, of risk-taking in particular as this is its particular polar opposite.

8.6 Conclusion

This chapter has summarised the analysis of the interviews presented in the previous three chapters. Necessarily this has meant some of the details and complexities of how the enterprise-strategy discourse operated have gone out of focus. This has, however, allowed the overall operation of the enterprise-strategy discourse to come into sharper focus. This view has allowed me to suggest a seesaw metaphor for how the enterprise-strategy discourse operates. One way of judging the fruitfulness of such a metaphor is to see what conclusions it might offer. The next chapter aims to illustrate the fruitfulness of this metaphor and the overall work of this thesis by drawing some conclusions that might be of use beyond the immediate world of this thesis.

CHAPTER 9 CONCLUSIONS

9.1 Introduction

This work aimed to examine *how* enterprise and strategy discourse are used by the owner-managers of small firms. From the analysis of the three interviewees presented, I argued that these discourses operated as a 'dichotomous unity'. This unity depended not only on what enterprise and strategy had in common but also on the dilemmatic tensions between elements of both. In Chapter 8, I proposed a descriptive model, using a seesaw, as a metaphor to show in detail the use of the Enterprise-Strategy discourse. This illustrated how the Enterprise-Strategy discourse was used by the owner-mangers in this study and how the discourse may be used by others, to discuss their priorities and concerns, and thereby construct their worlds. The detailed analysis of each interview showed how skillfully and how successfully the discourses of strategy and enterprise were deployed in the particular contexts of each interview. The smoothness or otherwise of this deployment depended not only on whether or not there might be a troubling issues in the lives of the interviewees (e.g. the issue of employees) but also on the interaction of enterprise, strategy and interview discourse requirements (e.g. the tension between the positioning of interviewees as passive with the positioning of entrepreneurs and strategists as masterfulness). The way the discourses of strategy and enterprise were related in talk (i.e. as a dichotomous unity) both facilitated and constrained the creativity in the use of the Enterprise-Strategy discourse. Creativity is facilitated by the dichotomous nature of the talk because it enables a speaker to compare and contrast two extremes rather than be stuck with talking about one. On the other hand this creativity is constrained by the existence of a dilemmatic opposite. This is because the speaker is kept busy talking about each side of the dilemma and about the relationship between the sides rather than creating talk outside the dilemma. Talking about the differences between black and white can be very interesting but it might lead to the neglect of other colours and other non-colour related attributes of the thing being discussed. As Billig et al (1988:6) notes of ideology, it "is not reproduced as a closed system for talking about the world. Instead it is reproduced as an incomplete set of contrary themes, which continually give rise to discussion, argumentation and dilemmas".

With my research aim and questions addressed in the last chapter, this chapter concludes by drawing out some of the implications of this work. The theoretical contributions of the work are discussed in the next section. The methodological import of this thesis is then discussed, after which possible implications of this work for practitioners, policymakers and the public are outlined. The tentative nature of the implications and conclusions arising from any scholarly work of this sort and the importance of placing it in the context of the continuing conversation among researchers is stressed in this chapter's conclusion.

9.2 Theoretical contributions and implications

This work increases our understanding of how the discourses of strategy and enterprise are used by the owner-managers of small firms. Carr (2000a) pointed out that even owner-managers are subject to government attempts to increase enterprise and so "there is a need to understand better how actors who are subject to enterprise reforms resist, utilize or disregard the identities that are held out to them" Lewis & Llewellyn (2004:7). My work has addressed this need by providing empirical evidence on how owner-managers utilize the identities, relations and realities held out to them by enterprise *and strategy* discourse. As was discussed in Chapter 2 there have been only a limited number of works looking at the use of strategy or enterprise discourse in small firms using an explicitly discourse analytical lens. In particular this work contributes to the insights of Cohen & Musson (2000), Rae (2002), Warren (2004), Rigg (2005) and Kohtamäki et al (2008). .

The continuing relevance of enterprise discourse to recently founded small-firm owner-managers in late Celtic Tiger Ireland is supported by this research, nearly two decades after the seminal contributions of a host of writers analysing its resurgence as a political rhetoric in the United Kingdom of the 1980s (Burrows, 1991; Fairclough, 1991; Keat & Abercrombie, 1991; Selden, 1991; Crawshaw, 1992; Du Gay & Salaman, 1992; Rose, 1992). Analysis of the interview material revealed that not only were both strategy (surprising perhaps in view of its history) and enterprise (surprising to this researcher, perhaps as result of his naivety) found to be present, but that structuring an understanding of the interviews using these two discourses provided a coherent explanation of the data.

On the enterprise side, this work can be seen as part of a small but growing body of work taking a broadly linguistic approach to small firms (e.g. Down & Warren, 2008). These studies contrast with much work on enterprise on the scale of large organisations and society at large. In particular, this work, like Cohen & Musson (2000) and Warren (2004), contributes by making links between the analysis of enterprise at more macro levels (e.g. Du Gay, 2008) and the use of enterprise discourse at the very micro level of small firms and their managers.

On the strategy side, this work contributes by making similar linkages between the macro-level analysis of strategy discourse and its use by owner-managers of young, small-firms. At the macro-level, strategy discourses have been subject to some studies of both its historical emergence and its societal effects (e.g. Knights & Morgan, 1991). As discussed in the literature review, there is also a rich body of related empirical work done on strategic discourse and other practices of larger organisations in both the public and private sector. However, there is much less empirical work done on strategy in small firms from a discourse-analytical point of view.

By contributing to the link between macro (also known as big 'D') and micro (also known as small 'd') discourses in both strategy and enterprise by a detailed empirical examination of micro discourses this work answers the call for "carefully thinking through discursive material in relation to its production before turning discourses into Discourse" (Alvesson & Kärreman 2000b:1144). The care with which I have harnessed elements of the interactional context, (of researcher-involved dyadic interviews), in which the discourse was created as an analytical resource contributes to discourse analysis both as theory and method in the study of enterprise and strategy. On the theory side, the way in which the masterfulness of the identities required by enterprise and strategy clashed with the passivity expected of interviewees, showed empirical support for those in the literature claiming this masterfulness of enterprise and strategy to be quite potent a force (Clegg et al, 2004; Nicolson & Anderson, 2005). The contributions to the researcher-involved dyadic interview as a method, is discussed further in Section 9.3 below.

My work here also contributes by expanding our understanding of the link between the operation of strategy discourse and that of enterprise discourse. Barry & Elmes (1997: 447) once remarked: "… it seems that entrepreneurs and senior

executives tell very different tales". Maybe this is true when small-firm entrepreneurs are contrasted with executives in large, staid corporations. However, in my limited sample, small-firm owner managers who are entrepreneurs incorporated the strategy discourse that originally emerged for big-firm senior executives, into their enterprise-strategy talk. Thus my work makes it clear that it is profitable to view strategy and enterprise as part of a single discourse. Clearly this was evidenced in this work in the context of small firms, but perhaps, given the increased stress on enterprise in larger organisations, the lesson might be extended. This of course resonates with ongoing changes in the academy itself. These changes are signaled by, for example, the arrival of books/edited volumes such as Meyer & Heppard (2000) and journals such as the *Strategic Entrepreneurship Journal* (founded in 2007).

The notion of the ideological dilemma (Billig et al., 1988) is central to my work's understanding of, enterprise-strategy as a dichotomous unity. The importance of dilemmas and paradoxes is not unknown in management learning. Quinn (1988: xv) attempted to move both management practitioners and academics "… closer to an understanding of the paradoxical dynamics that underlie effectiveness, mastery, and excellence". Poole & Van de Ven (1989) outlined the ways in which researchers could manage paradoxes to enhance their theories, while De Wit & Meyer (2004) use paradoxes to help learning about strategy. Pitt (1998) examined the dilemmas at the heart of particular entrepreneurs' personal theories of action. My work here supports these writers in their celebration of paradoxes. However, there are differences in the way dilemmas are seen to work here. For example, the dilemmas here are not, in contrast to Pitt's, seen as "… what the individual sees as a logical and intractable opposition …" (Pitt, 1998: 397). I am not disputing or addressing here the importance of the insight that individual thinking may be characterised by polar opposites (Kelly, 1963). However what is highlighted here is the constructive work done through dilemmas available as part of the socially available discourses of strategy and enterprise. While the individuals used the dilemmas I highlight in their talk, they were treated less as core personal beliefs of the individual than as the up and down rhythm that moved the talk along. In particular, what this work illustrates is Billig's insight about the productive power of dilemmas in a discourse:

> "Without contrary themes, individuals could neither puzzle over their social worlds nor experience dilemmas. And without this, so much thought would be impossible." (Billig et al., 1988: 2)

Whereas tensions between business discourse may weaken their power in other contexts (e.g. McCabe, 2008), the dilemmatic nature of enterprise-strategy discourse, as observed in its operation in the empirical encounters of this research, facilitates its use in generating talk that the interviewees used to achieve so many effects.

The idea of a business discourse deriving strength from its dilemmatic or paradoxical nature, in the way enterprise-discourse has been seen to do in this research, has been raised by some scholars. Oswick et al (2002:300) point to how "oppositional dyad constructs" such as 'loose-tight' structures and 'flexible specialization' are successful because they have the power to allow new ways of thinking in the face of conventional wisdom. The dilemmatic nature of the way enterprise-strategy discourse is deployed in a dichotomous unity is also reminiscent of Grey's remark concerning management and enterprise where: "… the promotion of both leads to a paradox in which enterprise is the solution to the problems of management and management is a solution to the problems of enterprise" (Grey, 2004: 9). If strategy can be substituted for management this work provides evidence of this occurring at the level of micro practice of small-firm owner managers.

My work adds to our understanding of how a discourse structured like enterprise-strategy discourse allows its users to be creative while simultaneously constraining them with the discourse they to some extent reinforce by using . Cohen & Musson (2000:46) argue that to maintain its vitality and dynamism "…the discourse of enterprise (and any other discourse, for that matter) must not be seen as unitary, but as diverse and changeable". My study shows that some of the vitality of enterprise discourse may be drawn from the tensions that some of its elements have with polar opposites in strategy discourse. The dilemmatic structure of the enterprise-strategy discourse is what allows its subtle application and variation while preserving the overall structure. I am not suggesting that humans can never escape a discourse that is structured as a dilemma. Rather, I am merely claiming that in using such a discourse it is often easier to limit one's creativity within the space marked out by its dilemmas. Talking about food in terms of sweetness and bitterness and of saltiness and sourness may mean there so much variation can be talked of that there may be no room left for a mention of *umami*, of spiciness, of colour, of calorific value or of fragrance.

I developed a metaphor to capture much of the learning from my interpretation of the interviews, for **how** the discourse of strategy and enterprise operated. This metaphor portrays as a seesaw the use of the unified discourse of enterprise-strategy in the interviews. At one end of the seesaw are the polar elements of the enterprise discourse; at the other, the polar elements of the strategy discourse. Both pivot on the fulcrum whose base is composed of the commonalities of the enterprise-strategy discourse. The details of this model of enterprise-strategy discourse and a discussion of how the seesaw is both similar to, and different from the enterprise-strategy discourse, is detailed in Chapter 8.

By illustrating, (following Billig's insight), that discourses can be structured into dichotomous pairs, this work has important implication for discourse analytical theories generally. As Phillips & Jørgensen (2002: 143) point out discourse analytical studies often rely on the identification of a discourse through which the data will be viewed. My work suggests that in such theorizing the possibility that a particular discourse is present in the data, discourse analysts should also consider that the discourse's dilemmatic opposite is also present. Thus my work here points to the benefit of using the theoretical understanding of an area so that one takes "one's starting point in an order of discourse rather than in a single discourse, [so that] the interplay *between* the discourses in the order of discourse becomes an important focal point in the analysis" (italics in original) (Phillips & Jørgensen, 2002: 143). My work particularly highlights the importance of seeking the inclusion of possible dilemmatic opposites in constructing one's theoretical view of the relevant discourses through which to view specific locations of discourses.

This thesis contributes to our understanding of how in using discourses such as enterprise and strategy the way people structure those discourse may constrain their use. My study too supports the view that while people interact with a discourse in a creative way, "…that individuals and organizations are confined by institutional policies and wider political, social and economic notions of what is and is not acceptable, or 'real' within particular contexts" Cohen & Musson (2000: 44). As an example of what Cohen & Musson (2000: 44) mean by such constraints they point to the 1990 UK general medical practioneers contract. In my work such contextual constraints are important. In addition, my work here shows that the dichotomous unity

of the way the enterprise-discourse is structured in interactions with the owner-managers acts as another constraint that balances the extremes of the discourse.

9.3 Methodological contributions and implications

The prevalent and important role of ideological dilemmas raises the question of what is an appropriate data capture/creation method in research of this kind. The presence of ideological dilemmas in strategy and enterprise talk adds greatly to the danger of verbal reports being misleading. One way this danger might be realised is if the discourse, from which these reports have been drawn, is fractured in some way so as to splice one pole of an ideological dilemma from its oppositional pairing. For example, much of Paul's talk (analysed in Chapter 5) concerned the importance of knowing the vision of what was to be achieved. If quotes from these passages of the interview were to be isolated from his equally enthusiastic comments on planning, a purely visionary approach to business on his part might be reported. Another way this danger of fracturing might be realised is if the data was collected in a way that only captured parts of interrupted conversations and left out any compensating parts. This might well occur in 'naturally occurring' data where the talk in a recorded meeting might be compensated by talk not captured outside the room.

My choice to use research interviews meant that this work had to engage with deep reflections on the use of such interviews. As a result, this work has contributions to make to this learning which is relevant to many uses of research interviews.

The research interview proved useful in capturing the dilemmatic seesaw nature of how enterprise-strategy discourse operates. However, the interview carries with it certain implications for how the discourses therein are created (Atkinson & Silverman, 1997). These implications can be harnessed at the data-creation stage by using the strategy of the active interview (Holstein & Gubrium, 1995). As was argued in the methodology chapter of this work, all types of interactions, not merely the interview interaction, have consequences for the discourses that are performed within them. These consequences will often be due to various kinds of researcher effects, if only the presence of recording devices. The 'trick' advocated here is to use these inevitable effects as points of analysis rather than to attempt to ignore or downplay them. This is the same trick that Speer & Hutchby (2003) use to handle the issue of recording devices. Using the features of the interview allowed this work greater

analytical purchase on the data. For example, the analysis of the individual interviews allowed an exploration of how the interview *as interview* cast the interviewee in a passive subject position. At the same time, since these were interviews concerning strategy and enterprise, the interviewee was cast also as an entrepreneur-strategist required by enterprise-strategy discourse to play an active masterful role. The analysis of the interviews in this work shows how, by analysing rather than denying such features of the data, greater insight can be achieved (see also O'Rourke & Pitt, 2007).

Some of the more straightforward interactions between interview discourse and enterprise-strategy discourse were captured in the summary diagrams of each of the individual interviews and as well as in the consolidated summary of the interactions in Chapter 8. However it is not always possible to put the effects of the interactional form by which a discourse has been created and the discourse so neatly into separate if connected boxes. In this regard it is interesting to contrast my experience in this research, where I presented as an academic interested in strategic issues, with Down & Warren's (2008) experience, where one of the researchers was not only explicitly interested in enterprise but was known as having experience of being an entrepreneur. Whereas I report a sophisticated deployment of enterprise-strategy discourse with more explicit, at least initially, use of the enterprise pole of that discourse, Down & Warren (2008:11) report: "It remains a possibility therefore that the researcher's mutual experience of running a business and his disciplinary interest in enterprise somehow 'created' the respondents' weak and clichéd attachment to entrepreneurialism." Of course there are many differences between the circumstances of Down & Warren's work and mine, other than our differing nature as interviewers. Nevertheless discourse-analytical research can be more rigorous, if it is reflexive about such potentials. What is clear, too, from my research is that with a discourse-analytical approach 'interviewer effects' can be used as a valuable analytical resource and not merely as obstacles to be removed.

The dyadic research interview reduces the fracturing of ideological dilemmas as it is an encounter in which there is greater predictability and control for the participants than in other interactions. For example, in a formal meeting any particular speaker may find himself or herself cut off from completing a balanced contribution by the meeting chair being anxious to allow others to contribute and/or keep the meeting on schedule. Less formal interactions like a chat in a corridor are also likely

to fracture discourses as their informality means that incidents can unexpectedly bring to an interaction to a sudden end. The dyadic research interview is of course not a completely isolated event, but the level of control of the entirety of what is being conveyed in that interaction is much greater for both participants.

The methodological guiding principles of LUCID-DA explicated in this work are offered more as a description of my *bricolage* than an integrating framework for others to follow. Others using discourse-analytical approaches in similar circumstances might find it profitable not only to draw on the well-known exemplars that inspired LUCID-DA but also on the LUCID-DA guiding principles themselves.. Relevant circumstances are likely to prevail often in management learning, with its many diverse approaches (Whitley, 1984; Watson, 1997) or in researching other issues that need to relate to a variety of disciplines, paradigms and approaches.

The LUCID-DA set of guiding principles, as the first letter of its acronym declares, is explicit in trying to be literature-engaged, attempting to relate to previous work in analysing a phenomenon. Here LUCID-DA contrasts with, for example, Schlegoff's (1997) stance. By being transparent about the influences of literature, LUCID-DA's empirical work can be, at least to some extent, unbundled (the second letter of the acronym) from its particular theoretical lens. In this way, the adoption of LUCID-DA means an effort to relate to a diversity of approaches. To allow such unbundling means that a great stress was placed on clarifying the context-constituting (the third letter of the acronym) nature of this study. The desire to allow readers to unbundle this work arises because I acknowledge that this work is interpretative (the fourth letter of the acronym). This means that this work can not be replicated in the sense of different researchers arriving at exactly the same interpretation, even with exactly the same data. However, the interpretative nature of this work leads me to try to be transparent as possible about the detailed (the fifth letter of the acronym) arguments that led to my interpretations. It is hoped that this detail will make my interpretation more persuasive. In any case, by tracing in detail the interpretation produced by its application, LUCID-DA invites those with other viewpoints to produce their own interpretations. By adopting LUCID-DA from the vast array of possibilities in discourse analysis, I hope my *bricolage* has adopted the most appropriate guiding principles for this material and for my desire to relate this work to the work of others.

The kind of coupling of an explicit denial of enterprise coupled with a *virtuoso* performance of enterprise discourse in the same interview, revealed in this work, shows a strength of DA. Focusing on what is being done with a discourse avoids a powerful tendency of researchers to filter all responses of research 'subjects' through the lens of the, perhaps implicit, theory that they must hold to a context-free, logical consistent view of the world. By adopting a discourse-analytical view enterprise researchers can resolve the conflict between the mass of accumulating evidence from a variety of qualitative studies that enterprise discourse is powerful, and the results from quantitative surveys that show "… that the development of enterprise culture (or discourse, or ideology) in the UK has not been a spontaneous sea-change in popular sentiment " (Armstrong, 2005:6). While Armstrong's (2005) summary of surveys on enterprise culture might be somewhat polemical, in a careful survey of small-business people, Blackburn et al. (1992:100) conclude that

> "… in a sense, politicians and other proponents of dominant discourse versions of the enterprise culture have been almost too successful. They have appropriated the notion so successfully that many - perhaps most on the evidence presented here - of those assumed to be the embodiment of the enterprise culture, feel alienated from it."

A hypothetical defender of the simplistic view that the dominance of enterprise discourse means it has to be pervasively and uncritically enthused about, might argue that the highly partisan nature of UK society in the early 1990s meant that Blackburn et al's small-business people were driven to hiding their enterprise enthusiasm under a bushel. However, such a defence begins to look as much like special pleading as Armstrong's (2001a) claims that the researchers finding enterprise discourse at work in so many circumstances are all suffering from illusions that the stylistic moves of key writers gave rise to. Of course, critical reflection on sample circumstances and critical reflection on the human tendency to fall in love with confirmations of *a priori* conceptions is a hallmark of all scientific endeavour. However, the discourse-analytical evidence, in this work, on **how** enterprise discourse is used does provide at least confirmatory evidence of its use.

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9.4 Practitioners, policymakers and the public

> "The role of the intellectual is not to tell others what they have to do. By what right would he do so? And remember all the prophecies, promises, injunctions, and programs that intellectuals have managed to formulate over the last two centuries and whose effects we can now see. The work of an intellectual is not to shape others' political will; it is, through the analyses that he

carries out in his own field, to question over and over again what is postulated as self-evident, to dissipate what is familiar and accepted, to reexamine rules and institutions and on the basis of this reproblematization (in which he carries out his specific task as an intellectual) to participate in formation of a political will (in which he has his role as a citizen to play)." (Foucault, 1988: 265)

That Foucault's own diverse notions have travelled in so many unforeseeable directions, that his political judgments have at times been so questionable, and the unfortunately gendered nature (to an Anglophone at least) of the above translation itself, all point to the value of the warning it contains. With these cautions in mind, I now turn to drawing out the lessons this work might have to offer to practitioners, policymakers and the public.

This work adds to the power of human consciousness by making explicit how the enterprise and strategy discourses can operate. As Hjorth (2002:44-45) puts it, referring to practices including discourses:

"To the extent that we develop greater skills as analysts of governmental practices, we also develop greater skills   as analysts of hindrances for the emergence of entrepreneurial processes in the context of formal organisations."

Of course, such awareness can be used for a variety of political ends, be they liberative or oppressive. In my view, entrepreneurial processes in many contexts can add to human freedom, wealth and happiness, but can also oppress. This view is mine as a citizen and is not, in my judgment, essential to my role as a researcher. As a researcher, I take a leap of faith in my fellow creatures that any increase in the power of human consciousness will be for the good. This assumption I see as essential not only to the freedom of enquiry necessary to DA but also to the proper place of a researcher in society.

That enterprise-strategy discourse is organised as a dilemmatic structure suggests a political nature to its deployment, for as was pointed out by the originator of the ideological dilemma: "In discussions, one can hear people jostling with the contrary themes of common-sense. This is particularly so when the topics are explicitly ideological." (Billig, 2001: 218). Given the recent history of enterprise as a political discourse and examinations of strategy's ideological nature (Shrivasta, 1986), this is perhaps not too surprising. My work should aid in answering calls (e.g. Thomas, 1998) for further studies of how the discourse of strategy operates ideologically, since my work makes available the understanding of strategy discourse as part of a dilemmatic pairing with enterprise discourse. The stress in this work was

on the overall operation in the interviews of the strategy and enterprise discourses. This work did not focus on a critique of its power effects. Furthermore as was noted in Chapter 8, my interpretation of the data did not give any clear insight into the ideological nature of the dichotomies in which the data was structured. However, some aspects of the interviews are worth noting in this regard. In particular, in the talk of the interviews difficulties concerning employees and these employees' personal lives indicate that strategy-enterprise discourse is politicised (e.g. the cruces in the discourse around employees discussed in the analysis of Extract PB 8 in Chapter 5 or those about the imperative for Una to grow her company, discussed particularly in the analysis of Extract UB 5 in Chapter 6). Further work might be done examining empirical material like that used in this study or perhaps material more likely to explicitly raise the power effects of the enterprise-strategy discourse. The insight provided by this work that the enterprise-strategy discourse is organised dilemmatically might aid such a study.

Enterprise discourse was most recently developed in its role as a political rhetoric in favour of the market on a macroeconomic scale and, in particular, as a way of commercialising and remodeling the public sector. Meanwhile, in their encouragement of enterprise, governments have engaged in a cultural policy towards newly founded firms that has encouraged a particular way of discoursing about business (Carr, 1998). The marks of these developments can be read in the way the enterprise discourse is deployed in concert with strategy discourse by small-firm owner-managers in this study.

For practitioners, the knowledge of the seesaw dilemmatic structure of enterprise-strategy discourse might raise awareness of how these discourses are structured and so open up the possibilities of greater awareness and perhaps creativity in their use. Similar possibilities are presented by this work to the makers and critics of media, and entertainment programmes that draw on enterprise and strategy discourses. Of course the contexts facing any practitioner, and particularly any producer, may be different from those facing the interviewees in this study. None the less, the possibility that strategy and enterprise discourse may be operating in this seesaw manner can alert both practitioners and producers to explore these discourses in more balanced and creative ways.

9.5 Limitations of this work and directions for future work

My work here has been a focused piece of research and therefore inherently subject to quite a number of limitations. Like all research there have been other limitations too, arising out of various scarcities of time, experience, intelligence and other resources of the researcher. I have pointed to both types of limitations through-out this work but it is appropriate to overview them here once again and to use them to highlight some directions for further research.

This work was conducted in late celtic-tiger Ireland, a time and place not at the heart of Reaganite and Thatcherite economic policy. Indeed the relevance of enterprise discourse to owner-managers in this context provided confirmatory evidence of the enduring nature of the enterprise culture. It would be useful to see if the talk of small-firm owner-managers in other countries can be interpreted in the same way e.g. if the extremes of enterprise and strategy poles where switched between with the same proficiency as they were in Ireland. Since the research was carried out, the global economic crises of 2008/2009 means that some (e.g. Vestergaard , 2009) are now questioning the survival of Anglo-American capitalism as a global paradigm. Indeed the impact of the crisis looks a more likely candidate to impact on economic discourse, than a mere change in party political affiliation of those holding political office proved to be (Grey, 2004). In such circumstance it is appropriate to search for changes in the dominant discourses on the economy. The dichotomous unity of the enterprise-strategy found in my work here, will guard against interpretations that might too easily mistake the rise of one side of a dichotomy for the permanent decline of its opposite. However a different approach from this work will be needed to explore a possible shift in the dominant economic discourse. The material used for such an examination will have to be inherently significant as a representative, or source, of dominant economic discourse. This means that such material probably needs to be a public and perhaps a media or political discourse of some kind.

Managers in the business magazine sector, looked at in this work, might be expected to be very skilled in enterprise-strategy discourse given the role the sector play in circulation of business discourses, its entrepreneurial nature and the strategic challenges it faces. Indeed this was one of the reasons this particular sector was selected for my work as I argued in Chapter 4. While this provided an appropriate

focus for the work, (as the media sector has for related previous work, e.g. Storey et al, 2005), it inevitability limits the work. A direction in which the nature of these limits could be explored would be to look at the discourses of those who might be expected to be less skilled in enterprise-strategy discourse. Possible sites in which this might be the case might be in the area of the sciences and the professions. The work of Cohen et al (2004) and McAuley et al (2000) might provide a useful comparison, though in those works the sites in which the discourse of professionals and scientists were analysed were deliberately picked to examine their response to a forceful intrusion of management culture. An environment where there was less incentive for sophistication in management discourses might provide a richer comparison for my work.

Given the rise of enterprise discourse in larger firms, these might be an interesting context to explore whether or not the dilemmatic pairing of enterprise-strategy exists or exists in quite the same way in the ancestral home of strategy discourse as it does in the enterprise homeland of small firms. Given the plethora of business competitions and media coverage of enterprise and business, (Boyle, 2008 provides a discussion of such representations), these too might form a suitable context in which to explore the seesaw model of enterprise-strategy discourse.

In this work I selected the researcher-involved dyadic interview as an appropriate way to generate data for discourse analysis. I argued strongly that any type of interaction has its own inherent structure and thus consequences for the discourses being used. Furthermore I argued that the features of the interviews used were particularly useful for studying the use of discourses of strategy and enterprise by small firm owner-managers. Nevertheless the interview interaction is just one particular type of interaction and the topic of my analysis was confined to the dyadic research-involved interviewed. A further research possibility that this limitation prompts is to examine discourse generated in another type of interaction such as the strategy sessions or strategy away-days mentioned as an important site of strategy practice by Johnson & Melin (2003:17).   A number of the interviewees mentioned either regular or occasional activities of this kind involving, in these small firms, all of the staff. Having studied the discourse of the owner-managers in interviews in this work such future work would have useful points of comparison to add to the analysis,

This study did not seek to analyse the interrelationship between the enterprise-strategy discourse and other discourses that might be important in the lives of the interviewees. Its focus was limited to strategy and enterprise discourses. This is a common issue in doing discourse analytical research (Phillips & Jørgensen, 2002: 142) and to some extent is ameliorated here for the reader by the presentation of much of the data that formed the topic of the analysis i.e. the interviews. Where particular discourses did seem to add a strong flavour to the enterprise-strategy discourse, this was noted. In building an understanding of how the enterprise-structure is structured, this work may well help in promoting questions for such work: e.g. How does the 'masterfulness' invoked as common to the enterprise-strategy discourses interact with discourses that position certain types of individuals as submissive? Warren (2004) clearly has more to offer on this aspect of, particularly enterprise, discourse and her observation that

> "Although the entrepreneurial discourse has been important to the women studied here at certain times during their career transition, the overarching priority is to be recognized as a professional business person, not as an entrepreneur." (Warren, 2004: 34).

provides an interesting basis for a speculation on my work. Of the three interviews whose analysis is detailed in this work, only one involves a woman owner-manager. In analysing that particular discourse, it is noteworthy how of the three owner-managers presented she, though using the enterprise-strategy a lot, most flavoured it with a professional and craft relish. Una even went so far at one stage as to deny that "entrepreneurial-ness has anything to do with … having a business or being about business" (Interview with Una, Turns 371-373 – see Chapter 6 for detailed analysis). In other interviews with women (associated with this research work but not presented in this thesis) similar tendencies were noticed (for example, see the analysis of an interview with 'Ashling' in O'Rourke & Pitt, 2006). This distancing from enterprise discourse was done in the context of interviews where, despite this distancing, there were highly competent performances of the enterprise-strategy discourse. Given the analytical focus of my work, these must remain, in this work, mere speculations, but ones that raise interesting questions such as: might these types of moves represent a greater liberty for women as compared to men to step outside the enterprise-strategy discourse, or a debilitating alienation from it? Similarly other studies could focus on

the interaction between the discourses of craftwork or journalism or advertising sales and enterprise-strategy.

A general lesson that might be gained from the limitations of this work might be the need to take further account of the general context of the discourses being studied. In outlining the guiding principles of this research I used the LUCID acronym, the 'C' does indeed refer to the context-constituting nature of the work. This rightly stressed the inevitability of my role as researcher had in constructing what context was considered but perhaps underplays the influence of that context itself in influencing the discourse. The relationship between local discourses and the wider world is one that can and should be treated with some sophistication, as Oswick & Richards (2000) point out. Such insights, together with the importance of context demonstrated in this work means that at a minimum the 'C' in LUCID should be expanded from just 'context-constituting' to 'context constituting and constituted' in future work.

9.6 Conclusion

My explorations, of *how* the discourses of strategy and enterprise are used by small-firm owner-managers, have yielded an understanding of these discourses as dilemmatically related. In offering this understanding and the implications that I have suggested might arise from it, I hope to contribute to the ongoing discussion about strategy and enterprise discourses. With vigilance, this discussion and my contribution to it, may improve from the interactions of different theories and different interpretations of further empirical material.

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Appendix A: The Jefferson-style transcription notation used

Symbol	Meaning
.	A stopping fall in tone firmly understood as a full stop
,	A brief pause understood as a comma
-	Indicates a sudden stop understood as breaking with previous sense
(.)	A brief but noticeable pause.
(#)	A timed paused where # is the number of seconds
↓	A falling tone
?	A rising inflection understood as a question
↑	A rising inflection not understood as a question
>text<	enclosed speech was delivered more quickly than usual
<text>	enclosed speech was delivered more slowly than usual
…	Deliberated excluded talk within a turn
… ….	Deliberated excluded talk across turns *
[text]	Square brackets enclose overlapping speech
ALL CAPS	Shouted or increased-volume speech
°text°	Enclosed speech is noticeably softer than surrounding
Underlined text	Speaker is stressing the underlined speech.
Double Underlined text	Text inserted by analyst to explore meaning.*
(text)	Enclosed is transcriber's best guess of unclear speech.
((*text*))	Enclosed is a report of non-verbal activity, deliberate replacement of speech, or an inserted clarification.

Notes

This transcription notation is based on the notation developed by Gail Jefferson as described in Atkinson & Heritage (1984).

* denotes a notation which the author believes is peculiar to his work.

Appendix B The Magazine Sector in Ireland

B.1 Introduction

This appendix provides some background on the magazine sector so important to this thesis. The next section of this appendix provides an understanding of what makes a magazine by looking at the history of magazines, the features that make magazines attractive to advertisers and how the magazine is placed within the overall media landscape. After attempting a basic understanding of the magazine, it becomes clear that technological changes have a huge impact on magazines and so the third section of this appendix is devoted to technology and the magazine. In the following section the relationship between the magazine and the macroeconomy is examined. Like most media products magazines generally depend on two sorts of customers – the reader and the advertiser. This 'dual' market aspect and the impact of technological changes make it worthwhile to devote the next section to understanding the complicated magazine value chain. The following section deals with the vexed question of whether or not the magazine industry is consolidated or fragmented and finds that it is both. The penultimate section of this appendix divides the Irish magazine sector into subsections appropriate to the purposes of this thesis. The appendix closes with a brief conlcusion.

B.2 Understanding magazines

The magazine has changed a lot since its first appearance, and more recent and ongoing changes, particularly technology changes, make it hard to pin down exactly what is meant by a magazine. Magazines, as distinct from the "newsbooks" (the forerunners of the newspapers) or the more philosophical periodicals of scholarly interest (e.g. *Transactions of the Royal Society of London),* emerged in the English-speaking world in the early 18[th] century, with publications like *Tatler* and *Spectator* providing some literary added-value to the mere reporting of news (Small, 1982; Briggs & Burke, 2002). 'Magazine' was originally used in English to describe store houses for ammunition and arms. This sense of 'magazine' as a store house was stressed in its first use in the context of publication when a London publication described itself as ''a Monthly Collection, to treasure up, as in a Magazine, the most remarkable Pieces on the Subjects above-mentioned, or at least impartial

Abridgements thereof'' (Gentleman's Magazine, 1 (1): 48, January 1731 as cited in (Haveman, 2004:7)). Up until the late 19th century magazines were often supported by the enthusiasm of their publishers and readers for their political or literary importance, rather than as surviving on their own as commercial entities. However from the 1890s magazines became mass media conduits for advertising (Randle, 2001: para. 9.7).

Magazines have several frequently discussed features that make them attractive to users and advertisers (Picard, 1989; Delaney, 2003; Aungier, 2003). These features are, or are likely to be soon, format-independent, i.e. common to both print and electronic versions of magazines. One attribute that is more confined to the print format, for most users *at the moment*, is the portability of the printed magazine that can be easily transported in a useable form without the need for power outlets or internet reception. Another characteristic – in which the advantage too probably still rests, for the moment, with the printed format – is the potential for magazines to be presented in aesthetically pleasing ways, with high-quality design, paper and reproduction. As users' machines and interconnections improve, the aesthetic potential of magazines in digital format will be just as, if not more feasible. A key feature of the magazine using any platform is, as advertisers tend to put it, a magazine's 'market selectivity' – its tendency to have niched audiences that are highly involved with the publication. For example, in sectorally specialised magazines, "Key business to business titles are sometimes seen as *the* voice of their industry." (italics in original) (CEC, 2005c:74). Magazines which avail of internet technologies will probably be able to strengthen this sense of community through the interaction with users that such technology affords. Old media companies with products such as print magazines may have some legacy effects but are not necessarily at any disadvantage, and do have many advantages to carry into new media products. How magazine publishers succeed or fail as a result of the increased impacts of internet technologies would appear to have more to do the actions of individual publishers than with any inherent aspect of web technology itself.

Magazines have been seen as within the field of mass communication and media studies, and in particular, in media economics, have been studied alongside, and as substitutes for, other media channels such as television and radio (e.g. Picard, 1989). Like other media products, economists consider magazines to be operating in a dual market, needing to sell to both consumers of the media (who may well be only

paying in terms of time) and advertisers. Another notable feature of all media products including magazines is that the product is almost definitionally different in detail from previous editions of the products (e.g. this week's *Economist* is different from last week's). This makes magazines at least to some extent an experience good (Nelson, 1970) as the consumers don't know what the product is going to be like until they experience it. This suggests that reputation, and perhaps the use of price as a quality indicator, are important in marketing magazines.

Figure B.1 below locates magazines and journals within the overall communications and media landscape.

Figure B. 1 Locating Magazines within Media and Communications
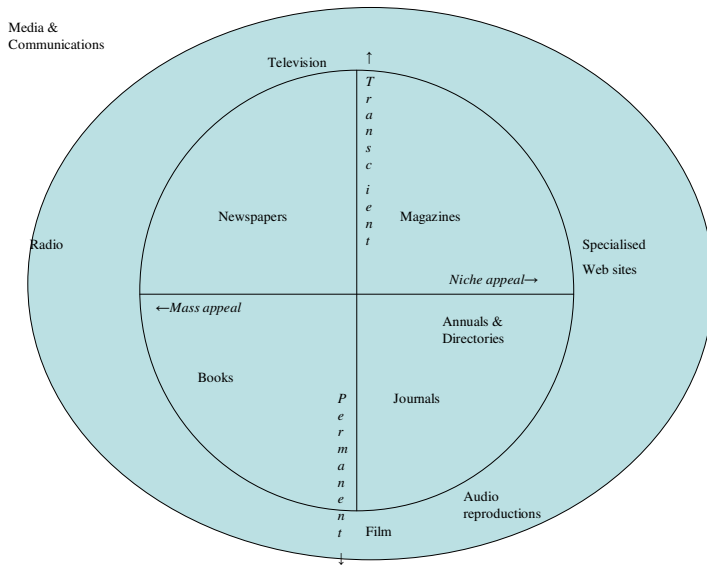
Source*:* Derived from the literature by the author

There is some difficult clearly distinguishing some products on the margins in this sector. Is *Paris Match* or the *Economist* better considered a weekly newspaper or a magazine? Generally we can distinguish magazines and journals from newspapers by considering magazines as having a shelf-life of a week or more, while newspapers might be considered more time-sensitive, thus making both *Paris Match* and the *Economist* magazines in the terminology adopted here. Is a financial services yearbook containing industry contacts better considered a book or a directory? A judgment on that question might need information on what else the work contains.

Journals can be most easily separated from magazines by the fact that they carry peer-reviewed content presented as the original research of the authors. Journals are generally aimed at universities and other research institutions and get most of their revenues from subscriptions. Even with this reasonably clear distinction, small periodicals such as the *Harvard Business Review* may be hard to categorise.

Some claim that – at least for now – there are separate cultures for each of the publishing subsectors (CEC, 2005c:16). Separate cultures among the publishing sub-sectors might be expected to be less the case in a small economy such as Ireland's. Most Irish business-magazine publishers, which I came to know in this study, usually also produced business directories and databases for audiences served by their magazine titles. Also, some of the magazine producers in this study earned revenue and brand awareness through branded content in newspapers. Furthermore, new technology means media are converging. However, even in the small economy of Ireland, there are still separate industry bodies for the closely related sectors of the industry e.g. magazine publishers have the Periodical Publishers Association of Ireland (PPA-I) and newspaper publishers have the National Newspapers of Ireland (NNI).

Technology changes have made it difficult to define the magazine sector. As a major report on the industry puts it, there is a "… mismatch between the way in which publishing is developing as an industry and the basis on which statistics are currently compiled." (CEC 2005c:96). To capture a dynamic entity in clear definition can be difficult and may demand some trade-off between precision and currency. In this work, I use the term 'magazine' to refer to not only such publications in their traditional print format but also to publications that use electronic formats which have magazine characteristics. Both practitioners (e.g. Tim Weller's 'platform agnosticism' in Anonymous, 2006) and other magazines researchers (e.g. see discussion of Eurostat, 2007 below) define magazines in a similar format-free way.

B.3 Technology and the magazine

From the time of Gutenberg and Caxton, technology has always played a central role in the media industry. The arrival of movies in the early 1900s provided some new competition to magazines. Radio provided the next major threat to which magazines

were able to respond with improved graphic publishing techniques; and the photo essay magazine became popular (Randle, 2001). From the 1940s, magazines had to learn to cope with the advance of television. The arrival and spread of television put an end to the traditional mass-market magazine, and magazines, with their lower production costs, went after and prospered in specialist niches (Dimmick, 2003:10, 57-58), anticipating somewhat the 'long-tail' effect (Anderson, 2004) of the internet (discussed further below).

In the late 1980 and 1990s much of the change associated with technology was concerned with the production of printed material and the impact of information technology. Then issues of production technologies were central to changes in print-related publications associated with such dramatic events as the Wapping newspaper dispute, though of course technology was far from being a single, independent, simple cause of change (Littleton, 1992; Cox & Mowatt, 2008). Production technology changes and their organisational translations continue to have an impact on publishing.

The impact of the internet on the distribution and on both the nature and quantity of demand for media has been the focus of discussions of the technology impacts on media since the 1990s.

The very nature of the media products may well be changed by the practice of internet technology use, as various commentators have pointed out (e.g. Kluth, 2006). With media websites such as that of BBC (www.bbc.co.uk), it is possible to get a tailored ezine delivered to your email inbox, enjoy programmes at times of your choice through downloading podcasts and, perhaps more radically, 'have your say' as a 'consumer' through ranking stories, comments and making more substantial contributions in various forums. Other sites, often unattached to legacy media products, often offer primarily 'reader'-generated content (e.g. www.politics.ie). Communities of people interested in particular content organised previously around one central voice, whereas with new media they converse with each other in the most convenient and satisfying site, run with the most attractive technology. Guidone (2000) has pointed to the role of the internet in stressing the community aspect of magazines. Some commentators remain quite skeptical about new media, questioning much of the hype surrounding the internet. Greco (2004:144) points out: that "Of the dozens of on-line magazines in the AOL Time Warner stable, only two are in the

black, and one just escaped from the red in early 2002." However, scepticism may be better confined to the speed and timing of the changes, than to the extent of the changes, since technology impacts take time to be put into practice.

Internet technologies have major implications for how magazines are distributed. Even confining ourselves to print magazines, host online web shops have emerged. One example focusing on the USA market is www.magazinecity.net, while www.uksubscribe.com focuses on the market in the United Kingdom and www.magazines365.com is based in Ireland. Of course, national borders mean less and less in cyberspace, and magazines can also be subscribed to through numerous sites. Here the cost of 'shelf-space' is so low that it provides no limit to the magazines that can be distributed. Cataloging and user-recommendation software mean a customer can be easily guided to highly specialised magazines, pushing them well to the long minority-interests tail of the popularity distribution (Brynjolfsson et al., 2003; Anderson, 2004; Brynjolfsson, Hu, & Simester, 2007).

There is evidence that the internet means that people are spending less time on magazines in traditional print format. For example, in the period 1995-2005 in the USA there was an 11.5% decline in time spent on consumer 'serials' or magazines (Veronis Suhler as cited in (Greco, 2004:127)). In Europe too, there has been a shift in 'media-time' expenditure from media such as printed magazines to internet use and this is likely to increase with greater access to 'always-on' broadband access (CEC, 2005c:91). A 2006 survey found that 23% of European internet users reported a decline in the time they spent reading printed magazines (Synovate, 2006). However, the relationship between old and new media can be complex. Old media formats have indeed been substituted for by new media. However, there have also been complementary effects and even new opportunities for old media formats (Randle, 2001; Lagorce, 2003). New media technologies may even give birth to old media products (e.g. print magazines such as *Soap Opera Weekly* whose market is based on a genre of television programme). So too with internet technology where "Many sites are tied to fledgling print content providers who hope to make it onto mainstream newsstands." (Ferguson, 2006:311).The interaction between new and older media can take some time to work out. As Randle (2001) points out, "it was more than 20 years after television's advent before the full impact of television hit the mass-market consumer magazines in the 1960s".

B.4 Magazines and the overall Irish economy

There are number of difficulties with measuring the activity of the magazine sector. First, it is sensible given the activities of magazines to define them, as was discussed above, to include electronically distributed material as well as the traditional format of a printed magazine. Yet up to recently, both official and industry statistics have tended to be gathered along traditional print format lines (CEC, 2005c:96). Secondly, often what we ideally want to measure in any media industry is the audience involvement and gratification with the product. To get at these we use proxies such as the number of copies bought or read, or even measures of time using the product. These proxies are poor 'translations' of what we really want Dimmick, (2003:34). A third difficulty is that the magazine sector is highly fragmented and has a relatively low cost of entry (CEC, 2005c:96), while many titles do not last long. Smaller and often transitory phenomena often tend to fall below the statistical radar on both counts. Fourthly, particularly in Ireland, the openness of the magazine market to international trade means figures should be carefully defined and counted to clarify whether one is talking about domestic and/or international purchasers (or readers or advertisers), or about domestic and/or foreign publishers (or content). Such clarification is rarely available in published statistics and in any case is hard to ensure in the practice of any particular count, especially in the case of joint ventures or local adaptations. Fifthly, a related difficulty, for international comparisons involving Ireland, is that for a relatively very small sector such as publishing the transfer-pricing distortion concerning the measurement of Irish GDP (see Murphy, 1995 for further discussion) means ratios involving GDP measures (and GDP is now the default national income measurement in most economic statistics) are badly affected. A sixth reason for the difficulty with statistics in this area is these statistics tend to be gathered in different ways across different industries and contexts. This makes comparisons difficult (CEC 2005c:83). Finally, into this measurement muddle there is an incentive to confuse: it is often in the interests of individual magazine producers, and media producers more widely, to distort the figures, as one of their products –advertising – is highly dependent on various measurements of circulation and audience involvement.

The Irish magazine sector is unusually small by international standards. Ireland's Sector 22 of NACE (Nomenclature statistique des activités économiques dans la Communauté européenne) Revision 1.1 (CEC, 2001) comprising magazines,

periodicals, newspapers, books, printing and electronic media reproduction appears particularly large – for 4.8 % of the non-financial value added in 2002 (Johansson, 2006:1) – but this is due to the large, mostly foreign owned computer industry's reproduction of software. In fact, Irish-produced magazines get an unusually small share of total (all media) advertising spend in Ireland: from 1995-2001 in the EU-25 the magazine share of total advertising spend ranges from 19-20% or so, whereas in Ireland it is between 2% and 6% (CEC, 2005c:Table 5-14), with the share in 2005 being a mere 2.7% (PPA-Ireland, 2005). The low magazine-share of total advertising spend is no doubt related to the relatively low proportion of time that Irish residents spend reading magazines: only 44% of Irish residents read a magazine once or more a month compared to an EU-15 average of 62% (CEC, 2005:Table 5-10). The low share of Irish advertising spend on magazines is partly explained by the openness of the Irish market to other English-language magazines (especially British), making it more economic for some international brands to confine their magazine advertising to British magazines widely available in Ireland. Figures from 2001 show that the magazine sector in Ireland contributed less than half the amount of added-value to GDP compared to the average contribution made by the magazine sector in the other (25) EU countries, and only one-third of the contribution made by the UK's sector (derived from ECE, 2005c). Even taking into account the exaggeration of GDP in Ireland, this shows that the magazine sector is not only small in absolute terms but also proportionately. Though a small sector, it seems to be productive, however: Ireland reportedly has the highest operating margin and a high value-added per employee compared with other EU countries' magazine sectors (CEC, 2005c:163-164).

Advertising revenue available for magazines and other media would appear to be highly dependent on the overall state of the economy. For example, Molinari & Turino (2006: 10),looking at both European and American data, find that "Advertising is strongly procyclical and highly volatile". This view is also supported by a study of the effect of recessions on advertising expenditure by Picard (2001) who reports that the effects of the business cycle seemed to be much greater for magazines and newspapers than for radio and television. To some extent the openness of the Irish economy may provide a moderating effect to the influence of the business cycle (in a similar way to what happens in the Japanese case noted as an exception in Picard,

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2001) but this moderation may well depend well on the source of the fluctuation in national income. The booming Irish economy has meant a rising advertising spend on magazines in recent years, as Table B.1 below shows.

Table B.1 The total advertising spend on magazines in Ireland for 2000-2005

Year	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005
€ millions	15	17	24	34	32	40

Source: (PPA-Ireland, 2006)

B.5 The magazine value chain

Figure B.2 below gives a view of a contemporary magazine's value chain. The ultimate product of the magazine value chain can be seen as the interest and attention of the audience or readership. This provides value not only for the consumer or readers but also for advertisers. The final product produced by any media has been sold on two markets: 1) access to audiences' attention (for advertisers) and 2) a media good (for audiences) or 'gratification' of the media consumer (Dimmick, 2003:34). Readers of magazines pay not only any cover price that might be charged but also in terms of their attention which they give the publication – for this scarce resource even magazines without a cover price have to compete.

Figure B. 2 A View of the Magazine Value Chain
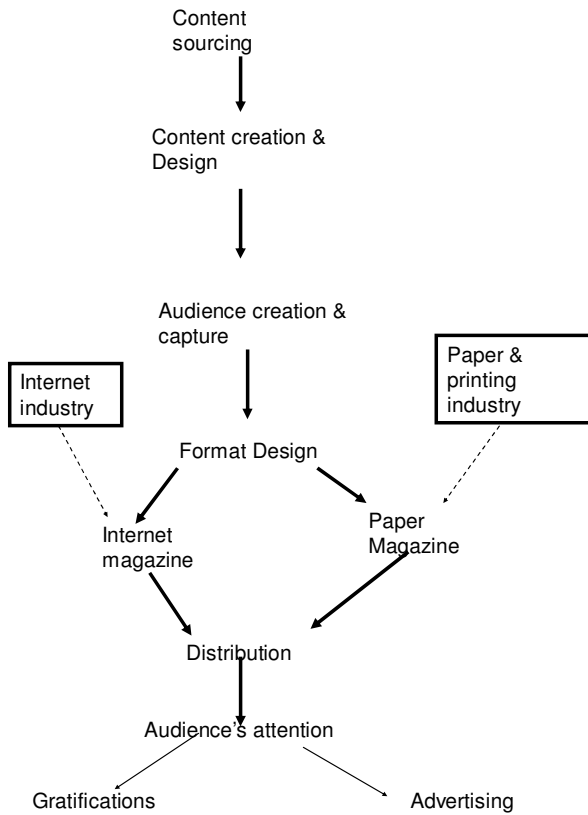
A useful ratio to know is the mix between magazine and copy sales. Unfortunately, figures are only available for the Irish magazine sector as a whole but, given the contingent nature of such ratios in any case, it might be spuriously accurate to think of these ratios as giving anything but a broad guide to what might be regarded as the norm. The average reported split between advertising and copy sales revenue for all Irish magazines from 2000 to 2005 was 30% from advertising and 70% from copy sales (derived from PPA-Ireland, 2006). This gives a lower proportion of revenue from advertising for all Irish magazines than is recorded for the United Kingdom's consumer magazines, where advertising seems to account for over 35% of advertising and copy sales revenue (PPA, 2004) .

How much of the supply chain is owned by magazine publishing companies varies according to particular companies. Ekinsmyth (2002) reports on the great

change and diversity of the industrial organisation of the sector. The EU's publishing watch report argued that core areas usually kept under the direct control of publishing companies are product, development, editorial strategy, content creation, brand identity, brand management and marketing (CEC, 2005c:16). For many of the firms in this study, design and information technology (especially maintenance of content data bases) were also considered important processes to control. Printing and distribution were generally outsourced. An EU report noted that for small-scale publishers many functions can be outsourced (CEC, 2005c:96), and these were the particular kinds of firms included in this study. Unsurprisingly, then, a lot of outsourcing took place including outsourcing of content (involving among some sections of the industry a failure to secure intellectual property rights to that content). The CEO of the Independent media group, a prominent power in the Irish media, believes that technology and the internet still have major impacts to make on the publishing value chain:

> "… the internet can yield an extraordinary opportunity to the newspaper industry in putting together its products at a much lower cost. … [because] … No reader knows where the page is made up. No reader understands or cares about where telesales or marketing is located, thanks to the ubiquity of the internet and faster and more user-friendly telephones." (O'Reilly, 2005:5-6).

The audiences may give their attention to magazines in a variety of formats. Traditionally the format has been in paper but there are also now internet versions of magazines. These include 'ezines', which can refer to magazines distributed by email and webzines available on a website. Magazines may also be made available as 'mobizines', available for consumers to view on their mobile phones (Fixter, 2006). The development of technologies means that the various methods of electronic distributions are merging. In contrast to the United States and northern continental European countries, in Ireland traditionally (like in the UK and southern Europe), a high proportion of magazines are sold through once-off sales in retail stores; in 2000, this distribution channel carried in Ireland the greatest share of sales, among the older 15 EU member states(CEC, 2004: Figures 7). Although retail sales of magazines remained at 95% until 2003, between 2004 and 2005 the share in subscription sales jumped to 25% (PPA-Ireland, 2005), which represents quite a change to the tradition.

Magazine publishers usually have a diverse range of revenue stream from goods or services complementary in supply to production of the magazine (Greco, 2004). This diversity is particularly marked in business magazines as they "… have

extended their brands into other media to become broad-based 'business communications' forms rather than simple 'publishers'" (CEC 2005c:108). Table B.2 below gives some idea of the diversity of revenue streams on which Irish business publications depend.

Table B.2 Some revenue streams of Irish business magazines

Retail copy sales	E-content sales e.g. special reports / back issues	Trade exhibitions
Subscription copy sales	Contract ezines	Conferences around magazine themes
Magazine advertising sales	Website advertising sales	Education & training seminars
Yearbook and directory copy sales	Database access	Contract print publishing
Yearbook advertising copy sales	Mailing list sales	Editorial content sales

Sources: Examination of magazine websites, media coverage of various business magazine-related events, conversations with industry participants

B.6 Consolidated or fragmented: a sector of two tails

The issue of whether the magazine sector is fragmented or concentrated is surprisingly complicated. It tends to be both: consolidated at the end of the distribution (bestselling magazines), and fragmented at the other end – the long-tail (many titles, each of which has small distribution).

There has been a general tendency towards concentration of ownership and increasing firm size in publishing and in media ownership. At first glance, the magazine sector seems no exception. In the USA the top 100 magazines' sales are dominated by companies such as Time Warner, Advance and Hearst (PEJ, 2006). In the United Kingdom, IPC media, EMAP, H Bauer Publishing, Future Publishing, BBC Worldwide and The National Magazine Company magazine dominate the best-selling magazines list (PPA, 2004). In Ireland, too, it is easy to name those domestically produced best-selling magazine titles such as *RTE Guide* (the state broadcaster's TV guide), *U Magazine* (a woman's magazine), *Ireland's Own* (a nostalgic heritage magazine) and VIP (an Irish celebrity magazine) that take the lion's share of the revenue from the well-known titles. Though the global publishers have taken little interest in the domestically produced magazines in Ireland, the Irish publishing houses of Ashville, Harmonia and Dyflin, while small by international standards, are important players in the Irish market.   The dominance of the top-selling magazines by a small number of hits is given greater force by two factors. First, the recent and current rise in retailer power that sees retailers reducing the number of printed magazine titles that take up room on their precious shelf space. Secondly, distributors of printed magazines also prefer to carry fewer titles and, as they often have little competition, this desire is often achieved. In Ireland, for example, printed magazine distribution is dominated by just two companies: Easons and Newspread. These advantages of incumbency are being reduced by internet technology but remained important for the duration of this study.

However, the magazine sector is much more fragmented than might be expected. Though the magazine top hits make up the main body of sales revenue from the top-selling magazines, there are lots of more specialist magazines not known to the general public but that earn revenue from niche readers. It is these niche publications whose revenues individually are not very great but who collectively constitute a large amount of activity that make the very 'long tail' of the magazine

sector. Brynjolfsson, Hu, & Smith (2003) and Anderson (2004) develop this idea of the long tail particularly in relation to the internet. It is feasible to supply many niche markets with their own magazine titles because the cost disadvantages of operating on a small scale are very low, and being made even lower by internet production and distribution technologies. Intuitively one might expect that even, if the economies of scale were not very big in the production of an individual magazine title, there might be significant economies of scope for the consolidation of titles into larger publishing houses. For example, Greco (2004:138-139) points to possible savings by bulk buying in paper, printing and distribution. Cross-selling of advertising in different publications by the same sales team also seems a possible cost-saving opportunity, as do spreading relatively fixed design costs (in-house designers, computer equipment and software licences) across a number of titles. However, empirically these consolidation forces seem to be weaker than the fragmentation forces. Dimmick (2003:10) is able to report that historically "… the smaller, more specialized magazines were relatively unscathed by television; the net result was a downward shift in the organization size …" and this is supported by other research (Picard, 1989:72; Cox & Mowatt, 2008: 504).

Within the niche markets that make up the long tail of the magazine, it is probably reasonably difficult to enter one of those well-established niches already served by an incumbent title. A community of users tend to be highly involved with the title serving them, so a niche magazine's readers are probably going to need some incentive to abandon even a below-standard incumbent magazine.

Despite current difficulties in becoming a hit magazine or in entering an already served niche (these difficulties are being much reduced by the increasing use and speed of the internet), it has nevertheless been noted how low the barriers to entry are in the magazine sector and how this is good for entrepreneurial activity in the sector (CEC, 2005c:96). The reason for this apparent paradox is that, while those established hits and niches are hard to enter and challenge directly, these markets are constantly changing. Thus it can be observed that the magazine sector is very entrepreneurial and open to new start-ups because:

> "The magazine industry has demonstrated considerable creativity and
> adaptility; this is one of its core strengths. Magazine publishers have been able
> to identify emerging markets and create new titles for them, as well as to adapt

existing titles to changing markets through content, design and commercial development." (CEC 2005c:73)

Even where there are dominant players in the magazine sector, the changes in, and outsourcing along, the supply chain mean that the sector is replete with small companies and contractors. This means the enterprise culture is quite strong in the sector (Storey et al., 2005:1033).

B.7 Magazine subsectors

There are various ways of breaking down the magazine sector (e.g. Greco 2004:137) which are generally similar to the way that is done here. A category of magazine that is often mentioned is 'customer magazines', and 'contract', 'partnership', 'client' or 'customised' magazines (e.g. Sharpe, 2005). These are magazines produced under a contract for particular organisations to give to clients. An example would be *Tesco Magazine* which the retail giant gets produced for its customers. While these customised magazines are a growing element of the magazine sector (CEC, 2005c:19), they are, for the purposes of this work at least, more efficiently absorbed within the other categories. A significant difference, in the magazine categorization I make below, from other schemes is the separation here between Sectoral and Local from Generalist business magazines. Often these two are included in the more general category of 'business-to-business' or 'trade' magazines, with more generalist magazines sometimes being classified among consumer magazines. Here they have been separated because the focus of the research is on business-magazine producers and this subdivision allows more context to emerge. Within the magazine sector, a useful breakdown for the purpose of this research is as follows:

1) consumer magazines

2) specialised business (sectoral, professional or local) magazines

3) general business magazines

Consumer magazines are generally about the non-work life of the reader and range from the extremely niche (e.g. *Bird Dog & Retriever News*) to the more general (e.g. *Time*). In a way these are the quintessential type of magazine: attractive and reflective to a non-expert or at least non-professional reader, they are designed for pleasurable elucidation – the original infotainment devices. Determining whether a title like *The Economist* is a consumer magazine or general business magazine is difficult,

although its advertising strategy (Tungate, 2004) does suggest that it is aimed at those who want to be successful in business, so inclining it towards the generalist business-magazine category used here. Specialised business magazines are aimed at particular sectors (e.g. *Containerisation International Magazine*), professions (e.g. *The Irish Medical Times*) or particular parts of the country (e.g. *Business Cork*). The last magazine sub-sector here is labelled general business magazines and refers to magazines aimed at the business person regardless of industry or location.

Using the dimensions of geographic spread and degree of specialisation, Figure B.3 below provides a mapping of some of the business-magazine titles available in Ireland. This mapping is meant to be illustrative rather than comprehensive as putting all titles in the figure would make it unreadable, particularly in this crowded and fragmented specialist market. Priority has been given to illustrating Irish-produced general business magazines.

Figure B.3 Mapping Business Magazines in Geographic & Sectoral Space
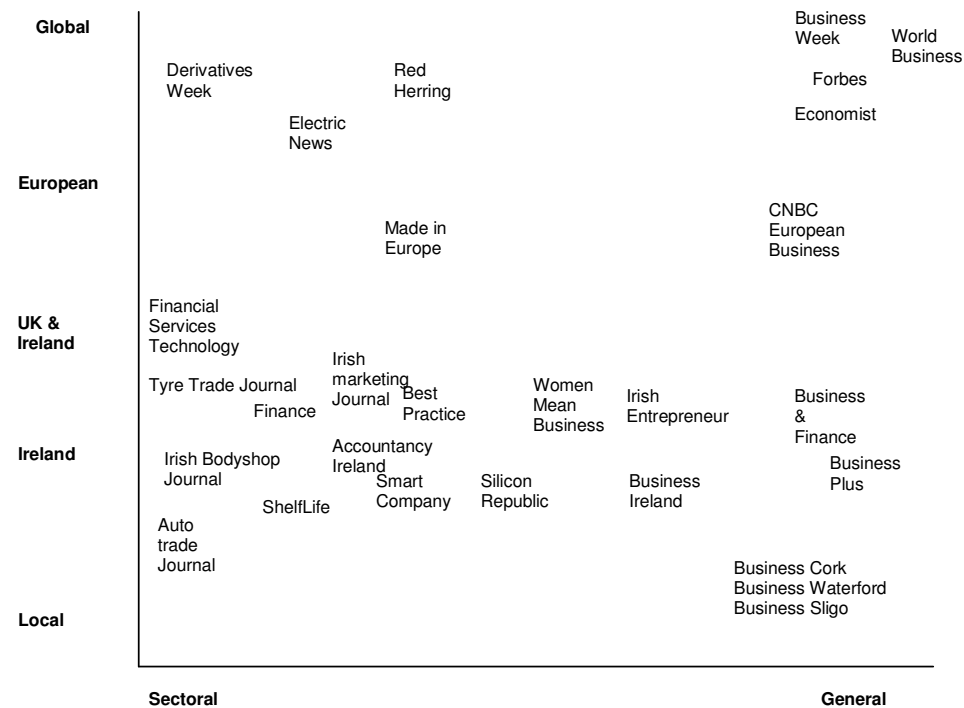
Source: Derived from the literature and empirical sources by the author.

The mapping in Figure B.3 shows that the borders between specialist and generalist can be problematic. For example, *Smart Company* has been placed at the more specialist end of the generalist space as, though focused on information technology, it is "focused on small-business managers" (Mediatea, 2006) concerned with general business matters and without expert technical knowledge. Similarly *Electric News* and *Silicon Republic* could be considered generalist, particularly in a country like Ireland where the information technology sector is pervasive, and given their generalist content. Although somewhat specialised for particular functions or professions, magazines such as *Accountancy Ireland* and *Irish Marketing Journal* could be seen too as generalist because of their content and the prevalence of these functions in business.

Between 2001 and 2003 the number of business titles recorded in Ireland was less than 1% of the number of business magazines published in the United Kingdom (derived from PPA, 2004 and PPA-Ireland, 2005 & 2006).

Average copies sold of business (both general and specialist) magazines in Ireland can be estimated as 8,700 per title (derived from (PPA-Ireland, 2005, 2006) – although this is probably an over-estimate given that it is only the larger-circulation titles that tend to show in statistics.

Statistics may well underestimate (and almost certainly did for the earlier years of the table below) the number of business-magazine titles in Ireland but do show the growing strength of the sector from 2000 to 2005, as illustrated in Table B.3 below.

Table B.3 Recorded Number of Business Titles in Ireland 2000-2005

Year	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005
Number	7	17	22	34	52	61

Source: CEC (2005c:Table 5-12) PPA-Ireland (2006)

B.7 Conclusion

This appendix has given an overview of the magazine in a way that provides background on the specific reasons for choosing it as the relevant sector for the empirical work of this work. The particular arguments for its relevance are included in the main body of the thesis.

Appendix C Example of Interview Hint Sheet

The hint sheet below was quite typical of a single page I brought with me to each interview. I have changed names to the pseudonyms used in this work, or, if I thought it more convenient for the reader, put a description of the proper name in square brackets. The hint sheet was used merely as aid to progress the interview.

Hint Sheet for Interview with 'Paul Kelly'[Date of Interview]

Thanks for giving the interview.   Any questions you have?

It's more a conversation about strategy I'm after not a confession, interrogation or exposé.

I'm looking at how directors talk about strategy & what stories they have to tell. My questions are only aids to get you to talk about your business so we can digress as much as you wish, I'm not too worried about the content of what we discuss just in understanding and perhaps clarifying your view point.

Some conversation progressors:

How did you get here?

What do you think were the main influences on you in forming & running your business? (working abroad, education, parents etc)

How you describe the businesses you are in? (consulting, publishing, epublishing, advertising, content selling?)

What did you think the strategic issues here are?

Was the office move from [name of earlier organizations Paul was involved with] to ECA a big one for you?

Are they very different from places you worked before? (e.g. [Name of previous employer])

How do you see the role of director?

Have you been a director before? (e.g. [name of earlier organization] Paul was involved with?)

Your other/former directors () do they play a big part in your thinking about the firm?

Are other colleagues in firm involved in the strategic direction of ECA?

Would they talk to me?

Probing Tactics:

Have you come across something / someone similar in the past?

Is this very different from what you've done in the past

Expand what activities are attributed to each category?

When you say that A is a Y, what do you mean?

Explore the opposite in a relational pair.

Pose alternative views/facts that might cause problems for the interview.

Revisit the same issues.

Explore confusions & hesitations

Notes on DCA & Paul Kelly

[Name of previous employer]. [Name of previous organization Paul was involved with]. [Name of another company that Paul owns]. ECA registration date. [some names of sponsors, publication titles and events organized]. [Name of a business associate]

Appendix D List of associated publications and presentations.

O'Rourke, B.K. & Pitt, Martyn (2003). Using Discourse Analysis to Search for Greater Variety in Strategic Thinking. Paper presented at the The 17th Nordisk Företagksekonomisk Förening (Scandinavian Academy of Management) Conference, University of Iceland, Reykjavik, 14th to the 16th of August. Available at http://arrow.dit.ie/buschmarart/1

O'Rourke, B. K. (2004). *A Discourse Analysis of Three Irish SME Directors' Strategic Discourses.* Paper presented on 23rd January, 2004 at the DIT Discourse Analysis Group Seminar, DIT Aungier Dublin. Available at http://www.dit.ie/research/centres/dag/previous-events/

O'Rourke, B. K., & Pitt, M. (2006) Exploring the discourses of small enterprise proprietors. In A. Beverungun, N. Ellis, T. Keenoy, C. Oswick, I. Sabelis & S. Ybema (Eds.), *Organizational Discourse:Identity, Ideology and Idiosyncrasy: The Proceedings of the 7th Biennial Conference held at the Vrije Universiteit, Amsterdam on 26th to 28th of July 2006* (pp. 238-244). Leicester: KMCP. Available at http://arrow.dit.ie/buschmarart/2

O'Rourke, B.K., & Pitt, M. (2007) Talking Enterprise and strategy with small firm proprietors in the celtic tiger. *DICOEN IV: Conference*. Nottingham: University of Nottingham.

O'Rourke, B. K., & Pitt, M. (2007). Using the Technology of the Confessional as an Analytical Resource: Four Analytical Stances Towards Research Interviews in Discourse Analysis [58 paragraphs]. *Forum Qualitative Sozialforschung / Forum: Qualitative Social Research, 8*(2), Art. 3. Available at http://nbn-resolving.de/urn:nbn:de:0114-fqs070238.