Founder’s Apprehension in Small Family Business Succession in Thailand: Interpretative View of the Situational Distance

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Abstract
Small family businesses (SFBs) encounter disruption during the intergenerational succession unless understood and managed effectively. Even before the succession process begins, the founder’s apprehension about the succession rises to a critical level, and yet a little research has dealt with this issue. We address the issue of the founder’s apprehension through this qualitative study by tracing the causes, contexts, and contours through the accounts of the founder in Thailand. We used 18 in-depth interviews with founders whose business types, their intergenerational succession planning, and regional contexts had similarities. A bricolage between family business as a rational device and a social device reveals whether and how the founder’s mental structures and situated-attention reflected on the focal concept of “apprehension.” We note several findings. First, a combination of cognitive scripts and situated attention altered the founder’s identity vis-à-vis the heir. Following from the functional, relational, locational, temporal, and structural narratives, the founder’s interpreted distance from that of the heir suggests that the discretionary power of the founder varies. Second, this variation translates into apprehension in an order. Third, based on the order of the distance between the founder and heir, the functional and structural narrative take the first and second positions. Third, theoretically, we link the functional context to cognitive and structural context to normative perspectives.

Keywords
small family business, founder’s apprehension, situated-attention context, founder–heir perceived distance, cognitive-normative interactions

Introduction
Intergenerational succession in the small family business (SFB) has attracted the attention of researchers to the founder’s apprehension about giving up control of their businesses. Three perspectives address the issue of the founder’s apprehensions. One perspective reflects on the knowledge as the source of the founder’s apprehension because of the technical issues and framing of that issue. This stream links the founder–heir information asymmetry about functional issues (Dehlen, Zellweger, Kammerlander, & Halter, 2014). The other perspective builds on the founder–heir gap related to their social capital (DeNoble, Ehrlich, & Singh, 2007). The gap on the social capital suggests that intergenerational differences in relations with customers add to the founder’s apprehensions (DeTienne, 2010). The third perspective brings the relational gap from the outside inside—the parent–children relational gap for apprehension (Kaye, 1996; Sharma, Sieger, Nason, Cristitina, & Ramachandran, 2014). Together, these studies acknowledge the prevalence of the intergenerational gap and the founder’s apprehension and its adverse implications.

The founder’s apprehension from these sources threatens the survival of the SFB, for it disrupts the family business more than other threats (Hamilton, Cruz, & Jack, 2017). For instance, the apprehension hurts the family business more than does stagnation. The founder’s apprehension outweighs other threats such as the one form small size of the firm (Gardiner, 1937). The founder’s apprehension threat precedes other types of threats to the family firm (Handler & Kram, 2004; Sharma et al., 2014). The lack of understanding and coping potential of the founder about the apprehension...
exacerbates the situation (Lumpkin & Brigham, 2011). Academic research suggests that diverse context, such as behavioral context, temporal context, and cultural context, better explain studies of family businesses (Hamilton et al., 2017). This literature includes the firm’s external environmental contexts (demographic, economic, educational, legal and social), but it leaves a cohesive analysis of the family business at the level of micro processes. We acknowledge that for a meaningful understanding of the apprehension processes of the founder (Rafaeli, 2013), and we probe further than the prior studies, most of which have ignored the founder’s apprehension vis-à-vis the heir in the intergenerational succession.

In search of micro processes, we rely on multiple rhetorical questions by addressing the situation-specific attention and interpretative decisions (March, 1994; Ocasio, Laamanen, & Vaara, 2018). We understand that these rhetorical questions, which follow from and represent the context of the founder of the family business, draw the respondent’s attention to the micro-context for the analytical process. The rhetorical questions in the context of their situation-attention drive meanings and actions; therefore, they refer to primers of the founder’s decision in the interaction between scripts and situation (March, 1994). Institutional theorists refer to the interaction between scripts and situation to “institutional enactment” (Scott, 2003; Weber & Glynn, 2006; Weick, 1995). For consistency with the prior literature and the current need, we refer them to rhetorical situations which represent questions reflecting five situations: what, who, where, when, and how.

For the analytical analysis of the narratives of the founder, the “what” answers functional knowledge, the “who” question answers relationships, the “where” question answers physical and social spaces, “when” question answers issues related to the temporality of, and the “how” question deals with structural mechanisms. Together, these frames of references deal with narratives, context, and situated attention of the founder in the family business research (Howorth, Rose, & Hamilton, 2010). In other fields of management research, these situated frames and actions refer to an attention-based view (Ocasio et al., 2018). We expand it to the bricolage between ideas, their dimensions, and their scales. In the current context, the notion of bricolage refers to the interaction between broader mental models and the emergent situation that translate into a new phenomenon needing new devices and interpretative values (Baker, 2007; Desa & Basu, 2013; Di Domenico, Haugh, & Tracey, 2010; Duymedjian & Ruling, 2010). Therefore, the resulting conceptual bricolage overlaps the existing meanings and deviates from them, making the bricolage of ideas into a new situation (Duymedjian & Ruling, 2010).

In this bricolage of the rhetorical situation with the mental scripts of the founder, we ask why the founder’s apprehension occurs when the situational devices change vis-à-vis the SFB succession events. We focused on the frames of references that changed the meaning and value in the narratives of the founder vis-à-vis the heir.

We explored these questions in Thailand as a unique context for this study. Family businesses make about 80% of the total business in Thailand, and they operate in different cultural and historical setting than their Western counterparts (Howorth et al., 2010). In the cultural context, the legal system, history, economic development, infrastructure, and technological innovation—radical versus incremental—Thailand varies from other Western and Asian contexts. Likewise, Western literature often focus on rational goals and means, and the Asian cultures combined social reasoning in the interpretation of family business issues. Although some literature has addressed the family business succession in Thailand (Sitthipongpanich & Polsiri, 2015), it has focused on large firms. Therefore, the idiosyncratic national and SFB research setting offers opportunities for new insights on the founder’s apprehension.

Framework

Small Family Business (SFB)

A family business refers to “family ownership, management by a family member, the operational involvement of family members, and family member involvement across generations” (Rogoff & Heck, 2003, p. 560). The family members run SFB activities in part or whole, and taking part in the SFB, these family members influence the SFB by bringing structural and functional roles into the management processes until the succession event (Howorth et al., 2010). After the succession, one or more of these members take control of the entire business. This transition reflects a typical succession of the family business anywhere, in any size of the enterprise. Within this typical succession of the family business, the intergenerational succession defines the focused case in the current research (Howorth et al., 2010). It means that “the transfer of control from the founder to daughter/son” delimits the notion of an intergenerational succession of the SFB and the founder’s apprehension in the current definition.

Apprehension

The founder’s apprehension refers to the anxiety associated with uncertainty generated from the gap between the desired level and expected levels of outcomes. Apprehension stems from the uncertain future upon which the individual has little control. The future outcomes that signal adverse outcomes and low control suggest a heightened level of apprehension. For instance, the enacted goals and means of the founder produces devices symbolizing lower than desired levels of the outcome, and in such enacted situation, the risk outweighs the rewards. With SFB succession event, the imagined fear from the failed succession builds on the perceived cognitive distance (Lazarus & Smith, 1988) of the founder from the heir in the family enterprise. The distance stems from the founder’s perceived assumption vis-à-vis heir. The founder’s history of running the family business shapes scripts
in mental models. The founder’s assumption about the heir contradict those paths and the enacted devices vis-à-vis the heir from the devices enacted for oneself. Therefore, this perceived gap translates into the interpretative distance.

The notion of interpretive distance forms shapes the emotive situation that elicits some apprehensive response. For instance, the emotive device retrieves the founder’s positive information or negative information from memory, depending on the situated distance. The positive interpretation reduces uncertainty, anxiety, and stress of the founder; the negative interpretation increases the founder’s uncertainty, anxiety, and stress (Forgas, 1995). As this principle assumes founder–heir distance generates feelings of apprehension, the resulting apprehensive feelings elicit responses (Lazarus & Smith, 1988). This apprehension of a person reflects emotional responses that differ from other psychological concepts such as moods and attitudes (Fredrickson, 2001; Fredrickson & Branigan, 2005). First, moods and attitudes fall into broader categories, and they differ from emotive responses in multiple ways. For instance, moods endure longer than emotions; emotions occur. Likewise, moods diffuse across a broad space; emotions occur in a narrow space (Baron, 2008). Moods persist the situation-free; emotions reflect on situation-specific changes.

Second, emotions and mood differ in their implications. The mood influences one’s thoughts; emotions elicit decisions and actions (Lazarus & Smith, 1988). Mood exists without eliciting a response of any kind; emotions have a valence in action, suggesting a direct link between action and emotions. A specific stimulus drives emotions. The founder’s apprehension toward succession symbolizes this link between emotions and actions, and the situation that symbolizes the founder–heir distance triggers the situational apprehension. It means emotions produce valance through stimuli, leading to the action; mood rises whimsically. The whimsical reaction of mood or attitude occurs in any context; the emotion occurs in situated conditions through interpreted reason (Weber & Glynn, 2006). Thus, emotions need to generate a stimulus in the situated-attention to goals and means; attitude lacks purpose and its aligned means.

Third, attitude occurs without the individual’s awareness—an automatic instance, attributed to institutional scripts based on institutional mechanisms such as coercion, norms, and cultural-cognition (DiMaggio & Powell, 1983; Scott, 2003). These institutional mechanisms shape one’s attitude over time that influences information processing rather than information processing influences it. Emotions occur through situational-specific information processing, influencing these institutional scripts. Attitude lacks a purpose; emotions carry a situational oriented purpose (Forgas, 1995). Likewise, emotions build on the awareness of the cause and effect of the stimuli or situational device (Lazarus & Smith, 1988). This situational device enacts the interpretation in the broader frame of mood associated with history. Attitude lacks awareness of the causes and effects of institutional forces. It implies that attitude shapes the recognition, comprehension, and interpreted values to respond to coercive, normative, and cultural-cognitive constraints in the institutional theory (DiMaggio & Powell, 1983; Scott, 2003). In contrast, the emotive situation depends on the situational devices, and together, their bricolage shapes the enacted devices used in framing the situation.

The institutional theory explains that scripts of the past induce constraints on the latitude of the action of the focal actor, leading to adverse translation of the distance between the scripts and the emergent situation. This distance between scripts and situation generates a sense of uncertainty, leading to anxiety and apprehension. These scripts reduce the interpreted uncertainty of the situation by reducing the cognitive distance between the actor and the situation. The novel situation enhances the gap, and the combined interpretation of scripts and situation engender the phenomenon of enactment (Weick, 1995). The gaps between scripts and situation produce uncertainty that shapes one’s view of the world, changing one’s latitude of action. High latitude of action increases discretionary power and vice versa. Therefore, the interpretative decision neither takes pure external scripts nor the emergent situation in the cognition, emotion, and apprehension.

The central concept that carries this interaction between the emergent situation and the history dependent scripts refers to the concept of bricolage when two ideas translate into a new idea. This combination applies to existing resources or tools to create new tools (Baker, 2007; Di Domenico et al., 2010; Duymedjian & Ruling, 2010; Stinchfield, Nelson, & Wood, 2013; Turner, 2014). To fit the bricolage in the current argument, we combine scripts in the founder’s mental model and the new situation associated with one of the situational rhetorical questions. As noted earlier, the scripted models come from the experience and historical path; the situation appears from the current situation of the founder and demands the founder’s interpretative decision. Thus, the bricolage of the founder’s mental models and the succession-related situation shape align the attention to the interpretative situation and meaning for action. These rhetorical questions and their situation shape the SAT (situated-attention theory) framework (Ocasio, 2011) and use it as an anchoring theme to capture those five generic situational contexts.

Table 1 show a topology containing perceived distance between the founder and heir on situated factors. These five situated factors reflect the founder’s perceived distance from the heir in relevance, importance and capabilities. The following sections deliberate on these four combinations of the inter-personal distance in this typology.

**Situated-Attention**

We used the notion of situated-attention of the founder in the exploratory study to understand the founder’s apprehension at the micro level. This situated-attention perspective refers to the intensity of the focus on the dominant frames of
references compared with others for situated action (Ocasio,
2011; Ocasio et al., 2018). The dominant devices alter the
meaning, importance, and decisions based on the vision and
decision power they provide to the founder. For instance, the
earlier introduced five types of rhetorical devices, which
other literature refer to contextual diversity (Howorth et al.,
2010), elicit the founder’s attention, meaning, and decisions.
Those generic questions, in the rhetorical sense, have differ-
ent disciplinary names. Organizational theorists call them the
“decision ecology” or primers of decisions (March, 1994).
Rhetorical institutionalists call them frames (Burke, 1969).
Sociologists and anthropologists call them “bricolage of
ideas” (Douglas, 1986; Levi-Strauss, 1966; Swedberg, 2014).
Appraisal theorists in cognitive science call them “appraisal
questions” (Lazarus & Smith, 1988). Methodologists in the
content analysis call them discursive devices of the method.
Life scientists call them discovery questions (Annesley,
2010). Despite their variety, our stated assumption hangs
these concepts together in the form of situation that elicits
interpretative action. We refer these contextual devices to
SAT in this qualitative study.

Scholars on family business commend for in-depth analy-
sis of the phenomenon of succession and apprehension in
family business research (Hamilton et al., 2017). Authors
from other management and organizational disciplines also
suggest that actor’s mental scripts and the situation translate
one’s identity, values, and interpreted actions—a bricolage
of various ideas (Di Domenico et al., 2010; Duymedjian &
Ruling, 2010; Garud & Karnøe, 2003). We applied this bri-
colage of ideas to the founder’s narrative to identify the type,
sources, and interconnected mechanisms in the formation of
apprehension. For instance, whenever a situation enters on
the scene, focal agent recognizes, evaluates, interprets,
decides, and acts upon this situation (Baker, 2007; Burke,
1969; Lazarus & Smith, 1988; Weick, 1995). This interaction
between macros structures and the situated stimuli occurs in
an interideas iteration (Ocasio, 2011). In other words, the
script brings the path-dependent ideas, and the situated ques-
tion brings the contextual ideas into the bricolage. Naturally,
the context entering the script alters the meaning because of
the actor’s identity, role, and decision change accordingly
(March, 1994; Ocasio, 2011). We briefly define these rhe-
torical questions (primers of decision or contexts).

i. Functional situation draws the founder’s attention to
a functional task for information process based on
capabilities and aligns it with the founder–heir
differences.

ii. Actors’ situation attention defines roles-based identi-
ties of the actors from the founder’s perspective, and
those identities change along with the contextual
references.

iii. Space: Spatial device refers to the physical space
e.g., the founder’s office, cafeteria, common room,
meeting room, or security room) and offers clear
representations. Sometimes, they also arise from
ambiguity-laden psychological spaces in the social
order. In other words, social status and physical
space interactively shape a contextualized
interpretation.

iv. Temporal context: It refers to the actor’s attitude to
time. People experience time differently, drawing
diverse meanings for decisions. For instance, the
notion of time differs because of the personal or
social experience of the passage. Some actors tran-
slate the future as entrepreneurial times; others tran-
slate it as a fixed destiny (Bourdieu, 1963). As actors
experience time differently, their meanings differ
across situational settings (Giddens, 1990). Therefore,
the scope, duration, and risk of time differ for actors
(Jaques, 1971).

v. Structural context: It refers to coordination mech-
nisms, communication structure, and relational con-
texts. Routines, methods, operation, and management
come under the structural umbrella. Closed structures
versus open structures, vertical versus later commu-
nication, upstream versus downstream interaction,
inside versus outside competition and policy versus
procedural perspectives support the structural con-
text in this framework.

Method

Research Setting

We conducted this study in Thailand for the theoretical rea-
sons noted earlier. Thailand offers a unique context for SFB
research because of the cultural differences, socioeconomic development differences, regional differences, and business firms’ differences from Western situations. In support of such a unique setting, the organization research suggests a unique setting facilitates existing theories or discovering new ones (Bansal & Corley, 2012; Howorth et al., 2010). At the same time, Thailand hosts a large proportion of family businesses, both among small and large firms (Kitayama & Masuda, 1995; Markus & Kitayama, 1991; Matsumoto, 1993). Past research has overlooked the SFB in favor of large firms. For instance, those authors who addressed the family business succession question in Thailand focused on large family business groups (Yabushita & Suehiro, 2014).

Unlike the large business groups in Thailand, which have strong family ties with political groups (Imai, 2006), small family businesses lack such ties with political elites, government, and interfirms. Their structures, rules, practices, and standards differ between large and small family business enterprises in Thailand (Bertrand, Johnson, Samphantharak, & Schoar, 2008; Chutatong, Kali, & Wiwattanakantang, 2006). For instance, SFB lack resources compared with large firms, and they solve their business problems through the process of bricolage of existing resources and ideas to survive and grow (Baker, 2007). Therefore, we selected SFBs with less than 50 employees, which have founders and heirs present at the time of the research and have started their succession planning.

Appendix A shows a preview of 18 interviews with founders preparing for intergenerational succession in the family business. This scope meets a typical family business, which refers “average family firms cluster” in prior literature, and it emphasizes closely held family objectives, ownership, and management (Howorth et al., 2010). The interviews took place between October 2012 and October 2013. Business size of these firms ranges from 8 to 30 employees. Respondents’ narratives show some similarities in the type of the question, size of the question text, and to some extent, the size of the response. Appendix B shows the scope of the interview questions, divided into thinking questions (opinions) and behavioral questions (action) associated with the situational device: what, who, when, where, and how. Besides the thinking and situational questions in scope and diversity, supplementary level questions complement these primary questions.

The analysis and the interpretative decision from the narratives of the founder make use of the appraisal theory (Lazarus & Smith, 1988) and affective decision theory (Forgas, 1995). Both types deal with the link between the founder’s apprehension about the SFB succession event and the situation presented to the founder. For instance, whenever the founder encounters a functional situation, the alignment between goals and means rises to the salience in the narratives. Likewise, interpersonal relations and emotional-based rationale come to the fore when the actor enters the situation in time and space contexts. In particular, the founder’s presuccession and postsuccession references to the context of time draw different meanings because of the firm’s boundary spans–internal versus external (Ocasio et al., 2018). As each of these contextual situations elicit attention to their stimuli (Ocasio et al., 2018), they affect and reflect each other as well as the overall interpretative values for the decision response (Lazarus & Smith, 1988). In line with these assumptions, we proceeded to the data.

Data
We collected data from 18 founders in semistructured interviews. We posed the main question to all response in similar manners: whether and why succession worried them. The subsequent questions complemented these main questions to enrich the narratives. The interviews were in the Thai language. We developed proper protocols for the interviews as follows. The first round of interviews took 6 months. After transcribing the interviews into the Thai language, we translated the transcript into English and back for comparison. The transcript of the English text in the data produced 151 pages. An external expert in the translation profession checked the accuracy and level of the transcription. We also showed the transcript in the Thai language to the respondents for corrections.

Analysis
The analysis follows an iterative process which started with the fundamental question concerning the apprehension, and this main question led to questions about situated frames of the problem, uncertainty, risk, fear, or loss, which enable interpreting the contents in the broader context. Contents generate relevance and importance in the context because of situational diversity and importance, bridging the gap between ordinary language and emotions in the discourse for apprehension (Lazarus & Smith, 1988, p. 291) referring to the “characteristics of messages” (Berg, 2006, p. 240). As a flexible technique (Holistic, 1968, p. 604) in the analysis of any textual data (Abramson, 1983, p. 286), some empirical research has followed this process from contents to coding to cohesive themes (Suddaby & Greenwood, 2005).

Coding Process
We used two levels of coding of the data in a systematic process: the division level and classification level. At the division level of coding, we coded all components based on direct and implied meaning. Direct meanings suggested a literal interpretation, and implied meaning suggested connotative and contextualized interpretation. This division processes separated the concepts from each other into subcategories. At the classification stage, we integrated the concepts into their higher categories, placing items belong to one class under the same theme. We used the principle of
selection drawn from the framework of the situational device of rhetorical questions as information eliciting mechanisms from the interpretative perspective.

The methodological literature on the content analysis points to the need for situational questions for the textual analysis (Krippendorff, 2004). Following these pieces of literature, we used qualitative data analysis at two levels: manifest contents and latent contents (Berg, 2006, p. 242). Manifest contents stand for actual words in the transcript. We coded the data into discrete segments to capture the apprehension of the founder about the succession situational in the framed situation (Bateson, 1972; Goffman, 1974). In the process of identifying discrete segments of data, we isolated each frame in a logical order: functional, actor-specific, spatial, temporal, and structural.

Then, using individual contextual devices as the starting point, we focused on the perceived differences between the founder and heir—from the founder’s perspective. For this purpose, we separated the founder apart from the heir to understanding the founder–heir distance on contextual devices, their diversities, and their intensities along with the five main rhetorical questions. In this sense, we identified the qualitative difference and quantified the contextual contents based on frequencies and distance. In other words, we addressed each item and its dimension in qualitative interpretation and added quantified values to give them a sense of comparison in a hierarchy. Appendix A depicts the quantification process.

The quantification process and the ordered results of the content analysis make an ordinal sense in the comparison within the situational devices and between them. As shown in Figure 1, we tackled each side of the triangle in order. For instance, we counted the distance between the founder’s self-reference to the situational device based on the words count. The FS side of the distance shows 7 points between the two ends. The opposite side, marked as HS in the triangle, shows the distance of 11 points between the two ends. The third side of the triangle shows the difference 4 (11 – 7) between the FS and HS points (distance). This estimate symbolizes the strength of the situated-attention and its interpretative influence on the founder’s response, and we applied this principle to the situational devices.

Findings

The finding captures the results in line with the steps used in the method and incremental steps. The first step in the data coding produced a list of meaning-making units at the axial level of coding. These meaning-making textual units fall into three categories: nouns, verbs, and ideas. These discrete units of the data resonate with the data analysis process and coding principles used in the literature in a qualitative study (Suddaby & Greenwood, 2005). This process produced over 400 units of key terms, reduced to 200 through the integration processes. Therefore, the size of the crude data at this axial coding stage makes little rationale to include in the final product. Instead, this stage supports the middle stage of the data analysis.

The second level of data analysis builds on two assumptions in coding the data. The first assumption deals with the envisioned goals of the founder of the family business, and the second assumption deals with the means to those goals. These envision goals and means set the expectations of the founder as lenses of identity, evaluation, and interpretation (DiMaggio & Powell, 1983; Weber & Glynn, 2006; Weick, 1995). Like these goals and means in the institutional perspectives, the emotion perspective also builds on the goals and means, their relevance and significance in the situated decision (Lazarus & Smith, 1988). Hence, the set of coded data at this stage presents the goals and means associated with presuccession attention and postsuccession attention.

Table 2 shows communicative devices of the founder, and these devices reflect envisioned goals and means associated with the family business. The goals project the expected outcome, and the mean shows the perceived ideas of the founder to reach those envisioned outcomes. In the current and future goals and means, sometimes the founder distinguishes between the pre and postsuccession attention. Other times, the attention based on the devices used overlaps between the two periods. From these patterns, the founder’s attention to the postsuccession goals and means attract more attention than the presuccession goals and means. The gap between the goals and means in the postsuccession time far exceeds the same gap between the presuccession time.

Several reasons explain these patterns of attention of the founder to the goals and means. First, the postsuccession era brings high uncertainty to the founder in the envisioned goals and means. For instance, the same device has high attention
in the two eras. Second, whenever the founder focuses on the postsuccession concerns, the role of the heir enters on the scene. As a result, the founder’s attention shifts more to the future and its uncertainty, affecting the intensity of the framed situation. Thus, the uncertainty of the time and the intervention of the heir on the scene changes the underlying meaning of the succession of the founder.

The envisioned goal conforms to relevance and importance of attention based on the appraisal theory (Lazarus & Smith, 1988) and interpretation decision theory (March, 1994; Ocasio, 2011; Ocasio et al., 2018). The appraisal theory points out that relevance, significant and potential coping with the situation influences a person’s evaluation of future events. The interpretative decision theory suggests that the person’s situational device reflects the cognitive scripts from the history, and the interaction between the situational device and scripts translate the situation into meaning and value that differs from the old but stay in its proximity. The combination of the appraisal and interpretative perspectives explain that the founder’s attention intensifies to the means in the postsuccession era. The literature points to similar ideas regarding the entry of the heir in the interidentity vis-à-vis interrole distances in the technical goals and means (Sundaramurthy & Kreiner, 2008).

Similar other studies have introduced differences on the timeline of succession where the founder’s attention and evaluation differ in the intergenerational family business success regarding the uncertainty and concerns (Dyck, Mauws, Starke, & Mischk, 2002, p. 159). For instance, the envisioned goals and means change before and after the baton-passing stage in the family business succession (Handler & Kram, 2004). The two stages induce different pressures and interpretative influences on the founder (Feltham, Feltham, & Barnett, 2005). Likewise, the technical means of functional and attention of the goals and means reflect on the interpretative decision in the family business succession (Cabrera-Suarez, De Saa-Perez, & Garcia-Almeida, 2001). The data in Table 2 support this literature and conclude that attention to the means goals exceeds the attention to goals. In this sense, the devices addressing post-succession outweigh presuccession devices. It implies that the founder’s identity shifts between the two times and the shift in the identity lead to a decline in the discretionary power of the founder.

| Weight     | 13.8 | 18.5 | 23  | 37.4 |
|------------|------|------|-----|------|
| Malik      |      |      |     |      |

Table 2. Envisioned Goals and Means.

| Goals attention | Means attention |
|-----------------|-----------------|
| Founder-specific | Heir-specific | Founder-specific | Heir-specific |
| Advantages/disadvantages | 0.13 | 0.21 | Adaptation | 0.23 | 0.28 |
| Big/large | 0.65 | 0.96 | Accounting techniques | 0.03 | 0.07 |
| Business success | 6.44 | 1.70 | Cognitive attention | 0.32 | 0.60 |
| Capitalization | 0.04 | 0.11 | Communication | 0.16 | 0.11 |
| Change/dynamics | 0.67 | 0.53 | Competitiveness | 0.45 | 0.32 |
| Competition | 0.23 | 0.07 | Complexity | 0.27 | 3.15 |
| Deficiencies/weakness | 0.15 | 0.11 | Control | 0.35 | 0.42 |
| Failure | 0.31 | 1.74 | Creativity | 0.24 | 0.14 |
| Gains/benefits | 0.31 | 0.32 | Decision ability | 0.15 | 1.42 |
| Growth | 0.49 | 0.71 | Difficulty | 0.30 | 1.13 |
| Impact/influence | 0.60 | 0.81 | Education/university | 1.47 | 0.98 |
| Increase/decrease of value | 0.28 | 0.42 | Example | 1.86 | 1.74 |
| Investment, risk taking | 0.19 | 0.32 | Experience/tacit | 0.63 | 1.59 |
| Location in space | 0.17 | 0.35 | Process/methods | 1.70 | 2.65 |
| Location, expansion | 0.92 | 1.13 | Job/task/function | 0.19 | 0.92 |
| Sales/business outlook | 0.4 | 0.4 | Responsibility/work | 2.99 | 4.5 |
| Stages/phases | 0.07 | 0.07 | Lead | 0.29 | 0.31 |
| Strength, power | 0.30 | 0.25 | Learning by doing | 0.58 | 0.11 |
| Surviving/longevity | 0.77 | 0.28 | Maturity | 0.03 | 0.00 |
| Transition | 0.43 | 7.33 | Temporality | 0.78 | 1.20 |
| Wrong outcome/direction | 0.27 | 0.64 | Planning | 0.47 | 0.89 |
| Problem-solving | 2.14 | 3.83 |
| Product/service | 0.38 | 0.28 |
| Routine actions | 3.79 | 6.27 |
| Sales/development | 0.4 | 0.4 |
| Work, function, tasks | 2.77 | 4.11 |
The next stage in the data analysis leads to the evaluation of the intensity of the founder attention to the situational devices, reflecting on the five rhetorical questions introduced in the framework. Table 3 shows a simple descriptive weight assigned to the five situational devices, their comparative intensity. The functional (27), structural (15), identity (13), spatial (9), and temporal (5) order shows the scores of attention at this stage in the analysis. The last column shows the main element used in the integrated patterns of assigned values. Based on the scope, scale, and possibilities, the shown hierarchy suggests two noticeable patterns. First, the functional, situational devices take the dominant form, which counters the assumption that family businesses operate under social logic more than technical logic (Miller, Le Breton-Miller, & Lester, 2010). Second, the low intensity of temporal attention defies the earlier analysis that postsuccession concern outweighs the presuccession concerns of the founder because of the high uncertainty of the far future. However, the succession event per se includes the timeline of the success and the uncertainty and anxiety it brings. Therefore, the devices surrounding timing rationalize their dominance, without referring to the notion of time.

Table 3. Situational Device.

| Situated-attention | Devices | Units | Frequency | Range | Situational distance | Intensity | Dimensions |
|--------------------|---------|-------|-----------|-------|----------------------|-----------|------------|
| Functions          | Activity| 42    | 6,435     | 10,164| Knowledge            | 27        | Explicit–tacit |
| Actor              | People  | 14    | 3,388     | 3,623 | Identity             | 13        | Situational roles |
| Temporal           | Timing/duration| 20    | 1,172     | 4,840 | Temporal             | 5         | Retrospective–prospective |
| Location           | place   | 27    | 2,260     | 6,534 | Spatial              | 9         | Physical–social space |
| Structure          | Coordination| 57    | 3,702     | 13,794| Structural           | 15        | Coupled: weakly–strongly |

Note. Intensity = frequency/range × units.

Table 4. Situational Device and Founder–Heir Distance.

| Self-attention | Heir-attention | Founder-specific | Heir-specific | Founder-specific | Heir-specific | Distance | Rank |
|----------------|---------------|------------------|---------------|------------------|---------------|----------|------|
| Function       | 27            | 567              | 999           | 324              | 567           | 675      | 1    |
| Actor          | 13            | 273              | 481           | 156              | 273           | 325      | 3    |
| Location       | 5             | 105              | 185           | 60               | 105           | 125      | 5    |
| Time           | 9             | 189              | 333           | 108              | 189           | 225      | 4    |
| Structure      | 15            | 315              | 555           | 180              | 315           | 375      | 2    |

Note. Distance = sum of founder’s self-references – sum of references to the Heir.

The next stage in the data analysis leads to the evaluation of the intensity of the founder attention to the situational devices, reflecting on the five rhetorical questions introduced in the framework. Table 3 shows a simple descriptive weight assigned to the five situational devices, their comparative intensity. The functional (27), structural (15), identity (13), spatial (9), and temporal (5) order shows the scores of attention at this stage in the analysis. The last column shows the main element used in the integrated patterns of assigned values. Based on the scope, scale, and possibilities, the shown hierarchy suggests two noticeable patterns. First, the functional, situational devices take the dominant form, which counters the assumption that family businesses operate under social logic more than technical logic (Miller, Le Breton-Miller, & Lester, 2010). Second, the low intensity of temporal attention defies the earlier analysis that postsuccession concern outweighs the presuccession concerns of the founder because of the high uncertainty of the far future. However, the succession event per se includes the timeline of the success and the uncertainty and anxiety it brings. Therefore, the devices surrounding timing rationalize their dominance, without referring to the notion of time.

Table 4 shows the founder’s situated-attention and perceived distance from the heir on five rhetorical devices and respective questions. Appendix C complements these situational devices in the perceived distance through patterns of founder–heir distance from the founder’s perspective, producing the intensity and scope of the situational device. These complementary patterns produced the distance and rank of the situational device to rhetorical questions. The last two columns (distance and rank) show the outcome in Table 4. Three pieces of information become relevant here: founder–heir distance; intersituational distance; a hierarchical order of situational factors. The founder’s distance translates into the relative situation and power to manage it.

Each situation frames the evaluation through positive versus negative values, depending on the attentional intensity and risk–reward structure of information retrieval along with the framing and ensuing meanings. The framing of the risk–reward situational device elicits negative values because the situational risk dominates in attention than rewards from the succession event. In contrast, the reward–risk order in the framed situation suggests that rewards outweigh the risk (reward/risk ratio > 1). The order and reverse order affect the founder’s attention and coping potential. The importance and relevance of these calculated patterns lie in the attention theory of information retrieval. The institutional theory defines these goals and means as scripts of typified action-in-situation (Weber & Glynn, 2006). These actions-in-situational device rest on expectations associated with goals and means (DiMaggio & Powell, 1983; Scott, 2003), the interaction between the situational device and mental scripts creates a level of tension because of the inconsistencies of interpreted values of the framed situation (Lazarus & Smith, 1988), and apprehension forms when the distance increases between the envisioned future and envisioned power to deal with the future. The institutional theory informs us from the historical perspective (DiMaggio & Powell, 1983; Scott, 2003), and
the enactment theory informs us of the situational perspective (Weick, 1995). The combination explains and elaborates on the interpretative action. Therefore, our notion of SAT explains the link between the founder’s situational device and apprehension.

The SAT, which draws on the attention theory of information retrieval, suggests that attention to emergent situation offers ubiquitous contradictions between frames referents and within them. The human, being a cognitive miser, relies on selected pieces of the incoming information (Fiske & Taylor, 1991). These shortcuts in the decision process bring the dominant situational device and attract a response (Kahneman, Slovic, & Tversky, 1982). This way, the decision-maker fills the gaps of missing information, leading to natural biases of attention, selection, and interpretation of the retrieved information (Bateson, 1972; Goffman, 1974), the intensity of the distance of the founder from the succession, which influences the perceived coping potential, and contributes to the toward metamorphism of apprehension on specific situational device dimensions.

Figure 2 shows the chronological processes and stages in the development of the link between the situational device and the founder’s apprehension about the succession events. The figure builds on descriptive quantitative and qualitative data to link the micro processes to the perceived distance of the founder from the heir. The framing of the risk–reward versus reward–risk expression produced different meanings for the founder.

Discussion

The article explored the founder’s apprehension in the intergenerational succession about the small family businesses in Thailand. We developed the framework through the bricolage of the founder’s mental models and five situational questions. These five situational questions refer to rhetorical devices, which shape identities, meaning, and power of the founder to deal with the succession of the family business. These five rhetorical questions form the framework, dealing with functions, person, place, timing, and structure (Howorth et al., 2010). We used 18 interviews with the small family business founders in Thailand. We analyzed and concluded that the situational devices highlight the dominant attention-driving bricolage and interpretative apprehension of the founder in the SFB in Thailand.

The first situational device refers to the founder’s perceived distance from the heir on the technical spectrum. The technical spectrum comprises two types of functional knowledge: explicit and tacit. Explicit knowledge refers to formal education, and tacit knowledge refers to the experience (Polanyi, 1967). The founder believes that the heir’s explicit knowledge that builds on the formal education has limited relevance and management power for the SFB. Functional intensity suggests that cognitive distance on the knowledge spectrum relevance to the technical needs of the business set the founder apart from the heir. As it appears in the direct quote, the founder faces a level of uncertainty about the technical value and social status of formal education.

I support his education, and if I did not support him [son’s education], then I have to admit the gap. My generation will fall behind others in some areas. At the same time, I see that, after returning from studying abroad, it will be difficult for my child to inherit my business. If he gains new knowledge and learns different things during studying abroad, he might want to start a new business that is different from the family business. That is what I am concerned. (JGA_2_Q4)
Another founder displays uncertainty about the functional and social value of formal education in the family business.

Well, after she graduates she will come to work with our family business, and she does not understand... the background of the business well enough. For parents who have any business which does not need to use high knowledge, it is better to let the child learn the business at the earliest stage. It is better when he is still little [young]. (TCH_9_Q4)

Likewise, another founder said,

I do not know how they will use their knowledge, but the thing we want is that they use their knowledge to manage and develop the company—make it bigger. Among the people who have experience [tacit] and people who know [explicit], the experienced people are better than the educated people. I think that, after children get a bachelor's degree, they should work for two to three years before they go for higher education. (WGA_8_Q2)

Previous research suggests that the growth of the family business and relative input for that envisioned goals influences the founder's anxiety. For instance, the founder's apprehension reflects on the slow potential growth (Gallo, Tàpies, & Cappuyns, 2004) because of the misfit between the perceived values of knowledge generates a distance between the founder and successor. These gaps hamper intergenerational transitional procedures (Lee, Lim, & Lim, 2003), create resistance (Handler & Kram, 2004), confound effective solutions (Massis, Kotlar, Chua, & Chrisman, 2014), and increase a level of tension along the parties' knowledge spectrum. These causes of tension and apprehension have roots in the technical identity theory that explains the differences and their implication (Lee et al., 2003). In institutional theory, it means that the founder uses economic scripts that link the means to the goals, and the heir appears a misfit in that script criteria because of the experience versus formal knowledge. We introduce the following.

Proposition 1: The founder’s educational discretionary distance from the heir predicts apprehension about the SFB succession.

As soon as the situation shifts from the knowledge attention to coordination attention, founder’s apprehension shifts toward the salience of structure of the SFB and the potential role of the heir. The intensity of the attention and distance of the structural issues suggest that it takes the second position after the functional concerns. In other words, economic performance and its means have competition with the normative goals and means. The frequency of attention of the founder to the structural frame makes it the second most salience concern in Table 4 in the Findings section. As shown earlier, the coordination among different actors in the family business triangulates and complicates the situation. For instance, the coordination engages multiple in the relational structures of the founder versus heir vis-à-vis employees, customers, society, relatives, friends and family members. This coordination of the founder with multiple actors, inside and outside the SFB, creates tension in two ways. The founder assumes central identity in the structure of relations, and the founder place the self higher than the heir on this structural hierarchy.

Regardless of the functional salience of the family business in the dominant discourse, the structural status drawing on normative principles induces influence on the founder’s evaluation. For instance, the founder suggests that the heir prefers law and regulation of the market mechanisms to manage the business and coordinate operations. On the opposite, the founder prefers hierarchical and trust-based structural mechanism and coordination processes even if the formal market mechanisms have some relevance. The tension between the two sides becomes vivid on the informal versus formal mechanisms from this narrative:

...if he [son] does not know who our security guard is... If he walks into the office, but the security guard does not open the door for him, it means the guard does not respect him... (WGA_8_Q11)

Another founder holds relations and trust within and outside the family firm in high esteem:

they [customers] still call me if they have a question... even though there are front-line workers and sit in the office and lack the knowledge to answer their questions; they still ask me (laughs). I give you an example. Our Foreman speaks 5 to 10 words; our customers do not accept them [words]. I speak one-word; customers accept it right away. Although they were the same words, trust was missing between the two links. It is the perceived trust that matters. He [son] has to build it. (JGY_14_Q3)

The formal mechanisms to manage the family business expected from the heir versus the relational mechanisms expected from the founder offer a new insight compared with the prior literature. The literature suggests that family business versus nonfamily business operates under different logics. The family business frames relational mechanism; the nonfamily business uses market and formal legal mechanisms (Gallo et al., 2004; Morris, Allen, Kuratko, & Brannon, 2010; West & Schwenk, 1996). These studies from various settings and perspective make an interbusiness comparison between formal and informal coordination structures. Our study shows that within the family business, two logics operate from the founder’s perspectives. The founder appears reluctant to value the formal mechanisms attributed to the heir’s management style. From a different viewpoint, the research signals a similar frame. For instance, one study concludes that heir’s involvement becomes a source of ills for business development (Kaye, 1996). This study confirms the
conflicting rationalities and apprehension. Another set of studies confirms the emotional mechanisms behind this apprehension (Holt & Popp, 2013; Lumpkin & Brigham, 2011). Thus, the quantitative and qualitative patterns lead to the following.

**Proposition 2:** The founder’s normative discretionary distance from the heir predicts apprehension about the SFB succession.

The third source of the founder’s distance from the heir rests on the relative importance and relevance of the actors on the perceived structure. In the current context, the founder’s perception of the SFB succession occurs against the founder self-importance. The measured intensity shows that the founder’s importance appears far stronger than the heir’s importance from the vantage point of the founder. According to the assigned scores to five contextual positions in the narratives of the founder in Table 4, the context of actors takes third place after functions and structures respectively. In the inter-actor relationships, the founder changes his/her identities in response to changes in the corresponding actors. These shifts in the identities enhance the founder’s confidence about the heir’s relationships with others. For instance, earlier, the founder appeared with the identities of the business owner, manager, or an expert. Here, the founder wears hats of multiple identities—Likewise, the founder’s identity shifts between being a parent, relative, manager, citizen, friend, and employee. These situated-specific roles and identities produced multiple meanings. An example shows the distance between the founder as a father and heir as a son in the discourse:

The father asks his son, why the father gives everything to his son, and the son cannot do the most important thing to the father—run the family business he founded for the family. The son replies to the father and says, “the father gives everything to his son, but not a single hug ever.” (AGY_3_Q3)

Prior research points to similar concerns in the family business success. For instance, the founder’s apprehension decreases when the heir grows with the founder in the family business (Gallo et al., 2004). This relational proximity between founders and children fosters relations for smooth flows of other resources such as knowledge transfer and events such as the effective succession of the family business (Kennedy, 1963). A successful business succession depends on the “parent-child relationships characterised by dependency and idealisation, vacillation, and conflict and opposition, respectively” (Gardiner, 1937, p. 526). In the current context, the above quotes show that the interactor relational gap generates an emotional frame for the founder, which translates into the cognitive distance. The appraisal theory refers it to cognitive emotions that elicit a response from the focal actor in relations to the environment (Lazarus & Smith, 1988). Hence, the founder’s environment of heir elicits a response in the following statement.

**Proposition 3:** The founder’s self-else discretionary distance from the heir predicts apprehension about the SFB succession.

The founder’s spatial tension on the physical–social spectrum marks another source of situational device and intensity about the location in Table 4. The spatial attention comes to fourth place in the score pattern. Although terms refer to physical space such as an office, building, city, and country, the underlying meaning reflects social status and situational meaning of the location spectrum. Therefore, we connect the physical–social duality on the same spectrum. The founder argues about the physical and emotional meaning of the location.

I think that the child does not like the family business type. Therefore, he wants to do something else. It seems that they [heirs] do not like the existing family businesses so they cannot do the job of running the family business effectively because they do not want it. They lack passion; we have a passion for the family business. Besides some other reasons for the succession failure, yes, it is the main factor in the family business failure: the child does not like the family business type. (SSL_6_Q1)

Another founder goes on saying,

Our children explore various venues, and after having experienced elsewhere (other places), they would come back to us. . . . if they studied what relates to their family business, it would be quite easier for us. However, so many people (founders) complain that their children do not want to inherit their businesses. For example, my friend’s children, none of them, wants to inherit the family business because they do not care what their father has been doing. One of his children got a degree in Medicine and the other in Law. So, my friend hoped that the one (who) graduated in Law school and is a boy would inherit the business. But it seems uncertain at this time. (SAS_1_Q1)

A third quote directly compares two physical locations but outside Thailand. The founder gives an example from a real observation:

Let’s compare with other countries. SME businesses in other countries can survive compared to those in Thailand. Laws and government support them. Like in Taiwan, there, the percentage of SME businesses is almost 80 % and of big companies is only 20 %. There, they successfully came out of the 1997 financial crisis; here, we faced problems. (AUP_13_Q1)

In the first quote, the founder imagined the personal succession frame but conversed in general term by referring to the heir as “they” and “the child” in abstract terms. Our understanding suggests that this founder recalled personal experience and feelings from the subconscious reasons. In
the second quote, the founder refers to here and there of the children exposure to the physical and spatial locations, and the founder’s conversation revolves around outside family business locations such as firms or institutions. The third quote draws a direct comparison of Thai small business and small Taiwanese businesses to conclude that the location matters. The location implies institutional development and resource endowment.

Earlier literature tackles this issue by comparing family and nonfamily businesses to assess the founder’s apprehension in a different setting (Chalus-Sauvannet, Deschamps, & Cisneros, 2015). Heirs who work in the nonfamily business before joining the family business contribute more than alternative paths, and they pursue careers outside the family firm before returning to the family firm because the professional experience elsewhere contributes to the success to the family firm. Technically, they bring knowledge to the family firms; socially, they bring legitimacy and professional signals to the firm—making the goals and legitimate means. This literature has merits in other national contexts.

Contrary to this literature’s finding, our founder’s apprehension increased when the heir moves from a nonfamily business to the family business. Like the distinction between the family and nonfamily businesses, the location also refers to the notion of psychological space. Japanese scholars refer to this space to “ba” in the business context (Nonaka & Konno, 1998). According to them, the perceptual space induces the founder’s discretionary identity, affecting the level of uncertainty about the future. The social space that reduces the founder’s discretion increases uncertainty and vice versa. Thus, the analysis, quotes, and literature produce the following.

**Proposition 4:** The founder’s spatial discretionary distance from the heir predicts apprehension about the SFB succession.

The temporal attention and intensity come the last on the heretical score of the five measures. However, as noted earlier, the entire project of succession evolves around the temporal concerns and uncertainty. The past and future induce variegated levels of uncertainty for the founder’s apprehension. For instance, one founder said,

... the challenge for the founder is to make sure his son is not going to spoil the long relationship with the loyal client. It is vital to the family business, it was important, and it will be important in the future. (JGA_2_Q7)

This quote reflects similar ideas associated with the quantitative scores for the pre- and post-succession devices in the interviews. The literature has long established that the typical founder believes the family business success depends on history (Gardiner, 1937). Putting together, the temporal devices used in the quote and the literature constitute the duality of experiential and social time rather than pure mechanical time (Giddens, 1990). Although the founder refers to the past and future in mechanical time, the underlying scripts show an integrated version of time. This experience of the past and the yet to experience time create founder’s apprehension because the founder interprets the time as a situational phenomenon; the heir interprets the time as a commodified entity, and the interpreted value signals the past but the heir’s expected value signal the future—the bureaucratic past and entrepreneurial future (Bourdieu, 1963; Giddens, 1990). We draw the following.

**Proposition 5:** The founder’s temporal discretionary distance from the heir predicts apprehension about the SFB succession.

Overall, the five propositions depict the analysis for future research, and the process and product of this study contribute to several levels. First, it alludes to the notion of five types of frames of the situational device. In this sense, it complements the attention theory for decision. Second, it devises the situational device theory (SAT) within the broader perspective of the new institutional theory by the juxtaposed meaning of the scripts and the situational roles from the emergent phenomenon. This interaction between the historical scripts and emerging situation forms a “bricolage of ideas” because it generates new meaning. Third, we complemented the SAT with the founder’s framing of the risk/reward ratios in mental models (affective) based on information retrieval, negative for risk and positive for rewards. Fourth, the SAT framework guided the analysis, it systematically leads to testable hypotheses for future research. Fifth, the detailed account of the systematic processes in qualitative research offers clear guidelines for future research within the SAT framework.

At the policy level, the study offers some lessons in the succession planning as it guides where to for the flaws in the interpretative decisions. Founders, heir, and other stakeholders in the family business may find its relevance and significance. Besides these positive signals, the study has several limitations needing attention. First, the study offers qualitative answers, and generalization becomes an issue for some people. Second, the subjective nature of the interviews has inevitable elements of ambiguities. It lacks the positive elements of observational studies—what happened before, during, and after the succession event. Third, this study excludes high technology sectors and large companies. Fourth, this study captures the phenomena in Thailand, which inherently reflects a different national setting. We suggest a comparative study of three types of national and international levels of analysis.
Appendix A

Description of Cases.

| No. | Case code | Business type         | Location cities | Firm age | Firm size  | Managed by          | Founder |
|-----|-----------|-----------------------|-----------------|----------|------------|---------------------|---------|
| 1   | SAS1      | Stainless steel       | Samutprakarn    | 30       | 50-99      | Husband & wife      | Husband |
| 2   | JGA2      | Glass/aluminum        | Samutprakarn    | 25       | 100-199    | Husband & wife      | Wife    |
| 3   | AGY3      | Gypsum factory        | Samutprakarn    | 16       | 10-49      | Husband & wife      | Husband |
| 4   | RGA4      | Glass/alum/gypsum     | Bangkok         | 23       | 10         | Husband             | Husband |
| 5   | BGY5      | Glass/Alum/Gypsum     | Pathumthani     | 25       | 10         | Husband             | Husband |
| 6   | SSL6      | Stainless steel       | Samutsakorn     | 18       | 10-49      | Husband & wife      | Husband |
| 7   | PGY7      | Glass/alum/gypsum     | Bangkok         | 24       | 10-49      | Husband             | Husband |
| 8   | WGA8      | Glass/alum/gypsum     | Bangkok         | 24       | 10-49      | Husband             | Husband |
| 9   | TCH9      | Chemical manufacturing| Bangkok         | 12       | 100-199    | Wife                | Wife    |
| 10  | VGL10     | Glass factory         | Bangkok         | 22       | 100-199    | Husband & wife      | Husband |
| 11  | SAG11     | Glass/Aluminum        | Bangkok         | 20       | 100-199    | Husband & wife      | Husband |
| 12  | RGY12     | Gypsum factory        | Bangkok         | 28       | 10         | Husband             | Husband |
| 13  | AUP13     | Paper manufacturing   | Pathumthani     | 20       | 10-49      | Husband             | Husband |
| 14  | JGY14     | Gypsum factory        | Nakornprathom   | 28       | 10-49      | Husband & wife      | Husband |
| 15  | TAM15     | Machine tools          | Pathumthani     | 15       | 10         | Husband             | Husband |
| 16  | DRC16     | Construction/consultant| Saraburi        | 17       | 100-199    | Husband             | Husband |
| 17  | ARP17     | Real estate            | Bangkok         | 8        | 10         | Wife                | Wife    |
| 18  | KAL18     | Aluminum manufacturing | Nonthaburi      | 22       | 50-99      | Husband & wife      | Wife    |

Note. Only founders interviewed.

Appendix B

Textual Size of Questions/Answers.

| No. | Questions (Q) | Response (R) | R/Q ratio | Thinking question | Situational question |
|-----|---------------|--------------|-----------|-------------------|----------------------|
| Case 1 | 26            | 2725         | 105       | 3                 | 3                    |
| Case 2 | 19            | 3,874        | 204       | 3                 | 2                    |
| Case 3 | 27            | 5,702        | 211       | 2                 | 1                    |
| Case 4 | 24            | 1664         | 69        | 0                 | 1                    |
| Case 5 | 34            | 1712         | 50        | 3                 | 0                    |
| Case 6 | 30            | 3,370        | 112       | 3                 | 2                    |
| Case 7 | 23            | 1695         | 74        | 4                 | 3                    |
| Case 8 | 27            | 6,811        | 252       | 4                 | 8                    |
| Case 9 | 20            | 3,766        | 188       | 5                 | 14                   |
| Case 10 | 28           | 4,710        | 168       | 3                 | 2                    |
| Case 11 | 17           | 3,095        | 182       | 4                 | 3                    |
| Case 12 | 30           | 3,162        | 105       | 5                 | 8                    |
| Case 13 | 22           | 5,435        | 247       | 2                 | 6                    |
| Case 14 | 27           | 3,851        | 143       | 2                 | 3                    |
| Case 15 | 25           | 3,134        | 125       | 3                 | 3                    |
| Case 16 | 24           | 2583         | 108       | 7                 | 8                    |
| Case 17 | 21           | 2746         | 131       | 4                 | 3                    |
| Case 18 | 18           | 4,418        | 245       | 7                 | 4                    |
| Sum    | 442          | 64,453       | 146       | 64                | 74                   |

Note. The content communicated depended on the relevance, importance, length, depth, and speed of the exchange.
Appendix C

Integrated Situational Device Distance.

|                | Self-identity Weight % | Other’s identity Weight % |
|----------------|-------------------------|---------------------------|
|                | Founder | Founder-specific | Heir-specific | Heir | Founder-specific | Heir-specific |
| 1  Family/kin  | 0.88    | 1.42             | 1 Child/dependent/heir | 2.66 | 0.00 |
| 2  Father      | 0.35    | 1.45             | 2 Daughter       | 0.13 | 1.10 |
| 3  Founder, owner | 0.17   | 2.58             | 3 Graduate       | 0.28 | 0.35 |
| 4  Generation/legacy | 1.57  | 0.21             | 4 Kid            | 0.09 | 0.04 |
| 5  Home, family| 0.11    | 0.21             | 5 Son            | 0.53 | 4.67 |
| 6  I/my/me     | 9.32    | 19.41            | 6 Heir           | 0.50 | 0.32 |
| 7  Mother      | 0.06    | 0.25             | 7 They           | 7.83 | 12.50 |
| 8  Parent      | 1.08    | 0.18             | 8 Young          | 0.13 | 0.60 |
| 9  Predecessor/want | 1.50  | 2.30             | 11 items = 58%   | 21%  | 37%  |
| 10 We (collective) | 3.7    | 7.3              | 8 items = 32%    | 12%  | 20%  |

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Note

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