Radboud Universiteit Nijmegen

THE ROLE OF SPEAKERS WITHIN THE CONTEXT OF CRADLE-TO-CRADLE CAFES

Master Thesis in Business Administration

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Date:	07-01-2021

Abstract

Sustainability is becoming a growing concern among all layers of society. Despite this concern, sustainability struggles to become the norm instead of the exception. Field-configuring events could help. These events provide space for developing industry standards, constructing social networks, and transacting business. An example of such an event is the so-called cradle-to-cradle cafe, aimed at spreading awareness regarding the eco-effectiveness concept of cradle-to-cradle. During these events, speakers are present to provide information about different subjects related to cradle-to-cradle. Speakers are important in shaping the event, for they come up with the content. Nevertheless, speakers are overlooked in literature regarding field-configuring events. This thesis has shed light on the practices of speakers, which resulted in the following research question:

What are the practices of speakers at cradle-to-cradle cafes as field-configuring events before, during, and after the event and how are these practices related?

Qualitative methods were used to answer this question. Several interviews with speakers were held in order to obtain data. This resulted in eight different practices speakers perform before, during, and after the event. Some of these practices were related to another, which was presented in two different roles speakers embody: 1) *formal approach*, and 2) *partly improvising approach*. By mapping practices of speakers at field-configuring events, more insight is provided regarding the complex nature of field-configuring events. More research is suggested, for these events can help in understanding the growing needs for sustainable ways of conducting business.

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1. Introduction

1.1 Introduction of topic

Growth. The dominant ideology of the modern global economy. Nowadays, most products are still made not to last, stimulating consumers to buy new products which drives continuous production (Kopnina, 2018), with depletion of scarce raw materials as an inescapable result. This productive cycle of consumer products needs to be reshaped by transitioning the industry to be less harmful to the ecological system as well as human wellbeing (Lieder & Rashid, 2016). Initiatives as eco-efficiency strategies focus on decreasing the impact of economic activity upon ecological systems while simultaneously maintaining or increasing the value of economic output (Braungart, McDonough & Bollinger, 2007). Nevertheless, while establishing a reduce in resource consumption and pollution and providing temporary economic advantage, these strategies often lack a long-term vision for establishing a truly positive relationship between industry and nature (Braungart et al., 2007).

Less bad is not good enough. Besides having a philosophical character, these words also describe the mindset regarding the concept of cradle-to-cradle. This concept criticises eco-efficiency, as it makes the wrong things last longer (Kopnina, 2018). Many products produced today cannot be recycled or reused, for they are made of virgin materials that cannot easily be separated (Kopnina, 2018). In contrast, the sustainability-based ideology of cradle-to-cradle focuses on eco-effectiveness by stimulating to do the right things in order to improve our positive ecological footprint (Toxopeus, de Koeijer & Meij, 2015). The core of cradle-to-cradle is to generate cyclical metabolisms that enable materials to maintain their status as resources and accumulate intelligence over time, so-called upcycling (Braungart et al., 2007). Cradle-to-cradle includes three main principles: waste equals food, the use of infinite sources of energy, and the understanding of natural diversity (Kopnina, 2018). The concept of cradle-to-cradle was founded by Braungart and McDonough in the 1990s, and further refined until its current form. Since 2005, cradle-to-cradle included a proprietary product certification system with different criteria related to materials, practices, and terminology (Smits, Drabe & Herstatt, 2020). Instead of reshaping the productive cycle of consumer products, cradle-to-cradle aims to close the whole thing by making it circular, by doing so creating a synergistic relationship between both economic and ecological systems. Cradle-to-cradle has a global focus and is not restricted by industry borders (Smits, et al., 2020).

The shift towards implementing techniques like cradle-to-cradle becomes visible in society. However, unlike the enthusiasm sparkled by cradle-to-cradle which is drawing actors into the field of design for sustainability, the concept is not widely known and practiced. So far, only 610 products have been certified according to the cradle-to-cradle principle worldwide (Cradle to Cradle Certified Product Registry, 2020). Research indicates that an organisation, especially those that have developed extensive experience can gain a lot by implementing a cradle-to-cradle design (Bakker, Wever, Teoh & de Clercq, 2010; Drabe & Herstatt, 2016).

In order to widen the interest of the cradle-to-cradle philosophy in the Netherlands, several businesses that engage in developing and producing goods according to the cradle-to-cradle principles have initiated a partnership. This includes the organising of seminars, so-called 'cradle-to-cradle cafes', during which several actual topics in the area of cradle-to-cradle and sustainability are being presented and discussed by inspirational speakers. These cafes are organised at least four times a year and are missioned to spread the general thought of cradle-to-cradle. Besides, they offer a location where actors involved in cradle-to-cradle can interact, share, and interpret information, discuss strategies, and form networks. One could conceptualize these gatherings as field-configuring events, defined as: 'people from diverse organizations and with different purposes assemble periodically to announce new products, develop industry standards, construct social networks, recognize accomplishments, share and interpret information, and transact business.' (Lampel & Meyer, 2008; p. 1026).

Field-configuring events are supporting the coordination of complex field-building processes and the definition of new technological standards among diverse and dispersed actors (Müller-Seitz & Schüßler, 2013). By creating a social space in which individuals can represent both themselves and the organisation, field-configuring events allow individuals greater scope for interaction. Although, simultaneously these individuals are structured in conformity with the institutional logic of the field (Lampel & Meyer, 2008). Consequently, field-configuring events guard individual initiative and creativity from isomorphic pressures of institutional field logics, selecting from the output of these events ideas, or actions that come to be valued within the field (Lampel & Meyer, 2008).

The scholarly interest in how various kinds of field-level events impact on organisations and organisational fields has grown in recent years (Müller-Seitz & Schüßler, 2013). Field-configuring events are rich in terms of collecting data regarding what happens when individuals leave their organisational routines behind (Lampel & Meyer, 2008). The

often ceremonial and dramaturgical character of these events is often carried out by inspirational speakers. However, speakers are heavily overlooked by scientific literature, where more emphasis is being put on organisers and participants of events, despite the shifting of the focus of research onto several actors operating on the micro-level (Müller-Seitz & Schüßler, 2013). This micro-level perspective points out three actors mainly present at field-configuring events: organisers, participants, and speakers. Organisers are important in terms of setting the conditions for the event and determining the goal, which often deals with influencing fields (Lampel & Meyer, 2008). Participants shape the event in terms of simply being there, discussing and interpreting information, investing in networks, and generating ideas (Leca, Rüling & Puthod, 2015). The content of the event is given to them. Speakers can be placed in between organisers and participants. They make up some of the content, add character to it and encourage interaction (Hardy & Maguire, 2010). Without speakers there is not much to present, marking their central position, importance, and influence in shaping the outcomes of the event. Still, research does not capture what they do and intent precisely. Hardy & Maguire (2010) investigated the effect speakers have on each other, leaving out their practices during events. In 2013, Müller-Seitz & Schüßler aimed their research at providing a better understanding of how different kinds of field-level events can be managed by organizations before, during and after their occurrence. This process perspective can contribute to a further understanding how to optimise the spreading of content, by uncovering practices that define the role of actors. Through mapping practices by means of different phases along the process, a comparison can be made between the practices before, during, and after the event. Besides, this perspective provides opportunities for investigating if these practices are related to each other. These potential relations can reveal relevant structures, needed to obtain a better understanding of the roles of speakers during field-configuring events.

As being an important actor during events, it is likely that speakers have a significant impact in shaping the field. Therefore, speakers can be of great value in defining new standards among multiple actors. This is an interesting point of view. Hence, the objective for this research is to determine what role speakers have regarding field-configuring events, by investigating the practices carried out before, during, and after the event and how these are related. Following this objective, a research question is formulated:

> *What are the practices of speakers at cradle-to-cradle cafes as field-configuring events before, during, and after the event and how are these practices related?*

1.2 Theoretical contribution

Field-configuring events are rich settings for collecting data. This rich pool of resources can offer important insights regarding the ongoing tension between individual actor's creativity and their isomorphic, organizational routines. This research is a contribution to the existing literature about field-configuring events. These events can play a substantial role in shaping the emergence and developmental trajectories of technologies, markets, and industries (Lampel & Meyer, 2008). Despite this important role, field-configuring events are still an understudied concept. More intensive theoretical research on the different aspects of field-configuring events can be turning points in further developing our understanding of how different actors can shape the events and thus influence field evolution. Specifically, the role of speakers has not gained a lot of attention in literature. An exception could be Oliver & Montgomery (2008) who researched the relation among speakers, leaving out the individual aspects attributed to them. This research contributes to current literature by focussing on the practices carried out by speakers, and how they are related.

1.3 Contribution to practice

The field of research concerning this thesis is the so-called cradle-to-cradle cafes, an initiative originating from a partnership between several firms that are developing and producing according to the cradle-to-cradle principle. These initiatives aim to further spread the ideas of cradle-to-cradle and informing people about the possible positive ecological and economical effects. Through intensive research on the role of one specific actor, the speakers, more insight can be gained regarding their practices before, during and after these events. As the speakers often have a somewhat loosely coupled role from the management and organization of the event, mapping their practices can potentially provide more insight into their position and influence relative to the aims of the cradle-to-cradle cafes set by the organizers. The result of this research can therefore contribute to defining the role of speakers attending field-configuring events. In the end, some managerial recommendations will be formulated that will be presented to the organisers of these cradle-to-cradle cafes.

1.4 Societal contribution

This research also embodies a societal contribution. The need for more sustainable ways of doing business is rising. Terms like 'circular economy' and 'zero waste' are popping up more frequently in the media. More and more people are joining the societal debate whether the industry should chance towards a more sustainable way of doing business, in order to leave a better world for future generations. Furthermore, the Dutch government aims

to have a fully circular economy in the year 2050 (Rijksoverheid, 2016). Field-configuring events provide mechanisms which enhance the spreading of novel ideas and new initiatives (Lampel & Meyer, 2008). More research is needed to fully understand the nature of these events, how these are managed, and how these can be organized to effectuate the aim towards more sustainable ways of doing business. As this research offers more insight regarding the mechanisms that shape field-configuring events, which potentially positively influences the spreading of cradle-to-cradle, the societal contribution is met.

1.5 Thesis outline

In order to answer the central research question, an extensive literature review of the underlying theoretical constructs of this research will be conducted in Chapter 2. The methodology of this research will be described in Chapter 3. Next, the results and analysis of this study are covered in Chapter 4. Lastly, Chapter 5 covers the discussion of this research in which the main question is answered, and some implications are given.

2. Theoretical framework

2.1.1 Cradle-to-cradle

The concept of cradle-to-cradle criticises the depletion of resources and the environmental impact as a result of unlimited economic growth (Toxopeus et al., 2015). According to Braungart & McDonough (2002) this growth can be used as a driving force behind the transition towards a more sustainable world. Whereas the mainstream of sustainability targets on 'making the wrong things less bad' (Kopnina, 2018), cradle-to-cradle focuses on eco-effectiveness by stimulating to do the right things in order to improve our positive footprint (Toxopeus et al., 2015). It enables the creation of wholly beneficial industrial systems driven by the synergistic pursuit of positive economic, environmental, and social goals (Braungart et al., 2007). The design of cradle-to-cradle focuses on zero-waste, thus closing the loop biologically or technically (Bakker et al., 2010). This design is built on multiple main principles.

First, eliminate the concept of waste. Waste equals food, based on the analogy of metabolism cycles in nature (Toxopeus et al., 2015). Therefore, all materials used in cradle-to-cradle products should be viewed upon as nutrients for other lifecycles in a biological or technical metabolism with a perpetual flow. The biological nutrients express themselves in biodegradable materials with no immediate or eventual harm to living systems. They can be used for human purposes, and safely be returned to the environment to feed biological processes (Braungart et al., 2007). These are for example plant-based materials, which may contain traces of synthetic substances that are completely safe for both nature and humans. These are products of consumption. For instance, biologically nutrients can be found in textiles and shoe soles (Braungart et al., 2007). On the other hand, technical nutrients are materials that have the potential to remain safely in a closed-loop system of manufacturing and recovering, maintaining its highest value through many products lifecycles (Braungart et al., 2007). These are products of service, durable goods that render a service to customers, without material loss during their use phase (Toxopeus et al., 2015). In other words, this service is used by the customer, yet the manufacturer has the ownership.

Second, make use of renewable energy. According to the overview of the cradle-to-cradle certified product standard (2012), energy from renewable sources is paramount to effective design. It is assumed that renewable energy sources are widely and abundantly

available without practical restrictions (Toxopeus et al., 2015). Examples of eligible sources are wind, solar, biomass, geothermal, hydropower and hydrogen power cells.

Third, celebrate diversity. This principle is targeting mainly societal goals in terms of involving employees working at firms participating in cradle-to-cradle. For instance, a firm can push the employee in helping the flourishing of their local ecosystems by supporting local biodiversity, thus striving for a beneficial cultural, social, and ecological footprint. Besides, staff participation is encouraged in creative design and research projects. Overall, technological diversity is key for innovation (MBDC, LLC, 2012). Firms which are active in the field of cradle-to-cradle strive to use social fairness to guide a firm's operations and stakeholder relationships.

Cradle-to-cradle uses a proprietary product certification system with different criteria. These criteria are for example material reutilization and material health which express themselves in sustainable practices (Smits, Drabe & Herstatt, 2020). Besides, there are five progressive certification achievement levels: basic, bronze, silver, gold, and platinum (Cradle to Cradle Products Innovation Institute, 2019). Each level refers to the extent of implemented practices related to cradle-to-cradle. Products which are certified must be recertified after two years (Smits et al., 2020). The institutions that guide and advice firms in the certification process are the Environmental Protection Encouragement Agency (EPEA), and McDonough Braungart Design Chemistry (MBDC), named after the founding fathers of cradle-to-cradle (Drabe & Herstatt, 2016). Because of the increased interest in cradle-to-cradle certification (Bakker et al., 2010), the approving of certificates was handed over to an independent institute. Since then, EPEA and MBDC have a consulting role regarding the certification of products. Getting certified without the consulting service of these two institutions can be quite a challenge (Drabe & Herstatt, 2016).

2.1.2 Cradle-to-cradle as a sustainability standard

The voluntary character of cradle-to-cradle combined with the strict rules for certification makes that this concept can be regarded as a sustainability standard. Sustainability standards are voluntary, predefined rules and methods to systematically assess and communicate the social and environmental behaviour and/or performance of firms (Gilbert, Rasche & Waddock, 2011). According to King & Toffel (2009), sustainability standards serve as a flag to stakeholders that producers who adopt them show a higher socio-environmental performance than uncertified firms also engaging in sustainability. According

to literature, adoption of sustainability standards is mostly based on anticipatory choices and a more rational assessment of future costs and benefits (Smits et al., 2020). Additionally, adoption of sustainability standards can also serve as a response to pressures of the external environment (Álvarez-García, Del Río, Saraiva, & Pires, 2018). For instance, by adopting sustainability standards firms anticipate that they effectively can respond to institutional pressures, thus maintaining legitimacy (Smits et al., 2020). Besides, market pressures such as competitors' certifications or customer demand can push a firm into adoption of sustainability standards.

Different actors and institutions influence the field of sustainability standards. A field can be broadly described as ''*a community of organizations that partakes of a common meaning system and whose participants interact more frequently and fatefully with one another than with actors outside of the field*'' (Scott, 1994; p. 207-208). As shown in the above, cradle-to-cradle is a part of this field. Several actors are active in this field. Managers for example serve as important adopters and users of sustainability standards and are also partly responsible for spreading its existence. They are not unwilling to communicate their freshly certified cradle-to-cradle products to the media (Toxopeus et al., 2015), for terms like sustainability, eco-efficiency, and corporate social responsibility are massively popular lately with the consumer. Other managers within networks love to tell stories about freshly adopted sustainability standards to impress important stakeholders, as a way of conforming with the current institutional and societal norms. Next to adopters, consultants are active in the field which help supporting and guiding the implementation of the sustainability standard. For example, the Environmental Protection Encouragement Agency (EPEA) and McDonough Braungart Design Chemistry (MBDC). These institutions support companies in their effort to develop cradle-to-cradle products. Other actors that operate in the field deal with the publicity and knowledge of the sustainability standard, such as the government and schooling. For instance, the Netherlands is targeting a fully circular economy by 2050 (Rijksoverheid, 2016). Striving this motive, feasible economic models appeared for applying the cradle-to-cradle philosophy commercially (Toxopeus et al., 2015). Other European countries also have dedicated strategies for resource efficiency and circular economy, such as Germany, Finland, and Austria (McDowall, Geng, Huang, Barteková, Bleischwitz, Türkeli & Doménech, 2017). With regard to schooling, lots of support for adopting sustainability standards can be found in scientific literature. Scholars have critically argued that economic growth based on continuous production needs to be tackled dramatically (Isenhour, 2010; Rees, 2010; Victor & Jackson,

2015; Vieira, 2016). In the last couple of years, universities tend to teach more courses that address sustainability related issues. Several university level courses were developed to address circular economy and cradle-to-cradle (Kopnina, 2018). Besides, the EllenMacArthur Foundation has developed multiple helpful educational material to be used at both school and graduate university levels (Kopnina, 2018).

Besides the actors mentioned above, spreading the awareness of sustainability standards also happens through organizing events and seminars. One example is the so-called 'cradle-to-cradle cafe', during which several actual topics in the area of cradle-to-cradle and sustainability are being discussed by inspirational speakers. These events have no entry fee, are open to everyone, temporary, and are missioned to spread the concept of cradle-to-cradle. Theoretically, these events fit the description of field-configuring events, defined as temporary social organizations, professional gatherings, technology contests, and business ceremonies that encapsulate and shape the development of professions, technologies, markets, and industries (Meyer, 2005). These are settings in which people from diverse organizations and with diverse purposes assemble periodically to announce new products, develop industry standards, construct social networks, recognize accomplishments, share, and interpret information, and transact business (Lampel & Meyer, 2008; p. 1026).

2.2 Field-configuring events

Each field-configuring event is different, and therefore they are complicated to classify. According to Nigam & Ocasio (2010; p. 824) events have duration and a history and are best understood not as instantaneous occurrences or happenstances, but as a sequence of overlapping activities and processes that occur over time. In this section, an overview of the most important aspects of field-configuring events will be given.

Field-configuring events provide social interaction by gathering people in one location. This makes them into arenas in which deals are struck, networks are constructed, accomplishments are recognized, and dominant designs are selected (Lampel & Meyer, 2008). Besides, through collecting people from within the field, field-configuring events can enhance, or even undermine existing industries, technologies, and markets. Lampel & Meyer (2008) have unravelled field-configuring events (FCEs) into six defining characteristics:

1. FCEs assemble in one location actors from diverse professional, organizational, and geographical backgrounds;
2. FCEs' duration is limited, normally running from a few hours to a few days;

3. FCEs provide unstructured opportunities for face-to-face social interaction.

4. FCEs include ceremonial and dramaturgical activities.

5. FCEs are occasions for information exchange and collective sense-making.

6. FCEs generate social and reputational resources that can be deployed elsewhere and for other purposes.

Field-configuring events are necessary for coordinating complex field-building processes and the defining of new technological standards among diverse actors (Müller-Seitz & Schüßler, 2013). Furthermore, field-configuring events contribute to organization management theory, by improving the quality of data regarding studying the dynamics that drive collective social and economic change (Lampel & Meyer, 2008). Typically, fields begin as agglomerations of individuals, groups, and organizations that meet sporadically at first, and then come into contact with increasing frequency (Powell, White, Koput & Owen-Smith, 2005). Field-configuring events provide the conditions for fostering competitive and collaborative interactions between these contacts. Depending on the specific local circumstances and individual strategies, they can trigger field evolution (Powel et al., 2005). The competitive and collaborative interactions are an interesting virtue of field-configuring events. By providing a social space in which individuals can represent both themselves and their organizations, field-configuring events allow individuals greater scope for interaction. However, at the same they are structured in conformity with the institutional logic of the field. This creates an effect where field-configuring events protect individual initiative and creativity from the isomorphic pressures of institutional field logics (Lampel & Meyer, 2008). Yet, a selection can be made of the output of social interaction, resulting in novel products, ideas or actions that come to be valued within the field. This is being underlined by Hardy & Maguire (2010), who argue that through creating and providing discursive spaces in terms of special moments in the life of a field and facilitating interaction among field members that do not usually interact, field-configuring events can catalyse chance.

2.2.1 Importance of field-configuring events

Field-configuring events are both the products and the drivers of field evolution (Lampel & Meyer, 2008). They can be of great importance regarding the different states of the field. For instance, during the emergent phase, in which dynamics of markets and industries are build, field-configuring events transform a disperse set of organizations and individuals into a 'community of organizations that partake of a common meaning system' (Scott, Rueff, Mendel & Caronna, 2000). The characteristics of field-configuring events

support the defining of new standards and dominant designs among different kind of actors, which benefits the spreading of sustainable ways of doing business. Field-configuring events may trigger emergent processes that redirect the field's developmental trajectory (Lampel & Meyer, 2008; p. 1026), which can shift the field's position positively. The mechanisms provided by field-configuring events guide the development of technologies, through social interactions which allow individuals to build collective knowledge. Therefore, technologies are negotiated artefacts whose design and dynamics are determined by collective cognitions, instead of an inevitable consequence of institutions which set demand for new products (Lampel & Meyer, 2008). As fields mature, field-configuring events tends to chance towards field replication, with a focus on expanding, refining, and solidifying beliefs and practices (Lampel & Meyer, 2008). Besides, reinforcing the field's position relative to other fields becomes of utter importance.

2.2.2 Actors in field-configuring events

Field-configuring events involve different actors, whom are of great importance. In general, these are people from diverse professional, organizational, and geographical backgrounds (Lampel & Meyer, 2008). The vast majority of actors present at field-configuring events are participants who have nothing to do with organising the event, they are simply visitors. However, that does not mean they cannot be of importance. According to Hardy & Maguire (2010) participants can influence the outcomes of events through the constructing of narratives, as a result of the openness and boundedness of discursive spaces. Second, a growing diversity of participants can induce fragmentation (Schüssler, Rüling & Wittneben, 2014). With less interaction, less exchanging and learning as a result. Participants roughly shape the happenings at the event, but the main characteristics are set by organisers. Organisers often design field-configuring events with the intention of influencing field evolution (Lampel & Meyer, 2008). However, unplanned and unanticipated outcomes can disrupt the intended outcomes, through contingencies lying beyond the control of the organisers (Lampel & Meyer, 2008), highlighting the importance and power of the events' participants. Organisers can set boundaries, fix content, and shape the event to their preferences, which make them powerful actors. Another group of actors, responsible for dispersing topics during the event, are speakers. This group is somewhat understudied in literature. Oliver & Montgomery (2008) researched the impact of speakers on other speakers, resulting in concluding that some events can take a sharp turn following a talk by a

charismatic speaker, providing those who follow with the opportunity to adhere their speech to wat the charismatic speaker discussed (p. 1163).

2.2.3 Process perspective on field-configuring events

Many methodological opportunities can be found in studying field-configuring events. For instance, in managed settings bounded by time a space, researchers can directly observe the sense-making and sense-giving processes that influence field formation and transformation (Lampel & Meyer, 2008). In addition, field-configuring events often offer large quantities of rich and accessible data. Because most field-configuring events are publicly announced and publicized in advance, they leave an explicit and documented record of their proceedings (Lampel & Meyer, 2008). Another advantage of research on field-configuring events can be found in the temporary character. An event is often limited to a few hours or a few days, which makes it possible to conduct a comparison along different phases of an event's course (Müller-Seitz & Schüßler, 2013). This allows the researcher to deeply examine the flux of practices going on before, during, and after the event. In their research, Müller-Seitz & Schüßler (2013) use this process perspective in examining how field-configuring events are managed by organizations.

In the article of Müller-Seitz & Schüßler (2013) it becomes clear that most of the literature is focussed on organisers of events and how they are managed, but not much attention is payed to speakers. Human agency is underresearched as a factor for influencing fields, whereas there is a focus on the creating of discursive spaces and opportunities provided by the field-configuring events itself, despite the claim that presentations and performances can diffuse best practices (Lampel & Meyer, 2008). In terms of the process perspective opted earlier, speakers can be of great importance for shaping field-configuring events.

Before the event, they have preparations to do on what and what not to present and discuss, which is of utter importance. First, speakers need to determine their *choice of topic*. They have to make trade-offs in what to present, for this can of great importance in how their thoughts are perceived. Oliver & Montgomery (2008) explain how little change in a presentation can be of great influence for the extent of interaction during an event. Besides choosing a topic, also selecting the *character* is important. Most literature on field-configuring events note that the character is often dramaturgical (Lampel & Meyer, 2008), without an explanation why. This raises the question whether the outcomes of the event are different when the character is more casual. Lastly, the temporally and spatially bounded

space of a field-configuring event provide an excellent opportunity to propagate an organization's own narratives, while challenging those of competing actors (Müller-Seitz & Schüßler, 2013). This phenomenon could imply that speakers are somewhat *engaged with organisers*, meaning that their content is influenced and adjusted based on the organiser's wishes, instead of telling their own independent narrative. This can be done by having meetings before the event, in which the content of the event is discussed. This engagement can potentially influence the earlier mentioned practices, the choice of the topic and tone-setting discussions.

  During events, opportunities are formed for *collective sensemaking* (Oliver & Montgomery, 2008). This deals with spreading awareness regarding the importance of their topic and trying to unite actors at the same level in terms of how they conceive the topic. This differs from another practice carried out by speakers, who besides collective sensemaking also could engage in addressing certain issues to the forefront, and with their talks they can motivate participants to interact (Henn & Bathelt, 2015). This practice is called *tone-setting for discussion*. Research implies that participants value this discussion as an important part of field-configuring events (Schüssler et al., 2014; Henn & Bathelt, 2015). Through tone-setting for discussion, speakers provide knowledge sharing by inspiring participants to interact with each other. Closely related is the speakers' role as *provider of knowledge as an expert*. This way, speakers can initiate discourse with participants during the event, after their presentation took place by answering questions. The fact that they are regarded as expert makes it easier for them to communicate ideas, for their position makes them more reliable (Lampel & Meyer, 2008).

  After events, speakers could indirectly form and *influence the basis of media discourse*, as many events are reported and reflected by the press or in personal blogs (Schüßler & Sydow, 2015). They can further shape their presentations after the event took place, by referring to it when asked during interviews. Also, like other actors attending field-configuring events, speakers can engage in *forming new networks* (Lampel & Meyer, 2008). These networks can be formed with other actors active in the field, and that are thought to beneficial to the speakers. Besides, from the work of Oliver & Montgomery (2008) it becomes clear that speakers can *serve as a contact* for inspired participants and entrepreneurs to elaborate on their topics even more outside the boundaries of the field-configuring event. Doing this, a far greater understanding of the presented topics is created for the participant, making them more familiar with the topics.

Research, despite focusing on micro-political factors, does not fully encapsulate the role of speakers in the temporary discursive places of field-configuring events. Speakers can have different motives for showing up at events. They can have their own agenda in terms of networking or spreading their innovative ideas and thoughts, or perhaps they are not engaged with the event at all, and just think of it as a fun activity besides their normal range of work. Their level of integration could be important, for a lack of integration among diverse actors may result in no desired field-level change (Müller-Seitz & Schüßler, 2013).

2.3 Cradle-to-cradle cafes as field-configuring events

The objective of this research is to determine what the role of speakers is regarding field-configuring events. In order to achieve this objective, first an extended literature review took place that frames the scope of the research. The field of action regarding this research are cradle-to-cradle cafes, an initiative created by several firms that provides scope for interaction, discussion, and other forms of discourse. The goal of these cafes, which can be seen as field-configuring events based on its characteristics, is to further spread the knowledge regarding the eco-effectiveness concept of cradle-to-cradle, which is all about upcycling and producing zero waste. This is necessary, for we as a society have to move to more sustainable ways of doing business in order to reduce our ecological footprint and minimize the negative impact on the earth's resources. Field-configuring events potentially support the spreading of these new ways of doing business, by providing opportunities in terms of gatherings for members within the field of sustainability standards to discuss ideas, share knowledge, and create initiatives.

While the scientific literature has shifted towards more attention regarding field-configuring events, emphasis on actors figuring at field-configuring events is largely missing. Especially speakers are overlooked. Nevertheless, it could be argued that speakers can be of great influence in shaping field-configuring events. They will be most likely regarded as experts, make up the topics, and stimulate participants to interact with each other. More insight on the role of speakers is needful in order to provide a better understanding in the shaping of field-configuring events, which can result in rising adoptions of sustainability standards such as cradle-to-cradle.

In this research, the role of speakers is determined based on the practices they perform placed in a process perspective: before, during, and after the event, and how these practices are potentially related. It is possible that several underlying structures and relations are

embedded within the practices. Potentially, by looking at the practices together, paths of practices could be entangled which have an effect on each other. For instance, if the speakers are given content by organisers, this could influence the character of the event and diminish the practice of tone-setting for discussion. The relatedness between practices can shed light on how the practices can be more efficiently designed in order to effectuate the primary goal of events. When analysing the practices, underlying structures and relations, knowledge can be added to the already existing literature about field-configuring events. In figure 1, the conceptual model that guides this research can be seen.
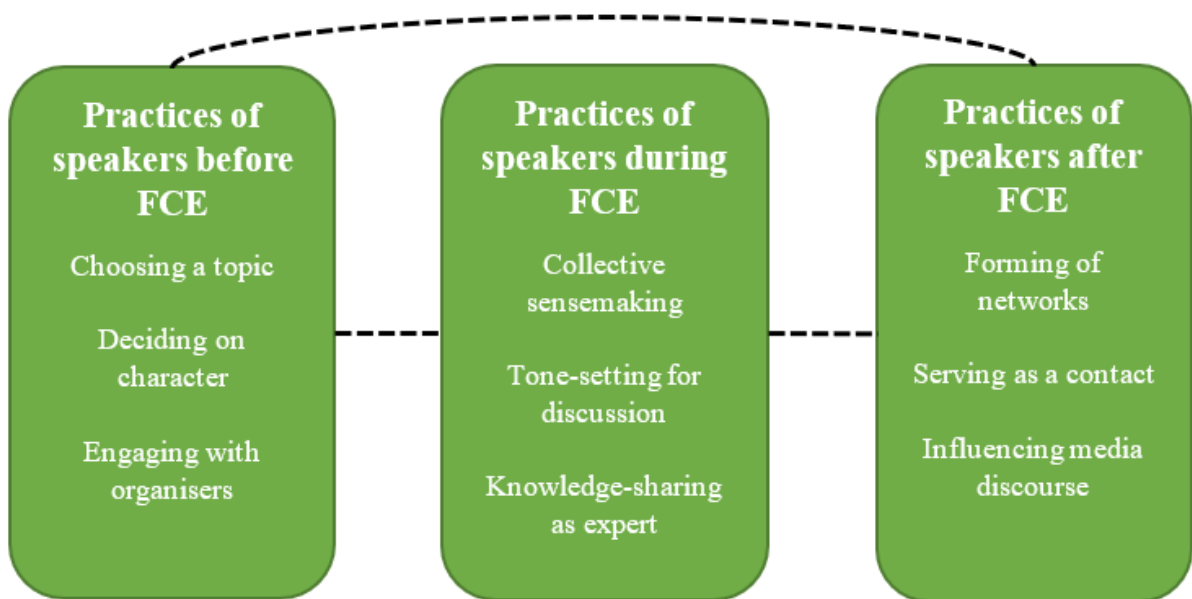

Figure 1: Conceptual model

3. Methodology

In this research a qualitative approach was used in terms of data collection, coding, and analysis instead of a quantitative approach. Due to the exploratory nature of this study an extensive analysis was needed regarding variables and relationships. This fits best with the procedures a qualitative approach entails in terms of in-depth textual interpretation and analysis, which permits a far deeper understanding than procedures used in quantitative approach (Vennix, 2011). By conducting an extensive literature research through different fields of study a theoretical framework was formed. The exploratory nature of this study combined with an a priori approach strengthens the quality and provided direction to the research (Symon & Cassell, 2012). Besides, the complementation of already existing theory by collecting primary data shows similarities to the grounded theory approach (Strauss & Corbin, 1994).

3.1 Empirical context

In order to gain a better understanding of what the role of speakers is at field-configuring events, interviews were done with respondents that spoke during cradle-to-cradle cafes, gatherings where several actors active or interested in the concept cradle-to-cradle can interact with each other. These specific events focus on spreading the general thought of cradle-to-cradle. In 2009, an initiative from several firms resulted in a partnership that is missioned to effectuate this aim. The firms that are part of this partnership are Tarkett (earlier Desso), QbiQ (since 2017), Koninklijke Mosa, and Koninklijke Ahrend. All of these firms develop and produce their products according to the principle of cradle-to-cradle and operate within the construction industry. Their mission is to endeavour a circular economy. The first cradle-to-cradle cafe was realized in 2010, followed by another 43 events since. During this total of 44 events, at least 118 speakers were present, providing a pool of respondents for sampling. In figure 2, an overview is depicted of the cradle-to-cradle cafes and the number of speakers that were present per year. The speakers have different backgrounds regarding their line of work. In this research a distinction was made between: (1) consultants, (2) scientists, (3) architects that use the concept, and (4) other, for instance managers and investors.
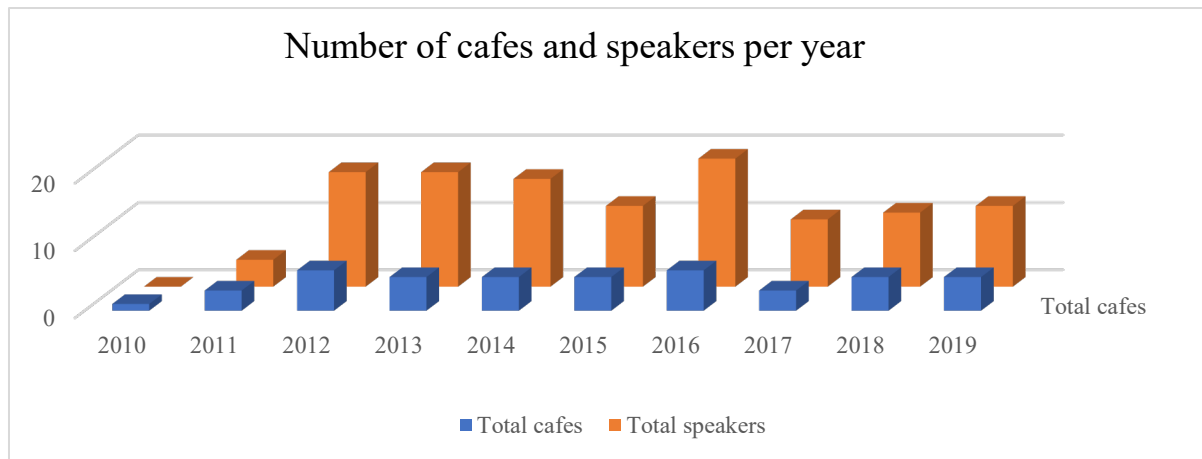
Figure 2: Overview of number of cradle-to-cradle cafes and speakers per year, derived from www.cradletocradlecafe.com

3.2 Data collection

As this research focused on the speakers of cradle-to-cradle cafes, these are the ones that were interviewed. These speakers served as the primary source of data. According to Symon & Cassell (2012), interviews can be used to examine broad issues that are difficult to examine. The nature of the interviews was semi-structured, meaning that the formulation and order of questions is fixed beforehand, but there is room for the respondents to formulate their own answers. By doing so, the respondent was given space to elaborate on topics that were not being fully addressed by the interview questions. Intangible knowledge and experiences were obtained that otherwise would not be discussed. The questions used during interviews were composed in line with the dimensions and indicators from the literature review. Each respondent was presented with the same questions, there was only a difference regarding the probing of topics when the researcher sensed that the respondent had some valuable information that should be elaborated upon. The selection of respondents depended on several criteria. First, the respondent had to be Dutch, as this made it easier to get a better understanding of their role, as penetrating topics would not be disturbed by lingual hindrances. Second, the sample of respondents had to contain distinct backgrounds, as elaborated on in section 3.1. In total, 11 interviews were conducted. An overview of the respondents is given in table 1.

Respondent:	Category:	Date:	Duration:
Respondent 1	Other	06-07-2020	62 minutes
Respondent 2	Consultant	07-07-2020	35 minutes
Respondent 3	Scientist	13-07-2020	40 minutes
Respondent 4	Architect	13-07-2020	48 minutes
Respondent 5	Architect	14-07-2020	65 minutes
Respondent 6	Scientist	20-07-2020	61 minutes
Respondent 7	Consultant	22-07-2020	64 minutes
Respondent 8	Other	22-07-2020	43 minutes
Respondent 9	Other	12-08-2020	47 minutes
Respondent 10	Architect	29-09-2020	55 minutes
Respondent 11	Consultant	30-09-2020	53 minutes

Table 1: Overview of respondents

Besides the primary source of data, also some secondary data was used in this research. These were for instance presentations used during the cradle-to-cradle cafes by speakers taken from the cradle-to-cradle cafe website (https://www.cradletocradlecafe.com/), which had helped in preparing the interviews by the researcher through getting a better understanding in their choice of topic and background. In addition, public digital profiles of respondents served as a preparation regarding what they do and what their line of work was. Together with the interviews, the secondary data can strengthen and validate the character regarding the results of research (Vennix, 2011).

Some limitations that came along the process need some explanation. First, the quality of data obtained through interviews differs a lot. The respondents were chosen based on their line of work, for a distinction was made into four groups. Along the process of contacting and inviting respondents, it seemed logical to look at respondents who spoke as recently as possible. Unfortunately, not every speaker that the researcher contacted was available, thus he had to look for earlier happenings of the events. As some of the events happened in some cases several years ago, memories about the event had already faded away. Second, it appeared that the covid-19 pandemic had some impact. Due to the measures applied by the Dutch government, it was impossible to talk to the respondents face to face. As a result, all the interviews were held via different online platforms, e.g., Microsoft Teams, GoToMeeting, and Zoom. This slightly hindered communication, although enough information was acquired to formulate an answer for the main question. Third, the researcher sometimes had to steer the

interviews into the right direction. During several questions, respondents elaborated based on their enthusiasm in great extent about practical examples of how they pursued sustainability. Although being interesting, the researcher had to remind the respondents what the actual question was, with regard to better penetrating the subject and the time limit of the interview.

3.3 Operationalization

Primary to collecting data, an extensive literature research took place. This resulted in several potential practices carried out by speakers before, during and after the event. The practices derived from literature served as guidance during data collection, which resulted in an initial operationalization, as shown in table 2. The questionnaire was abstracted directly from this operationalization. Nevertheless, the practices that eventually were formed in chapter four of this research differ from those described in the initial operationalization. The explorative nature of this study allowed to tailor the data provided by respondents freely, without having restrictions caused by staying to close to the initial first ideas of what practices of speakers entail. Therefore, in chapter four the practices were named different with respect to the initial operationalization, resulting the names to be more aligned to the content of each practice.

Variable:	Dimensions:	Indicators:	Mainly based on:	In questionnaire:
Practices of speakers at cradle-to-cradle cafes	Before the event	- Choosing a topic	Oliver & Montgomery (2008)	5
		- Deciding character	Lampel & Meyer (2008)	6
		- Engaging with organizers	Müller-Seitz & Schüßler (2013)	7
	During the event	- Collective sensemaking	Oliver & Montgomery (2008)	9
		- Tone-setting for discussion	Henn & Bathelt (2015), Schüssler et al. (2014)	10

		- Knowledge-sharing as expert	Lampel & Meyer (2008)	11, 12
		- Forming of networks	Schüßler & Sydow (2015)	14
	After the event	- Serving as a contact	Lampel & Meyer (2008)	15
		- Influencing media discourse	Oliver & Montgomery (2008)	16

Table 2: Operationalization

3.4 Data analysis

The data collected from the interviews was analysed according to the principles of template analysis. Template analysis balances a relatively high degree of structure in the process of analysing textual data with the flexibility to adapt it to the needs of a particular study (King, 2012). It is a flexible technique, permitting the researcher to tailor the data to match their own requirements.

Prior to conducting the interviews, some a priori themes were conducted in terms of potential practices. This helped in identifying which themes were important and provided a guideline for the interviews. By doing so, the flexibility of the data transformation increased. After conducting the interviews, it was essential to read through the transcripts for familiarization and to check for any possible errors in transcription (King, 2012). In template analysis, the coding is structured in a way that descriptive themes close to the data can be transformed in a smaller number of interpretive themes and then into a few major, overarching themes. The initial coding identified the parts of the transcripts that are relevant to the research question. If some of the codes seem relevant, they were attached to the earlier created a priori themes. When a relevant theme for the code was missing, a new theme was created.

After conducting the initial coding, the initial template was made. For this, only a certain part of the transcripts was analysed. The initial template was later applied to the full data set. The identified themes were grouped into a smaller number of higher-order codes which described broader themes. This technique provided a fair amount of freedom in terms

of different kind of levels, but too many levels would decrease the clarity of the template. The final template was used to interpret the findings.

3.5 Quality of the research

In order to secure the quality of the scientific process attention was paid to several methodological means that achieve a believable study (Symon & Cassell, 2012). In this research, the criteria of Guba and Lincoln were used to maintain the quality. They distinguish four criteria: credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability (Symon & Cassell, 2012).

Credibility refers to trying to demonstrate a good fit between 'constructed realities of respondents and the reconstructions attributed to them' (Guba & Lincoln, 1989; p. 237). This criterion has similarities with internal validity. The most important source of data in this research were interviews. By interviewing speakers with different backgrounds, the reconstruction of reality regarding their role was approached as closely as possible. Through applying triangulation, in terms of comparing different sources of data, during the analysis a better comprehension of the empirical context was accomplished. By means of triangulating and analysing the transcripts, groups of respondents were formed in order to gain a better understanding regarding their level of engagement and their relatedness to each other, an important aspect of this research. Furthermore, the data collection in terms of semi-open interviews secured that the scope of the research is set beforehand but left room for further exploration on several topics provided by the respondent. The literature review guarded the frame of the questionnaire, making sure that the right topics were addressed that needed to be answered in order to formulate an answer to the main question of this research.

Transferability implies that instead of demonstrating that the results are generalizable to other contexts, the researcher provides an elaborate case description that the reader can judge what other contexts - particularly whether their own situation - might be informed by the findings (Symon & Cassell, 2012; p. 207). Nevertheless, to prevent misunderstandings and steer the reader in the right directions, the researcher will anticipate on the generalizability of the results. This research' results could be transferable through other field-configuring events that targets sustainability, standard-setting, and operate in the field of corporal social responsibility. Despite focussing on the cradle-to-cradle cafes, other events with a similar scope also have speakers that shape the initial form of an event.

Dependability refers to demonstrating how methodological shifts and changes in constructions have been captured and made available for evaluation (Symon & Cassell, 2012; p. 207). In other words, this is an audit process. This was achieved by keeping a research diary. In this research, memos were used to evaluate the research setting time to time to question the researcher's actions, in order to stay objective and keep the influence on the research limited. These memos captured the line of thoughts of the researcher, and the possible applied changes along the process.

Lastly is the criterion of confirmability. This refers to proving that results are not simply imaginational figments of the researcher (Symon & Cassell, 2012). Due to the providing of a detailed description regarding the data collection and analysis, the researcher ensured that the results of this research and outcomes are rooted in contexts and respondents, instead of the researcher.

3.6 Research ethics

Several measures were taken to guarantee that this research was conducted in an ethical way. In order to contain transparency with the respondents, the goals of the research were explained beforehand. Besides, it was discussed how data will be handled, analysed, and processed. Furthermore, all respondents participated voluntarily, as forcing them would be wrong. During the approaching of respondents, only those who react positively to the invitation were selected for participating in interviews. After the interviews, if one of the respondents chanced his or her mind and does not want to corporate later in the study due to various reasons, the collected data will not be analysed. Throughout the research, this did not occur.

Second, there was the issue of confidentially. What was said by respondents will only be used for academic purposes. The names of the respondents were not included in the transcripts. By doing so, anonymity was ensured. Transcripts of the interviews were not publicly shared and are only accessible by the first and second examiner. The data was safely stored and encrypted, meaning that the data was encoded into an alternative unreadable form and can only be decoded by those who are authorized, in this case the researcher. By doing so, the risk of hacking was diminished.

Lastly, this research is part of a larger research about field-configuring events executed by the first examiner and the collected data will also be used in this research. This was clearly communicated with the respondents beforehand. This resulted in several questions added to

the questionnaire. Prior to transmitting the data, several adaptions took place to ensure anonymity if the respondent desires so. Given that this larger research is carried out by the first examiner this does not broaden the range of people that have access to the data. As being a part of a larger research, conflict could arise. The researcher was at all times attentive to prevent this by acting in a neutral way as a responsible academic.

4. Analysis

In this chapter the results of the analysis are discussed. First, as the main goal of this research was, the practices of speakers that emerged are elaborated upon. This is done in terms of the process perspective, chronologically: *before*, *during*, and *after* the event. Each practice is described briefly and supported by quotes provided by respondents. Second, it is discussed how these practices are related. The connections that surfaced are subsequently grouped, resulting in two different roles speakers can embody.

During collecting data, the initial operationalization as depicted in table 2 was used. This operationalization served multiple goals. First, it provided some insights regarding possible practices carried out by speakers. By executing an extensive literature research an early idea was generated what these practices could entail. Second, it provided structure and guidance to the interviews, for the questions asked were directly derived from the initial operationalization. Although, the practices as described in this chapter differ from the practices suggested in the initial operationalization. This requires some explanation. The earlier proposed practices were solely described based on literature and served the goal of providing guidance to the questionnaire. While collecting data, but mainly during the analysis, it appeared that the beforehand formulated practices did not correspond with the collected data. The in-depth textual interpretation led to different results, causing other practices to emerge. Thus, as being different from the initial operationalization these practices have different names, in order to fully encapsulate what they are about.

4.1 Before the event

The analysis of the *before* phase resulted in three practices: connecting, interacting, and story building.

4.1.1 Connecting

It was found that prior to the cradle-to-cradle cafes, speakers gather what they regard as useful information about the circumstances in which the event takes place. This is done by reaching out to other actors participating in the event and discovering what the intentions are that shape the event as a whole. In general, it emerged that speakers tried to connect with the whereabouts of the event. This practice of connecting manifests itself in several forms. First, it appeared that prior to the event speakers seek to connect with other speakers. The organisers of the cradle-to-cradle cafe invite several speakers, often from different organizations. Alignment between the presentations of different speakers is necessary to

achieve an overarching theme for the whole event, which can be used to spread information of the content the event is dealing with. As responded 8 stated: ''*We were told what the other speakers were going to present, so we had to come up with a logical order of presentations without any contradictions.*''. Respondent 5 claimed: ''*After a discussion with other speakers, one can conclude a program. Essentially it is about filling a database with people who can tell about related topics. Those connections with other people, they are fun.*''.

Second, speakers participate in connecting with the general idea of the cradle-to-cradle cafe. This requires some explanation. Speakers realised they were asked to present because of their experience in the field. As mentioned earlier, the cafes are aimed towards spreading the knowledge regarding the eco-effectiveness concept of cradle-to-cradle. Although, the boundaries of what entails the theme present at these cafes are relatively broad, and not focussed solely on cradle-to-cradle itself. Speakers have to realise this, and thus connect with the idea that the cafe is about sustainability-linked topics, much broader than one sole concept. For instance, designing healthy buildings, zero waste, and circular economy are very common subjects. Once this connection is made, speakers are more engaged with the general atmosphere surrounding the event. An example was given by respondent 5: ''*I have been asked because of my experience with the concept of cradle-to-cradle. Material passports are part of that. Of course, that is supporting for the concept of cradle-to-cradle, but not the core. In my story, I have made a link between the development of cradle-to-cradle and material passports.*''. Other respondents also elaborated on the broad view upon sustainability in general that exists during the cafes: ''*In that case, it is not a very specific presentation about cradle-to-cradle, for those events are organized relatively broadly. They aim at informing and spreading knowledge, the presentation itself is not very specific.*'' (respondent 8).

4.1.2 Interacting

Many respondents talked about how their preparations before the event eventually formed the final product that was presented. What stood out was the attitude towards the organisers of the cafe, in terms of shaping the subject of the presentation. This attitude can be described as the practice of interacting. Among the respondents this attitude varied. An explanation for this variety may be found in whether or not hosting the event. In order to understand this distinction, it will be briefly explained how a cradle-to-cradle cafe is established. First of all, the organisers of the cafe invite an organisation to host the event. Thus, the location of separate cafes differs. Second, the invited organisation selects a suitable location, often linked to a certain achievement with regard to sustainability. That being said,

respondents that were part of the hosting organization seemed to be less interacting with the organisers in terms of shaping the subject of their presentation. As respondent 1 stated: ''*Subsequently, we said: if you guys want to come to us, we want to deliver the input.*''. Respondent 6, who also was an employee of the hosting organisation, said: ''*These were the most appealing examples which yielded concrete results. We wanted to show those quantitative numbers.*'', explaining that the input and shaping of the presentation was entirely their own work, without influences of the organisers. In retrospect, some respondents experienced a higher level of interaction between themselves and the organisers. They explained that the organisers of the cradle-to-cradle cafe are well aware of some of their projects and that their invitation is based upon that knowledge, meaning that the content of their presentation is more specific and clearer beforehand their preparations. This was being underlined by respondent 4: ''*The choice of topic is coming from the organisers. They know that my project exists.*''. Respondent 7 said firmly: ''*the choice of topic is being set by the organisers.*''. Respondent 5 illustrated a mediating way between the proactive and reactive attitude ''*It could be that they thought about doing something with material passports, and that might be why they came to me. The actual choice of topic is at that moment not being set; they only knew what my experience was.*''.

4.1.3 Story building

Furthermore, a consensus among respondents surfaced in terms of story building. During the preparations, speakers think about what kind of atmosphere they want to create when presenting. The stage given to them provides a powerful tool for delivering messages of any kind, for example propagate your organization's products and services. Remarkably, none of the respondents seemed to have this business-like perspective. This is backed up by respondent 2: ''*If the purpose is pure commercially, then you just tell people what you are doing with your business. Consequently, you end the session with what you can offer people. We did not do that.*''. It seems that the respondents felt some sort of responsibility for spreading the general thought of sustainability instead of gaining publicity or advertising their organization. This responsibility expresses itself in a both informative and inspirational narrative. Respondent 1 underlined this by stating: ''*We went from a theoretical framework in terms of why we apply this policy, to how we do it.*''. The respondents have a similar structure in mind when preparing the presentation: this was our predetermined goal, and this is how we achieved it. The achieving part is often backed up with examples. This creates an inspirational message of how sustainability projects can be successful in terms of achieved results. The

informative and inspirational story building is also driven by the passion the respondents have with regard to corporate social responsibility. Respondent 6 embodies this message: ''*It is a challenge, to tell something people benefit from. To tell something which inspires people, which is useful. I always try to bend it in that direction.*''. The inspiring story building has no limits apparently, according to respondent 3: ''*I've told some holistic story about saving the world.*''. Also, the respondents said that they sometimes intend to add some personal touch in the narrative, in order to foster inspiration: ''*But, I always try to make it personal in the moment. So, I always try to have interaction. Where am I, who is my audience, what is special, what have I been through. I try to inspire the people across the room.*'' (respondent 7). Another finding that invigorates this informative and inspirational atmosphere of the story building, is the enthusiasm surrounding the respondents. During the interviews, respondents loved to elaborate in great extent regarding their line of work, and how it fostered sustainability. They want to spread a message about make the world a better place, without being smug about their own achievements.

4.2 During the event

This analysis continuous with the practices *during* the event. Again, the findings resulted in three practices: role representing, relating, and integrating.

4.2.1 Role representing

Whatever message speakers are trying to deliver, choices are made regarding the way speakers are going to present themselves. It appeared that speakers have different roles while attending the event. First, there is the role of the facilitator. These speakers have for instance hosted the location of the event and are well aware of their responsibility with regard to guiding the event into the right direction. Besides presenting, these speakers serve as a contact for participants. Speakers who adopted this role are actively involved in the process of preparation and have to make sure that the outcome of the event is in accordance with the pre-arranged plans. It appeared that this role of facilitator shifts the focus into organising aspects, instead of being informative and inspirational. The location, the other speakers, the circumstances: all have to be aligned in order to make a good impression with other participants. This mitigates the effect of exchanging knowledge and experiences by the speaker, while invigorating a threshold for organizational awareness in terms of how the business is carried out.

Second is the role of delivering content. These speakers use their knowledge and experience in their field of work as a tool for delivering information. During the collecting of data, when being asked if they regard themselves as an expert, most respondents claimed they do not. The broad character of sustainability diminishes this label to be given. Speakers have quite some knowledge, but more in a convergent way instead of divergent. As the event offers several sustainability-linked topics, it is more humbling to state for speakers that they just know a lot of stuff, without being regarded as an expert. It was found that speakers are more occupied with delivering content without being labelled as a know it all. Although the message speakers tried to deliver is partly inspirational, the more general thought can be described as: these are my experiences, do whatever you want with it. This was being underlined by respondent 1: *''Of course, some part of me wants to convince the public. But the emphasis is placed more on informing instead of convincing. With regard to that, trade-offs were made. What they do with the information provided by us, that is up to them''*.

4.2.2 Relating

Participants attending events come in all shapes and sizes. Most of them are genuinely interested in the presentation itself, for the advertised topic awakes their enthusiasm. They want to be blown away by numbers, stories, and experiences. Some of them are fortuitously around and will attend a presentation for they have simply nothing better to do with their time. Most of the time, these people are looking at their phone and pay no attention to the narrative.

It was found that speakers relate to the participants differently. This is influenced by several characteristics the participants have as a group. Different characteristics present among participants influences the practice of relating to them by the speakers during the event. First, there is a thin range of participants coming to the cradle-to-cradle cafes. This thin range in participants was expressed by several respondents. It appeared that most of the time the same participants are present: *''During my presentation, I saw a lot faces among the public that I recognized. It is a small world, some kind of little club.''* (respondent 2). This might be explained by the fact that the general concept of practicing sustainability is not widely spread across individuals. Besides, it appeared that participants often are like-minded. This seems to be somewhat problematic. The respondents stated that during their presentations there is a lack of discussion. For example, respondent 6: *''There were some questions. There is a lot consensus about the subject. Consequently, there were some critical questions about how much money it will cost, and if it is meaningful.''*. Respondent 11 even takes it a step further: *''When someone is really sceptical, that person is not aligned to my*

thoughts. If you are the only person sitting in a room who is not aligned, then the discussion is over before it began.''. It seems that speakers had some difficulty relating to participants due to these characteristics. Participants play thus an important role in shaping not only the event, but also the presentation.

It appeared that mostly people who are interested in some part of sustainability are attending the cradle-to-cradle cafes. This was being underlined by respondent 5: *''I think that most of the people go to these events already have affinity with the subject, so I don't really have to convince someone''*. As the majority of the participants are familiar with the concepts that are being presented, the speakers tend to be telling about application. They mostly talk about how they have done it in projects, and how they experienced it. This embodies a both inspirational, but in particular an informative way of presenting. For instance, as respondent 10 stated: *''We just wanted to show how we as an organization did it.''*. Subsequently, respondent 3 said: *''This is how we do it, and people themselves can decide what to do with it. We do not preach one perfect way of doing it, instead we told how we achieved our goals''*.

4.2.3 Integrating

Coming to an event as a speaker is not just simply stepping up a stage and telling something you have prepared beforehand, there is more to it. With a lot of knowledge and experience surrounding speakers, they want to integrate that during their attendance. This integration manifest itself in several forms. First, it appeared that speakers value the various talks they have with participants and other speakers, after their presentation took place. Besides, during their presentations speakers sometimes referenced to other speakers, trying to include the other speaker's stories. During the talks afterwards, participants ask questions to further explore the subject in terms of their own interest. This tailoring of specific knowledge can lead to new insights in both the speaker and participant. This was stated by respondent 6: *''Often, interesting people are attending the event. I can take advantage of that''*.

Second, it was found that the circumstances for exchanging experiences and knowledge are facilitated by the organisers, in terms of having several drinks afterwards. This creates a platform in which speakers and participants are encouraged to interact with each other. This form of integration is considered as networking. Speakers appeared to value this open space but highlighted that the focus is on informing and inspiring, not so much on networking. As respondent 9 stated: *''Of course, there is space to make connections with other people. But we have our own project. I mainly try to be informative about what we are*

doing.''. This statement uncovers an interesting point of view. Almost everyone attending the event, including speakers, are somewhat working with the concept of sustainability. In order to create more grip on discovering new practices to manage this relatively new concept, one could expect intensive collaborations with other pioneers. It appeared that speakers like to inform and inspire, but there is a lack of attention regarding the forming of networks in order to spread knowledge which could result in making the managing of sustainability more effective and efficient. A possible explanation for this phenomenon may be found in the fact that speakers at cradle-to-cradle cafes are not professional, fulltime speakers. Sure, it is fun to meet new people and inform them about their line of work. But most of their work is done with their own team, their own colleagues and most important of all, their own ideas, and principles.

4.3 After the event

This is the last phase of the process perspective. The findings are presented in two practices: involving and reflecting.

4.3.1 Involving

It appeared that after the event speakers are still involved with the whole process, although this manifests itself in different ways. It was found that the majority of the respondents had a less involving attitude after being at the event. After all, their story is told. This should not be interpreted in a negative way. It indicates that speakers are fully open for further communication with participants who contact them later on. A simple question or more information regarding the subject, that is not a problem. On the contrary, the respondents claimed they love to elaborate on their expertise. But it simply does barely happen. With only several exceptions, most respondents claim they are not contacted afterwards, despite providing participants with their contact details. The respondents who were approached afterwards, stated that this did not result in any kind of partnership or further collaboration. Sure, the network of speakers becomes more extensive, but no direct result in terms of exchanging ideas and having a discussion is visible. This was illustrated by respondent 3: *''Two participants approached me afterwards and told me that I had quite a nice story that day. They told me maybe they could do something with it. Later on, it did not work out.''*. Or, as respondent 1 stated: *''Yes, several connections were made that day. But I have no memory of who that were. I have forgotten all of that.''*. The more involving speakers liked getting constructive feedback. This practice of involving was mainly visible in speakers who also facilitated the event. They consider hosting the cradle-to-cradle cafe as having a

positive effect on their publicity and brand awareness. This is being underlined by respondent 6: *''The cradle-to-cradle cafe is one of those beautiful events to show ourselves, and how we pursue sustainability. It was very valuable''*. But despise profiling their own organization, once again these respondents highlighted the importance of informing and inspiring about their line of work and how they achieve their goals.

4.3.2 Reflecting

The speakers coming to these events are professionals. They like their work, have an interest in sustainability, and want to make the world a better place. These abilities establish themselves in a thorough reflection in several ways. First, speakers acknowledge they are still learning every time they present. The preparations prior to the event, the reactions from the public, their attitude during the drinks: these are all small learning moments. As most of the respondents have spoken multiple times at events, they pursue the goal of improving their performance. After all, a better performance leads to a better understanding of the subject by the participants which positively influences the spreading of the importance surrounding the concept of sustainability, which is valued by the speakers. Besides, despite being contacted rarely afterwards as told earlier, speakers want other participants to remember them. As respondent 1 stated: *''I look back at the event as being positive. We spoke, they now know we exist. The presentation was good, we received some nice feedback.''*. This form of reflection can be performed individually, or in a more collaborative way. It appeared that it was mostly done in private, without involvement of other people. The respondents who reflected collectively stated that it was carried out in a formal way with the organisers, through digital ways of communicating, for instance per email.

Second, speakers not only reflect on their own performance, but they are also interested and concerned with the conditions of the cradle-to-cradle cafe itself. It was found that speakers have several remarks about the organising part of the process. This conscious involvement highlights their passion regarding the concept of sustainability. For example, respondents would encourage more presence of regional and nationwide media. As respondent 9 stated: *''I have been interviewed several times, and this gained a lot of attention. Unfortunately, this did not happen after this particular event. That is a shame, because the cafe means a lot and has some good intentions.''*. Respondents claim that more attention through different channels would further effectuate the aim of spreading awareness not solely of cradle-to-cradle, but the concept of sustainability in general. Furthermore, the respondents regarded the event itself as quite unique, despite attracting the same kind of public over and

over again. It appeared that respondents looked upon the cradle-to-cradle cafe as an identity having an ideological character, without much profiling from the organisers themselves. This fosters the general thought of building a more sustainable world together, with a holistic view that it cannot be done individually. As respondent 6 stated: ''They (the organisers) really pursue cradle-to-cradle and sustainability. I notice that pursuing myself, at my own organization I want to stimulate sustainable development. By doing so, one immediately recognizes the need for others, for you cannot do it on your own. You need partners for that.''.

4.4 Different roles

In the above, it was discussed which practices emerged as a result of analysing the input provided by respondents. The use of a process perspective allowed the researcher to allocate the findings among three different phases: *before*, *during*, and *after*. These phases were analysed individually, as each phase having its own boundaries. While the boundaries of what a phase entailed appeared to be solid, it appeared that some practices embedded within these phases are influencing each other. Hence, connections are present among different phases. These connections presented themselves mostly during the formation of the practices and already slightly surfaced during earlier stages of this research, especially while collecting data. Uncovering these connections led to different profiles, or roles speakers can embody. By means of grouping connections, two roles are created. Defining these roles happened not solely by means of the found connections, but they were also shaped along the process. Thus, during collecting data it became clear some distinction between speakers exists. The two roles are described in terms of the connections between the practices and can be regarded as approaches, implying that some overlap might be present, they are not absolutes.

First of all, it should be mentioned that the main differences between speakers appeared while analysing the *before* and *during* phases of the process-perspective. In the last phase, too few variations were found among speakers' practices. This phenomenon will be further elaborated upon in the last chapter. The practices that were found in the first phase, namely *before*, were (1) connecting, (2) interacting, and (3) story building. For the second phase, *during*, (1) role representing, (2) relating, and (3) integrating were identified.

4.4.1 Formal approach

The first role is called formal approach. An overview of the connections that led to the formulation of this role are illustrated in figure 3.
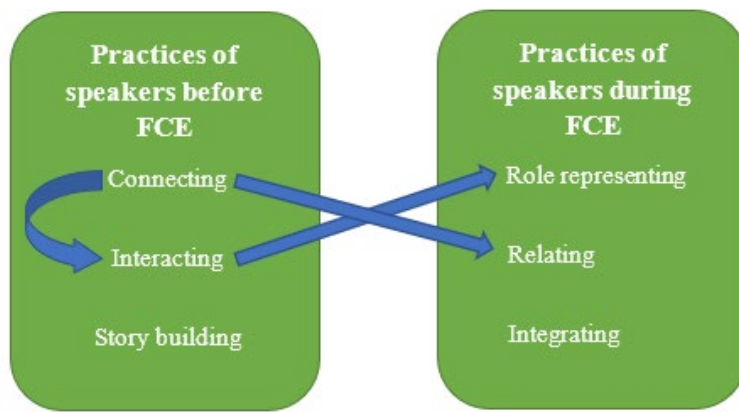
Figure 3: Connections among practices that formed the formal approach.

4.4.1.1 Connecting and interacting

As mentioned in the analysis of the *before* phase, the practice of connecting is relatively broad. A distinction can be made between speakers who are more connected to the event in terms of aligning presentations and collaborating with other speakers, and those who do not. It appeared that those speakers who put more effort in connecting have higher levels of interacting, the second practice of the *before* phase. This results in a closer collaboration with the organisers, which influences the choice of topic and shaping the content of the presentation. That being said, it appeared that these speakers tend to have a more formal approach during their presentation. Their appearance is more uptight and guided, providing less space for deviation caused by participants' influence, or spontaneous ideas generated by themselves. A possible explanation for this somewhat more formal representation may be found in the speakers' humility. They are honoured to be such an important part of the whole event, as they realise the importance of their presentation in terms of potentially cognitively influencing the participants.

4.4.1.2 Interacting and role representing

The second connection that was found crossed the boundaries of the *before* and *during* phase. It appeared that speakers who engage in higher levels of interacting, which was described as the amount of collaboration with organisers, tend to adopt a more facilitating attitude, part of the practice of role representing. This phenomenon occurs when speakers are also the hosts of the event. The respondents who were part of this group mentioned that better preparation as a consequence of striving to a well organised event, due to pressure they experienced, resulted in less elaborate questions asked during the presentation. This pressure originated from the speakers themselves and was not necessarily applied by the organisers. They simply wanted to show that, as a representative of the hosting organization, they are

capable of putting the whole event together. That being said, the questions coming from the participants were more focused on the content of the speakers, with little deviation into other subjects. Thus, by providing in depth information about the chosen content, the questions were guided into a certain direction. This most certainly was not a goal for the speakers, as their main goal is to have a well-organized event, and to just inform and accessory inspire participants. Nevertheless, the formal and thoroughly substantiated character of the presentation seems to cognitively shift the questions from a general, to a more specific view.

4.4.1.3 Connecting and relating

The practice of connecting was not solely about reaching out to other speakers, but also getting to know the whereabouts of the event. It was found that some relation exists between this part of the practice of connecting, and the practice of relating, part of the *during* phase. Speakers who did not know of the existence of the cradle-to-cradle cafe, tend to invest more time into the preparations of the presentation. This has some similarities with the connection described in the above, as this results in less elaborate questions. Although, this relation manifests itself in the relating with participants. The extra time put into the preparations results in a more formal character of the presentation. A possible explanation for this phenomenon may be found in not solely knowledge of the cradle-to-cradle cafe as a whole, but specifically knowledge of participants. Speakers who are already engaged and informed with the circumstances coming along with the cafes, are well aware of the kind of participants in the room. These speakers focussed more on relating with them, trying to awaken their enthusiasm for sustainability and delivering an inspirational message. Speakers who have no idea what kind of people are attending the event are more focussed on delivering content, for they are not aware of the often already present interest in sustainability among participants.

4.4.2 Partly improvising approach

The second role is called the partly improvising approach. An overview of the connections that led to the formulation of this role are illustrated in figure 4.
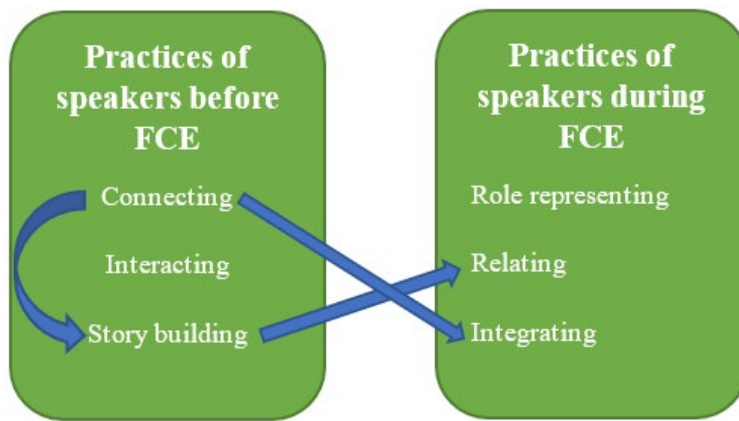
Figure 4: Connections among practices that formed the partly improvising approach.

4.4.2.1 Connecting, story building, and relating

Speakers who adopt this role are more or less informed about the conditions of the cradle-to-cradle cafe, described as the practice of connecting. It became not quite clear why speakers had this knowledge beforehand, but the most obvious explanation is that they spoke earlier at the event or were part of the public as a participant. It appeared that such knowledge resulted in a more inspirational mindset, as these speakers already experienced the present atmosphere. During their preparations in the *before* phase, the story building tends to slightly shift into a less tight presentation. This does imply that the content is set beforehand, but space is provided for personal stories and inspirational messages. In other words, the character is semi-structured. In contrast to the formal approach, relating, part of the *during* phase, is considered as a main objective. This results in an approach that has beforehand provided room available for improvising. The story building, when becoming more inspirational and focussed on communicating with participants, leads to more relating with participants. Speakers who did so, embraced the interaction with participants as a tool to further elaborate on the importance of sustainability, instead of solely providing information about their line of work.

4.4.2.2 Connecting and integrating

Another characteristic relationship that shapes this role can be found with regard to the practice of connecting in the *before* phase, and the practice of integrating in the *during* phase. It seems that collaborating with other speakers create a more comprehensive event, in terms of integration. During the preparations, a discussion with other speakers takes place with regard to the content of the presentation. Although not being an intensive cooperation, this discussion serves as a way of aligning content resulting into more or less integrated presentations with

references to each other. Despite having small impact on each other's story building, still conditions are created for spreading an inspirational message. This differs from the earlier mentioned role, where the connection is closer to the organisers instead of other speakers. It is interesting that this type of the practice of connecting influences the *during* phase differently. Connecting to other speakers seems to lead to a more partly improvising approach, whereas connecting to organisers seems to lead to a more formal approach. Thus, the practice of connecting appears to be an important catalyst in terms of the initial product that is presented, with a noticeable difference between connecting with organisers, or other speakers.

4.4.3 Respondents and roles

In this research, respondents were divided among four different groups: (1) consultants, (2) scientists, (3) architects, and (4) other, for instance managers or investors. Based on their input they are allocated to a role they have the most similarities with. In some cases, respondents' answers were not unambiguous enough to be placed to a specific approach, and therefore these respondents are allocated in between the two approaches. As is illustrated in figure 5, the two scientists both fit the characteristics of the partly improvising approach. This might be explained by their nature, as scientists in general are used to giving presentations. Respondents who were grouped under other, all fit the formal approach. As this group is quite dispersed in terms of profession, no clear explanation could be found why they all fit the formal approach. Architects appear to opt mostly a partly improvising approach, with two out of three embodying this role. Consultants are more divided among the different roles, demonstrating the biggest differences of all the groups.

Respondent	*Profession*	*Formal approach*	*Partly improvising approach*	*In between different approaches*
Respondent 1	Other	X		
Respondent 2	Consultant			X
Respondent 3	Scientist		X	
Respondent 4	Architect		X	
Respondent 5	Architect			X
Respondent 6	Scientist		X	
Respondent 7	Consultant	X		
Respondent 8	Other	X		
Respondent 9	Other	X		

Respondent 10	Architect		X	
Respondent 11	Consultant			X

Figure 5: Speakers allocated to roles

5. Discussion

In this chapter the answer to the main question is given. Consequently, some theoretical implications are provided. Next, some practical implications are formulated, followed by a reflection.

5.1 Conclusion

Field-configuring events have become indispensable in accepting and coordinating new technological standards such as cradle-to-cradle among diverse and dispersed actors. These events rely heavily on human capital, especially speakers. Nevertheless, literature about field-configuring events is mainly focussed on other actors, for instance participants and organisers (Leca et al., 2015; Müller-Seitz & Schußler, 2013; Schüssler et al., 2014). As a consequence, the role of speakers is being neglected. This research endeavoured to bridge this gap, by proposing the following research question:

What are the practices of speakers at cradle-to-cradle cafes as field-configuring events before, during, and after the event and how are these practices related?

As the main question implies, the practices of speakers were studied in a process perspective. Besides providing a clear overview, this perspective allowed the researcher to investigate the extent to which these practices are related. As a result, the following eight practices emerged:

- *Before*: (1) Connecting, which is expressed through collaboration and cooperation with other speakers and connecting to the whereabouts of the event. Furthermore, there is a connection with sustainability linked topics, not solely the concept of cradle-to-cradle.
(2) Interacting, described in terms of how speakers react to influences of organisers and the differences embedded within whether or not hosting the event.
(3) Story building, explained as mostly inspirational and informative due to feeling responsibility for spreading the general thought of sustainability and driven by passion. No business-like perspective was present among speakers.

- *During*: (4) Role representing, where a distinction is made between facilitating the event, and delivering content. It was found that speakers have a lot of convergent knowledge and experience that is used as a tool for providing information.
(5) Relating, which is about involving and communicating with the public. It appeared that the thin variety in backgrounds among participants resulted in a lack of discussion.

(6) Integrating, where several circumstances surrounding the event are combined in order to generate practices like networking. Speakers admitted they valued talking with participants afterwards their presentation, both formal and informal.

- *After*: (7) Involving, a practice regarding the attitudes after the event. Some speakers who are described as more involved liked getting constructive feedback, whereas the less involved speakers had no further intentions with the outcomings of the event.
(8) Reflecting, a process of thought involving evaluating the presentation. Speakers reflect on their performance but are also concerned with the conditions of the event.

Finally, it was found that these practices had some relations, which expressed themselves in several connections. Based on these connections, combined with earlier stages of this research such as data collection that already provided some guidance, two different roles are formed: (1) formal approach, and (2) partly improvising approach. The connections that lead to these characterizations are only present between the *before* and *during* phase, causing the practices as defined in the *after* phase to be ignored with regard to the two different roles. The first role, the formal approach, seems to be applied by speakers who are more connecting with organisers, resulting in more interaction. This connection is made within the boundaries of the *before* phase. Furthermore, a connection can be found between the practice of interacting and role representing. It appeared that better preparation caused the questions asked by participants to be less elaborated and more focussed to the presented content, resulting in less generalizability regarding the broad field of sustainability. Next, a connection was found between once again the practice of connecting and the practice of relating. The second role, the partly improvising approach, is characterized by a connection between the practices of connecting and story building which takes place in the *before* phase, and relating, as part of the *during* phase. Through consciously preparing a semi-structured character, some open space during the presentation is guaranteed usable for interaction, underling the partly improvising approach. Next, a relation was found between connecting and integrating, practices respectively allocated to the *before* and *during* phase. It appeared that connecting with other speakers resulted in more integrated presentations. As the practice of connecting has influences in both roles in different ways, it seems to be an important antecedent that shapes the eventual presentation.

5.2 Theoretical implication and suggestions for further research

This research shed light on field-configuring events in different ways compared to already existing literature. By researching speakers' practices, more insights are gained about these important and mostly overlooked actors. This provides reason for discussion.

5.2.1 Implications for literature about FCE's and speakers

Literature about field-configuring events has grown exponentially over the last few years (Lampel & Meyer, 2008), yet the concept is still understudied. This research adds value to this existing literature in terms of taking a closer look at other actors that could have an influence in shaping field-configuring events. While most literature focusses on actors such as organisers and participants (Müller-Seitz & Schüßler, 2013), speakers are often neglected. By researching one specific actor thoroughly, the results of this study can be compared or even combined with earlier performed studies about field-configuring events. As a result, a better understanding of individuals' influences related to field-configuring events can be obtained. Consequently, this research resulted in defining two different roles that speakers embody. It was found that speakers can shape events by applying different roles. As theoretically pioneering as this research is in terms of speakers' influence at field-configuring events, the focus is more targeted towards uncovering practices. It is highly recommended to carry out more research on speakers' roles, for they have the opportunities, tools, and abilities to spread new sustainability standards among participants.

Lampel and Meyer (2008) state that field-configuring events often have ceremonial and dramaturgical activities, without providing an explanation why. In this study, it was found that *before* the event non such pressure was applied by the organisers to create these kinds of activities. The atmosphere during the cradle-to-cradle cafe, although being more inspirational and informative instead of ceremonial and dramaturgical, came often from the speakers themselves as being their own initiative, simply encouraged by enthusiasm about their line of work. The lack of convincing and dramaturgical activities might be explained given the content of the cradle-to-cradle cafes, which is sustainability. Nowadays, sustainability is considered the norm instead of an exception. A societal shift happened, placing sustainability in a central position. This mitigates the needs for convincing, dramaturgical activities. Besides, the lack of these activities might be explained given the fact that these cradle-to-cradle cafes are organised once every few months. By doing so, events lost a unique one-time atmosphere, due to the event becoming more common and recognized actors operating in the field.

Furthermore, it is assumed that the few research existing on speakers at field-configuring events is about professional speakers. Oliver and Montgomery (2008) investigated the connections among 29 speakers, implying that they are professionals, in other words, speaking at conferences is their line of work. In this research it is quite different. This research contributes to literature by studying non-professional speakers at field-configuring events, one respondent excepted. The majority of speakers were asked because of their experience within the field of sustainability, not because they are professional speakers. Of course, the nature of the studied events is small-scaled and therefore not fully suitable for professional speakers which are expensive. This research found that non-professional speakers under the studied circumstances often successfully deliver their message. That being said, a suggestion for future research can be investigating the effect of different speakers, both non-professional and professional, on participants in terms of delivering their message and how they can optimally make use of the temporarily and bounded space provided by the characteristics of the field-configuring event.

5.2.2 Process perspective

During this research, it was found that speakers have certain practices that are carried out along the process that a field-configuring event entail. A first idea of what these practices entail was generated by literature exploration. This resulted in an initial operationalisation, which was used to provide guidance with regard to the questionnaire. Besides, this allowed the researcher to acquire knowledge about the content of practices prior to collecting data, which helped improving the overall quality of the interview. Although, the encapsulation of practices in terms of names given to them in the initial operationalization did not quite correspond with the data. It appeared that other names were more suitable given the descriptions of respondents. In order to ensure a better fit with regard to the data, the researcher chose to alter the names given to the practices. This was done during the analysis, as described in chapter four. In addition, these new names were more suited for describing connections found among different phases of the process perspective, thereby securing the consistency of this research. By obtaining a process perspective a more comprehensive framework can be conducted in order to fully understand exactly how speakers can shape certain events and influence field evolution. The process perspective was directly derived from the study of Müller-Seitz and Schüßler (2013), in which managing unexpected and organised events was researched. During their study, it was found that the *after* phase existed out of activities such as learning and systematic knowledge transfer. However, during this

study the *after* phase appeared to be thin and not as rich in data as the *before* and *during* phase. The beforehand formulated questions for the interviewees did not generate satisfying answers. Short denying responses were given, mitigating the formulation of practices during the analysis. Most interviewees claimed not so much was done after the presentation, besides in several cases having a small reflection with the organisers or receiving some interest from participants. This difference may be explained given the focus of this research, namely only speakers. They are tasked with preparing in the *before* phase and presenting in the *during* phase. In the phase *after* the event, maybe some time is spent on receiving feedback or a short reflection takes place, but that is it. Perhaps an explanation can be found giving the fact that these speakers do this for fun, and not really much personal gains are made. They like telling their stories, with the goal of informing and inspiring people. Also, no business-perspective was present. The researcher's guess is that this absent perspective influences actions taken *after* the event. After all, the speakers that were interviewed are fulltime employees. Although they like to elaborate about their work, they simply do not have the time to talk to every interested participant with no guarantee for a future collaboration. Besides, from a participant's view, one could imagine they find the presentation interesting, but not immediately are blown away and fully convinced.

Despite some difficulties experienced with the *after* phase, the process perspective proved to be useful in mapping practices performed by speakers. In their research Oliver and Montgomery (2008) investigate the impact of speakers on other speakers. Although, the scope of research was limited to the impact within the boundaries of the *during* phase. In addition to their research, this study found by investigating practices also happening *before* and *after* the event, that impact of speakers on each other also occur *during* events. Nevertheless, more research is suggested. The process perspective can be useful in discovering connections among different phases. In this research, this led to the formulation of two roles speakers can embody. It would be an addition to literature to investigate the connection among different actors participating in field-configuring events, and how these connections further shape the dynamics that foster field-evolution.

5.2.3 Context

Lastly, the context of field-configuring events. Most influential and prominent literature on these events (Lampel & Meyer, 2008; Henn & Bathelt, 2015; Leca et al., 2015; Müller-Seitz & Schüßler, 2013) are carried out under conditions that differ from the smaller cradle-to-cradle cafes. First, there is size. Existing literature talks about bigger gatherings,

even sometimes international conferences which attract a lot more public than the relatively small number of participants present at the cradle-to-cradle cafes. Second, the continuity of events that are studied. In the study of Oliver and Montgomery (2008) about Jewish speakers, only one event is researched as this was a one-time conference. Lampel and Meyer (2008) state that literature focusses on the dynamics present at one singular event, instead of a series of events. It was these dynamics that led to their defining six characteristics of field-configuring events. In contrast, the events in this study are organised every few months, with a total of 44 cradle-to-cradle cafes over a period of 10 years. Nevertheless, despite the differences in size and continuity all defining characteristics were present, the dramaturgical activities excepted as mentioned earlier. Therefore, it seems that size and continuity do not have much impact on the characteristics of what entails a field-configuring event.

Although, in this study it was found that not the size, but the composition of participants was important. People attending the cradle-to-cradle cafe were often like-minded and already had some affinity with the concept of cradle-to-cradle, or sustainability as a whole. Remarkably, little attention is given to participants in literature. They are mainly used as a tool for collecting data. Oliver and Montgomery (2008) concluded that participants had some dispersed opinions, and that the conference they were investigating helped in shaping new standards, aligning these earlier dispersed opinions. Not much attention is paid to the composition of the group. As in this study the participants often have the same opinions and thoughts, which influenced the interaction between speaker and participant, it seems to be worthwhile to look at the relationship among participants and other actors, and how composition of participants potentially influences the dynamics present at the event.

5.3 Practical implications

The results of this research can also be transformed into several recommendations for practitioners. These recommendations are primarily targeted towards the organisers of the cradle-to-cradle cafes, as this was the scope of the research.

First of all, it could be helpful to increase the variety of backgrounds among participants. This research found that most of the time the same people are attending the events. These participants already have a passion for the concept of sustainability or specifically cradle-to-cradle. As the goal of the cradle-to-cradle cafes is to spread the general thought of this concept, it may be useful to invest in other actors who are willing to educate

themselves about this new construct, but do not know exactly how. In other words, organisers may have to evaluate which audience they should be targeting.

Next, accessibility. It was noticed that some of the cradle-to-cradle cafes took place in remote places, such as the provinces of Zeeland or Friesland. It could be worthwhile to invest some time in studying a potential relationship between locational choice and the number of participants. Second, it is advised to simplify ways of subscribing to the event digitally. The researcher experienced some difficulties with this. Of course, due to the covid-19 pandemic this is relatively new and had to be introduced quickly, but a societal shift is noticeable in using digital platforms for communication. Besides, by doing so a larger number of participants can have access to the event.

Consequently, another practical implication is investing in networks. During this research it appeared that most of the time no further actions are taken after the event took place. This unfortunately does not fully comply with one of the characteristics of field-configuring events as stated by Lampel and Meyer (2008; p. 1027): ''Field-configuring events generate social and reputational resources that can be deployed elsewhere and for other purposes.''. Of course, knowledge is exchanged, and people are somewhat inspired, but the speakers admitted that no business-like perspective was present. Challenging participants cognitively is not enough for further utilization of the concept. The researcher would recommend investigating how presentations can incorporate a business-like perspective, without fully erasing the inspirational character of the event. That aspect is what makes the event unique.

5.4 Summary and personal reflection

Overall, the main question as formulated in the introduction was eventually answered satisfactorily. Theoretical shortcomings and societal needs guided this research into a certain direction. A comprehensive framework was deducted based on already existing scientific literature. The cradle-to-cradle cafes proved themselves as excellent sources of data, respondents were enthusiastic to cooperate. Therefore, the process of collecting data went smoothly, excepted small hindrances caused by the covid-19 pandemic. Nevertheless, sufficient information was gathered that eventually led to the creation of practices performed by speakers. In addition, roles that speakers could adopt were formulated, underlining the broad, explorative nature of this research. By adding theoretical as well as practical knowledge, the researcher considers this study as successful. Field-configuring events were an

interesting concept to investigate, future research is recommended and encouraged in order to fully understand how these events can be improved and optimized.

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Appendix A: Interview text and questions

Introductie:

- Allereerst, bedanken voor het tijd en deelname.

- Tijdsduur aangeven, en ook dat de tijd in de gaten wordt gehouden.

- Uitleggen waar de data voor gebruikt wordt, en dat het een onderdeel is van een groter onderzoek.

- Uitleggen hoe het onderzoek ongeveer in elkaar zit.

- Structuur van het interview uitleggen

- Informeren of er vragen zijn van de respondent.

Algemeen:

1. Bij welk cradle-to-cradle café heeft u gesproken?

2. Waarom en hoe bent u benaderd om te spreken tijdens het desbetreffende cradle-to-cradle cafe?

3. Wat heeft u besproken tijdens het desbetreffende cradle-to-cradle café?

4. Had u een bepaald doel voor ogen bij het presenteren op het cradle-to-cradle café en heeft u dit kunnen realiseren?

Activiteiten uitgevoerd voor het event:

5. Op welke manier heeft u het onderwerp gekozen van uw presentatie? Kunt u verder ingaan op dit proces?

6. Heeft u voor het event nagedacht over het karakter van uw presentatie? Meer verhalend, zakelijk etc.

7. In hoeverre heeft u bij de voorbereiding samengewerkt met de organisatoren? Bijvoorbeeld met betrekking tot de keuze tot het onderwerp, en het karakter van de presentatie.

8. Zijn er nog andere relevante activiteiten die u uitgevoerd heeft voor het event, maar die nog niet zijn besproken?

Activiteiten uitgevoerd tijdens het event:

9. Probeerde u tijdens het desbetreffende cradle-to-cradle café participanten te overtuigen van uw boodschap en ze gezamenlijk achter uw ideeën te krijgen?

10. Met de gebruikte communicatiemiddelen, probeerde u om discussie aan te wakkeren?

11. Probeerde u zich te profileren als expert, en zo kennis over te dragen?

12. Na uw presentatie, wanneer u nog aanwezig was op het desbetreffende event, hoe ging u om met participanten die een gesprek wilden aangaan, stond u daar open voor? Hoe zou u uw rol omschrijven op dat moment?

13. Zijn er nog andere relevante activiteiten die u uitvoerde tijdens het event, maar niet zijn besproken?

Activiteiten uitgevoerd na het event:

14. In hoeverre heeft u contacten overgehouden aan het presenteren op het desbetreffende cradle-to-cradle café? Was dat puur bijkomstig, of een doel an sich?

15. Stond u open om benaderd te worden door participanten na afloop van het desbetreffende cradle-to-cradle café die nog verdere informatie wilden vergaren? Is dit ook gebeurd?

16. Hoe stond u er tegenover wanneer de media u had benaderd om nadere uitleg te geven met betrekking tot wat er is besproken op het desbetreffende cradle-to-cradle café?

17. Zijn er nog andere relevante activiteiten die u uitvoerde na het event, maar die niet zijn besproken?

Gerelateerde activiteiten:

18. In hoeverre zijn de uit te voeren activiteiten voor, tijdens, en na het event aan elkaar gerelateerd? Zijn ze van invloed op elkaar? *Eventueel een klein voorbeeld erbij noemen.*

Vragen Armand:

19. Heeft u het cradle-to-cradle café (of cafés) wel eens beschouwd als een reclame/promotie-evenement voor een of meer van de organiserende bedrijven? Waarom wel/niet? Zou het onderwerp/de locatie hier iets mee te maken kunnen hebben?

20. Werden de organiserende bedrijven gepromoot tijdens het event? Op welke manier?

21. Wat is/zijn de redenen volgens u dat de bedrijven die achter de cradle-to-cradle cafés zitten deze events organiseren?

22. Vindt u dat de cradle-to-cradle cafés een eigen identiteit hebben (of zijn ze meer verlengstukken van de organiserende bedrijven)? Waarom? Hoe zag u dit terug bij het cradle-to-cradle café waar u gesproken heeft?

Ter afsluiting:

23. Zijn er nog andere belangrijke aspecten met betrekking tot spreken op events die we nog niet hebben besproken?

Appendix B: Table with quotes

Stage of the process-perspective:	Practice:	Quote example:
Before	Connecting	''*After a discussion with other speakers, one can conclude a program. Essentially it is about filling a database with people who can tell about related topics. Those connections with other people, they are fun.*''
	Interacting	''*It could be that they thought about doing something with material passports, and that might be why they came to me. The actual choice of topic is at that moment not being set; they only knew what my experience was.*''
	Story building	''*It is a challenge, to tell something people benefit from. To tell something which inspires people, which is useful. I always try to bend it in that direction.*''
During	Role representing	''*Of course, some part of me wants to convince the public. But the emphasis is placed more on informing instead of convincing. With regard to that, trade-offs were made. What they do with the information provided by us, that is up to them*''
	Relating	''*This is how we do it, and people themselves can decide what to do with it. We do not preach one perfect way of doing it, instead we told how we achieved our goals*''
	Integrating	''*Of course, there is space to make connections with other people. But we have our own project. I mainly try to be informative about what we are doing.*''
After	Involving	''*Two participants approached me afterwards and told me that I had quite a nice story that day. They told me maybe they could do something with it. Later on, it did not work out.*''
	Reflecting	''*I look back at the event as being positive. We spoke, they now know we exist. The presentation was good, we received some nice feedback.*''