An improvisational, practice-oriented approach to innovation
Examples from the fashion industry

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Abstract
Fashion and innovation interrelate in multiple and complex ways. With its routinized, cyclical production yet creative context, the fashion industry is sustained by an ongoing tension between stability and change. As a consequence, innovative activities are performed in everyday work routines. However, in previous research, the dominant view on innovation has mainly been influenced by technological innovations, emphasizing planning, sequencing, and separation among innovation phases and types. Our understanding of how different innovation types interrelate, how product, process, service, organizational, and stylistic innovations affect one another as they emerge and develop remains limited. Furthermore, separating innovation types into sequential models does not account for the unintended, improvised, and overlapping activities’ contribution to innovation. In order to address some of these shortcomings, the present study suggests a practice-based approach to understand how innovations emerge as an outcome of mundane activities, involving both planning and improvisation on routines. In such a relational, practice-based view, there are no levels of reality, but the world consists of interrelated practices. In driving this argument, this study makes use of a corpus of material drawn from a two and a half year long study of practices involved in the making of fashion collections at the main offices of two separate fashion brands, in Stockholm, Sweden. Through interaction observations, interviews and the study of documents, three practices have been identified as relevant to the purpose of this study: Designing, Producing, and Selling. Results indicate that the interrelationships among innovation types are highly dependent on the co-created practice memory and the alignment or misalignment among practices that cut across organizational borders, as well across individual, organizational and industry levels. The findings also contribute to the practice-based approach on innovation by suggesting a framework of how elements of practices may change (often resulting from practice alignment or misalignment), and how practitioners respond to these changes. Routines, planning, and improvisation constitute three different, though mutually interdependent relationships, that lie at the heart of innovation in the fashion industry.

Keywords: innovation, practice, fashion, improvising, planning, routines, practice memory.

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Sara Öhlin
To my best friend and sister,
Erika - for your endless love
and support
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Stockholm, April 2018
Preface

I have always had a great interest in clothing, textiles and fashion. At the age of fifteen, I had already decided on a textile orientation in my education. At the time, I had no idea about all the professions the apparel and fashion industry offered, but I knew I wanted to create clothes. I have always been fascinated by the ways clothes may shape our bodies, and how we can express ourselves through them. I find it interesting how the contemporary society is mirrored through fashion, but also how taste changes for larger and smaller groups, and how items we would never wear (again) find their ways (back) to the fashion catwalk. The detailed craftsmanship, and artisanship were, and are a great source of inspiration, which led me to immerse myself further into the world of creating fashion, clothing, and textiles. At a young age, I started to work as a design assistant and seamstress. I learned the hard work of producing clothes, and the tough organizing needed to manage time, qualities, suppliers, and customers. I realized that the making of clothes depends on a large number of people, scarce resources, and activities that have to be coordinated in both possible and nearly impossible ways.

I also learned that producing beautiful garments relies on hard physical labour and long working hours, a lesson that resulted in severe back pain. Because of this, I decided not to continue at my occupation at the time, but hoped to become a buyer. I thought my practical skills would be useful in such a position, especially if I could combine it with additional knowledge of business and administration. For that reason, I applied to the university, with the intention to take a few courses, only to learn the basics. But the rest is, what is usually referred to as history. After I finished my Master’s degree, and later got the opportunity to take on a PhD, the empirical field of study was evident: the ever changing, uncertain, ugly, novel, exciting, beautiful, stressful, creative, routinized context of fashion.

During my university studies, I found the orientation towards management and organization most intriguing. Maybe this was because I could see so many parallels between the theories we studied, and my former work roles. I was especially interested in how and why we organize in different ways and why this organizing changes. I knew I wanted to study change within the fashion
context, but not only why fashion changes, but rather how working with fashion requires some changes in organizing it. This led me to the literature on management innovation, i.e., innovation in management processes and techniques and the reasons behind these innovations. However, as I started my empirical study I realized how management innovation was integrated with other types of innovation such as product, service, and process innovation, and the importance of not investigating them in a compartmentalized way, but as integrated phenomena which affect one another.

In this research project, I am interested in how innovation happens, or does not happen, in everyday work. What fosters or hinders innovative activities in a creative yet routinized setting such as the fashion industry? The study of innovation in the fashion context is important for both theoretical and empirical reasons. The creation of fashion provides a creative, yet a very structured site in which planning coexists with improvisation, and artisanship coexists with management.

The fashion context involves a diverse number of practices, some of which are industry specific, but also similar to, or contributing to understanding practices in other industries. Understanding practices within the fashion context, and in particular how innovation among these practices is enabled or hindered, should also be interesting to other industries in which design, cyclical production, long production chains and consumer behaviour are important. Even though I might just capture fragments of this fascinating context, the in-depth sequences of this study still provide examples illustrating how innovations are facilitated or hampered in an interconnected manner, in planned and/or improvised ways.

Due to my former experience, I thought I would have the advantage of background knowledge in studying this particular industry. However, many activities were completely new to me. I knew that the creation of fashion depends on a large number of people, positions, and activities, but not the exact methods involved in all these activities and how they were aligned or misaligned. Nor did I know exactly where to start looking for innovation in this context. But, due to the complexity of the industry, and the tension between the routinized cyclical production and the creative artisanship, I anticipated this would be an interesting site in which to explore innovation.

During the spring semester of 2013, I was invited to conduct my study at two fashion brands located with head offices in Stockholm. I was invited to study innovation in relation to the creation of a fashion collection, a very broad and open-ended brief, with no predetermined end. My background in textile knowledge proved to be somewhat helpful, since I could offer to undertake
some of the simpler tasks while becoming acquainted with my new surroundings. For instance, in one organization, I initially helped out labelling textile samples. Because this task could be done by placing the textiles, markers, and myself almost wherever I wanted within the office, this became a very helpful start for my interaction-observation and informal interviewing, methods used to gradually understand how work was organized and re-organized in this setting. This study contributes to the already existing knowledge on innovation. It does so by adopting a practice-based approach to analyse the empirical evidence collected in a fashion context.


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1 Introduction

Fashion and innovation interrelate in many different ways. Even though the fashion industry relies on routinized, seasonal production cycles, which require a certain type of knowledge and understanding, it is also an industry facing difficulties and opportunities that invite creativity and innovation. New technology provides both products and processes that challenge previous design, production and distribution channels. Smart textiles, or “wearables”, allow technology in accessories and garments that is able to measure and adjust to the body as it wears the clothes in different ways, or connect to the Internet, providing consumers with various information while using the garments. New technology and Internet services further contribute to new solutions within production and logistics (Jackson, 2007; Sternö & Nielsén, 2015). New technology has also changed the diffusion of fashion. Before the Internet breakthrough, only those working within the business were updated on the latest fashions. Now, fashion shows and the latest trends are available to anyone through on-line fashion shows and bloggers’ reports. It is also possible to buy fashion from around the world. This also enables companies with high-speed production, so-called fast fashion, to imitate the designs of smaller brands before they have even launched their products in designer boutiques (Lantz, 2013; Rocamora, 2013).

Scanning for trends involves a combination of global and local activities. For global fashion trends, and consumer behaviour towards them, external information sources are important right in the initial phase. Trend forecasters may reflect on such trends early, up to 18-20 months ahead of a season (Jackson, 2007). New fashion trends can also be sourced and explored by visiting popular markets, and modern museums, by keeping in contact with raw material suppliers, and attending exhibitions around the world, among other activities (Aage & Belusi, 2008). New trends in fashion are not merely delivered to consumers. Street fashion and subcultures are also sources of inspiration in creating “new” catwalk fashion (Hebdige, 1979). The challenge for the fashion creator is to interpret and put pieces of inspiration together (Aspers, 2006).

Compared to the traditional apparel retailing business model, in which fabric and apparel production and shipping can take 20-30 weeks, the fast fashion retailing business model produces fashion lines in 8-15 days. Due to the short
lead times, fast fashion forecasting occurs much closer to the season itself, influenced by current consumer demand, catwalk shows and communication technology (Hines & Bruce, 2007). Fast fashion is not only concerned with the material goods but also the symbolic ones, i.e., the rapid circulation of fashion images and words (Rocamora, 2013).

*It is like some (fashion brands) provide innovation and new ways of thinking, while others just join them since everything is available all of a sudden. Everyone can reach everything, which is different from how it used to be. Back then; a collection was launched in a different way, which is not how it’s done today. But the routines of providing fashion shows is still present – Head of Design, Fashion-Y (Interview 2013-11-05)*

This routine way of introducing a fashion collection is still present, which allows some fashion labels to launch innovative new designs while other companies, focusing on innovative high-speed production processes, imitating current trends, are able to deliver the latest fashion too. Hence, with the changes in technology and the speed of information, fashion is spread in novel ways. These technological changes provide innovation in launching a collection by different means because they facilitate imitation.

There are various ethical concerns about the fashion industry. One challenge it faces is the effect it has on the surrounding environment. This industry is becoming increasingly notorious for its environmental effects in terms of generated waste, chemical use, and pollution (Fletcher & Tham, 2015). Producing garments is also a labour intensive business. Fashion labels usually specialize, focusing on the design and subcontracting cutting and sewing to different suppliers in various locations. Sewing is usually done in a country with low labour costs because it is labour intensive (Richardson, 1996). This means workers in underdeveloped parts of the world are being exploited to produce clothes at such low labour costs, to satisfy the demand of markets in the developed world (Hines & Bruce, 2007). Even though much within the fashion industry has changed, its dual nature of a glamorous façade and the exploitation of workers hidden from sight seems almost inseparable (Wilson, 2005). Several fashion labels have faced critique using workers at low labour cost, and for the damage fashion production has on the environment (Lantz, 2013). Consumers and other stakeholders are able to search for information about production and demand sustainable solutions, which means fashion brands need to emphasize their corporate social responsibility (CSR) work.

Innovative solutions to these issues are prompted by such concerns, i.e., fashion brands need to deliver fashionable clothes, but to produce them in different ways with higher transparency. This is an issue that has gained importance in
recent years (Zaczkiewicz, 2016). Greater awareness among consumers also affects consumption patterns such as second-hand shopping, swapping or lending clothes, and buying clothes online. Fashion brands need to respond to these new behaviour ways in an innovative mode. Sustainable production may be a further way to differentiate fashion brands as consumers are increasingly demanding more information about their sourcing and manufacturing (Joy, Sherry Jr, Venkatesh, Wang, & Chan, 2012).

Due to new technology and the ways in which labour and materials are sourced, the fashion context is both stable and changing. The seasonal launch of clothes still dominates, but new technologies propose new channels for marketing and distribution, which may have an effect on competition to some extent. Long lead times in production are still a problem for smaller companies, both financially and creatively. The general price level on clothes is low, which forces many designers to cut down on their quality and creativity (Sundberg, 2006). However, as noted above, consumers are also becoming more conscious about working conditions in clothing production and environmental aspects in the textile industry, which might change the current view on fashion. New conditions further require innovative organizing and management to cope with adaptations to such demands. Innovation is a means to change and the fashion industry is an industry in motion. However, innovation in a fashion setting requires hard work, which suggests planning and improvising in relation to the surrounding context is key:

*It requires a lot to be continuously hip, it takes quite a lot. But if you have a higher level of innovation you can gain from that in a different way... In textiles or looks, innovation happens when you do research and when you challenge things. You cannot just say I’m going to innovate, it requires solid work... An innovation can be a new way of selling or something else too. But the level of innovation in the fashion industry is generally low... A lot of companies do things in similar ways... There is creativity, but not so much innovation – CEO, Swedish fashion council (Interview 2013-06-18)*

Hence, the fashion industry provides an exciting context in which creative novel product developments are dependent on both routine production and distribution, but at the same time new relationships, technologies and customer demands challenge these routine ways of working. Fashion has the ability to affect almost everyone. Whether one decides to follow it or not, fashion still has to be taken into account. Fashion changes only to prepare for further innovations, but the knowledge that what is in fashion today will change tomorrow does not weaken it, rather it contributes to the strengths of fashion (Esposito, 2011). Fashion is a global business that employs a large number of people in different professions, all involved in delivering the best products at the best price in the fastest time, given the circumstances. The fashion industry
involves every aspect of design, manufacture, marketing, and distribution. The combination of aesthetics, technology, and business creates tensions, but it also makes fashion a special and fascinating industry to study (Hines & Bruce, 2007). According to Aspers and Godart (2013), fashion can be influenced, but not planned or imposed. Hence, they define fashion as ‘an unplanned process of recurrent change against a backdrop of order in the public realm’ (p. 185). Yet it is this unplanned process, in which change and innovation are constant, in which fashionable products must be produced, packaged and sold to successfully manage the fashion business. Understanding the creation of fashion and its complex business relationships can also be useful to other industries within organizational studies due to its paradoxes of rationality and irrationality (Esposito, 2011).

1.2 Fashion and innovation in organizational research

Innovation is generated and applied as a response to changes in technological and managerial knowledge, industry competition, constituents’ expectations, or top executives’ aspiration to reach distinctive competencies (Damanpour, Walker, & Avellaneda, 2009). There are various theoretical approaches and fields of inquiry in which to study innovation, including business administration, psychology and sociology. Research on innovation also spans many different levels of analysis such as the individual, team, organization, industry or economy (Damanpour & Aravind, 2012; Lam, 2009). In a broader sense, innovation is usually understood as the introduction of something new, such as new methods or techniques and new or altered products and services (Dasgupta & Gupta, 2009, p. 205).

Previous research on innovation has, to a large extent, been influenced by technologically based innovation, mostly conducted in the manufacturing sector (Damanpour & Aravind, 2012). Although there has been an increased academic interest in creative industries, any creative industry in which creativity is an essential contributor in the innovation process, has been scarcely researched (Tran, 2010). However, the creative sector, including the fashion industry, has faced a steady growth, today employing about five to ten percent of the workforce in most Western countries. In addition, creative industries are also engaged by other parts of the economy (Hauge, 2012). Therefore innovation and creativity are not only issues for high-tech firms, but also increasingly important aspects of creative industries (Jaw, Chen, & Chen, 2012).

Creative industries, and particularly the fashion industry, are associated with the dynamics of change (Tran, 2010), implying that change is present throughout the whole production of a fashion line. The immense work underlying the creation of a fashion collection is a balancing act between commercial and...
financial goals and creative ambitions. For this reason, the fashion industry is dependent on routines in which timing is crucial. Routines and planning are based on the Spring/Summer and Autumn/Winter seasonal distribution of clothes (Morean, 2006). Newness must be produced on a seasonal basis (Easey, 2009; Loschek, 2009). This cyclical way of working implies that creativity and innovation are routinized in all practices included in the making of a fashion collection. According to Maramotti (2000) the creation of fashion is a good example of forced innovation since it is constantly necessary to recreate, rethink, relaunch, and discuss things over and over again. The work of creating fashion, to a large extent, depends on finding innovative, yet predictable, solutions to a desire for change (Mora, 2006). Fashion is a creatively dependent industry, but it also has to involve the more mundane business operations to be up to standards in its production, marketing, and distribution (Hauge, 2012). However, the actual process of fashion product development remains largely a “black box” (Tran, 2010).

The main contribution to innovation studies provided within the fashion industry relates to stylistic innovation (Capetta, Cillo, & Ponti, 2006; Cillo & Verona, 2008). Whereas technological innovations are related to the functionality of products, stylistic innovations concern the changes in aesthetics through looks, shapes, forms and/or changes in symbolic value expressed through the meaning and language of products. Stylistic innovation is defined as the change in the aesthetic design and/or symbolic value of products (Tran, 2010). However, there is less research on innovation related to work processes, management, and organizing and, further, how these aspects of innovation might be related. But, cultural industries, such as fashion, have a great influence on values, attitudes, and life styles. These industries are highly visible and, for that reason, they would benefit from research addressed towards managerial and organizational issues confronting firms in such industries (Lampel, Lant, & Shamsie, 2000).

New technology, flexible approaches to offering innovative products to meet consumer demands, and fragmented markets suggest that previous ways of managing in the fashion industry are being challenged (Hines & Bruce, 2007). The creation of fashion involves product development, production, service, coordination, organizing, and creativity. The study provided by Hauge (2012) suggests that even though creativity is an important aspect of the fashion industry, such creative input must be transformed into commercial products. A holistic way of running fashion companies is hence stressed, in which the designer plays an equally important role as the other professions within them. Non-technological innovations, such as stylistic and management innovation, have recently gained more research interest in order to complement technological innovations, such as product innovations. But, research is still scant on the relationship between these innovation types (Damanpour, 2014).
The models and strategies for initiating and implementing innovation in the organization literature mainly focus on one innovation type at a time. Further, these models are commonly developed in sequences and include a clear structure and planning. Even though it is suggested that innovation can be planned for, it has also been acknowledged that rule-based and hierarchical systems or best-practice models of innovation may be less useful to some organizations (Flöysand & Jacobsen, 2010), especially when there are high degrees of uncertainty and an increasing pace of change (Kamoche & Cunha, 2001), such as in the fashion industry. Goal-oriented and plan-based models of human conduct ignore the significance of the immediate context, which implies that situated and embodied knowledge is ignored (Heath, Knorblauch, & Luff, 2000). However, as suggested by Kamoche and Cunha (2001), the organizing of innovation does not have to be either about pure planning and structure or total flexibility. Instead, the relationship between improvisation and structure is emphasized. Improvisation is a spontaneous and dynamic process, in which activities emerge non-linearly.

It is argued that the process of innovation comprises the emergence, development and implementation of new ideas (Garud, Tuertscher, & van de Ven, 2013), but even though it is possible to describe actions that have occurred, it does not provide certain predictions of what will happen in the future. However, what has been created in the present moment will influence further actions as well as increasing the understanding of former actions (Larsen & Bogers, 2014). The diversity and flexibility involved in the innovation process hence call into question whether there is such a thing as the best practice in relation to new product development (Kamoche & Cunha, 2001). Support for an approach to innovation which relates creativity and improvisation with routines and planning, can further be found in March’s (1991) request for a balance between exploration and exploitation, Feldman and Pentland’s (2003) suggestion that routines are also sources of change, and Glaveanu’s (2012) work on the relation between habitual action and creative expression.

Even though previous research suggests an interrelated approach to what is planned and routinized in creativity and innovation, further explanation is needed for how these interrelationships are performed in mundane work. The fashion industry provides a site in which routine cycles of production are combined with continuous product development and contextual demands. Due to this, the creation of fashion provides a context in which different types of innovations may interrelate through processes consisting of both creativity and structure. To further explain this relationship, the aim of the present study is to propose a framework to explain the interrelations among innovation types, and in what ways planning and improvising, in relation with each other, contribute to innovation. This framework builds on a practice-based approach that
emphasizes mundane work activities as an alternative to the rational plan-based models of innovation. A theoretical preunderstanding is first developed to guide the analysis of the corpus of material generated within this study. This framework is then revisited to enhance an explanation of the interrelations among innovations. Practices are recognized as routinized activities, yet practices are in constant motion. Adopting practices as the unit of analysis, suggests that it is possible to explain how and why innovation (including ideation and implementation) occurs as planning and improvising on routines. Rules and routines are enacted when performing a practice, but each time a practice is performed, the same rules and routines are constantly challenged by improvisational actions.

Organizational improvisation has been theoretically elaborated on, mostly using organizational anecdotes to illuminate improvisational activities, but the way it unfolds and interacts with organizing still suffers from some shortcomings in empirical studies (Leybourne, Lynn, & Thanning Vendelo, 2014). In order to understand the relationship between improvisation and planned routines, we also need a detailed development of work practices that results from an interplay between bodies and artefacts in mundane work settings (Thanning Vendelo, 2009). Hence, evidence from real-time settings is required, such as observations of actual innovation processes (Kamoche & Cunha, 2001).

The fashion setting provides a research context in which planned, routine cyclical structures and operations are essential to production, yet it is an industry in which creativity and improvisation constantly challenge and relate to these in an innovative way. Innovation constitutes a means to change. Innovation is therefore understood as the combination of two or more already existing things; the process and outcome of performing new or altered activities and/or things, intended or unintended in mundane work. It involves new ways of using, combining, and adopting materials and ways of working. The guiding research question in the present study is how and why innovation types (product, service, process, stylistic and organizational) in a fashion context interrelate with one another, in intended and unintended ways, through practices, in everyday work.

1.3 A practice-based approach

A relational view of the innovation process, which involves collective work over time and across several work tasks, is premised on a practice-based approach (Scarborough, Panourgias, & Nandakumar, 2015). From a practice perspective, organizing is seen as the knowledgeable collective action of individuals and artefacts (Gherardi, 2009). A practice-based approach suggests that all actions result from practice and must be understood within a practice.
Products, services, social interactions, movements, technologies etc. all belong to practice (Schatzki, 2001). Hence, in this study innovation is not understood as a practice in itself, but depends on performed situated practices.

The focus is not on a particular innovation typology, but to provide a view to understand how innovations relate and unfold in every day work practices. This view also provides a way to study the relationship between planned for and improvised events in mundane work. Routine and planned activities exhibit recognizable patterns of action, but individuals involved in them have different understandings of the purposes they serve. These activities are inherently improvisational and adaptive since practitioners adjust their behaviours in response to others’ performing the same practice (Wright, 2014). To capture this, the practice-based analysis will focus on the dynamics of the elements of practice (change in skills, materials and engagements), the ways in which practitioners perform practices, and the integration of these practices and their practitioners. A practice-based approach provides a way to organize activities and interlink them not only to individuals or a particular organization, but to a larger setting in which these various practices contribute to innovation within the creation of a fashion collection.

To achieve this aim, the present study uses a corpus of material drawn from a two and a half year long study of practices involved in the making of fashion collections. Through interaction-observations, interviews and the study of documents, three practices have been in the centre of the study: Designing, Producing, and Selling. Further, these practices have been studied in two different organizations both located in Stockholm, Sweden. It emerges in this study, that innovations in a fashion context are interrelated to one another, and highly dependent on the alignment or misalignment between practices spanning organizational borders, integrating an individual, organizational and industry level. The findings provide examples of the ability to share knowledge and respond to changes in practices in order to adapt to continuous change in the surrounding environment. The analysis also extends the practice-based foundation by explaining how elements of practices may change, the effects of alignment or misalignment among practices, the importance of practice memory, and by suggesting three different interrelations among routines, planning and improvising to explain innovation in a fashion context.

1.4 Outline of this thesis

The remainder of the thesis is structured as follows: the next chapter provides a review of the literature on innovation with a view to understanding how innovation has been explained to unfold. Previous research and contributions to innovation in a creative setting, and particularly in the fashion industry are
introduced. This chapter also includes views on innovation studied in other contexts, in order to outline some of its characteristics. Following this discussion, I will suggest an alternative approach to understanding how and why innovations occur in everyday activities. In the third chapter, a practice-based approach is introduced to answer some of the mentioned limitations relevant to the aim of the present study. Chapter Four describes the research design. Ontological and methodological considerations, the empirical setting, and methods performed to generate the findings of the present study are explained. This chapter is followed by a general description of the three practices Designing, Producing and Selling and their organizing elements skills, materials and engagements. Chapter Six introduces the two organizations within the present study, Fashion-X and Fashion-Y, and the background to their planned innovations. Chapter Seven provides an analysis based on the theoretical approach developed in Chapter Three to explain how and why innovations are interrelated throughout the creation of fashion. In Chapter Eight, the findings from the analysis are discussed in relation to previous research and the framework developed in Chapter Three. Chapter Nine concludes the findings of the present study and highlights the implications of explaining innovation as planning and improvising on routines from a practice-based approach within a fashion setting.
2 Innovation

Innovation depends to a large extent on a variety of relationships between actors, artefacts, and knowledge, which shape both the process of the innovation and its outcome (Scarbrough et al., 2015). For this reason, innovation has gained research interest from various fields and the increasing number of studies has provided both breadth and diversity, such as various conceptualizations, aspects and measurements of innovation (Baregheh, Rowley, & Sambrook, 2009; Becheikh, Landry, & Amara, 2006; Damanpour & Wischnevsky, 2006). In this chapter, I will first review research on innovation in a creative setting and particularly in the fashion industry.

One main contribution to the innovation literature, provided by research within the fashion industry, concerns product innovation and particularly stylistic innovation (Tran, 2010). However, the fashion industry provides a site in which other types of innovation are essential too. Above all, it is where these innovation types would benefit from being studied in relation to one another. For this reason, compartmentalizing and integrating of innovation types are further discussed below.

The literature on innovation has, to a large extent, focused on well-planned approaches with a clearly understood structure, based on a rational-functional paradigm. These models are, in general, well suited for stable environments. But the uncertainty and flexibility included in product development create challenges for organizations which require different approaches to innovation (Kamoche & Cunha, 2001). Innovations have been studied in relation to routines and practice-based approaches have been adopted to capture the relationship between stability and change. Practice-based approaches have also informed approaches traditionally focusing on macro aspects such as neo-institutional theory to understand change and innovation. However, a certain richness of a larger context, subsumed by a practice-based approach, is to some extent neglected in these studies. Therefore there exists further potential to explain innovation from a practice-based approach. This is why the literature review concludes that innovation in a fashion setting can be further understood and explained by adopting practice as the unit of analysis. The process and outcome of performing new or altered activities and/or things, intended or unintended, in mundane work, but interrelated to the wider context is emphasized in this view.
2.1 Fashion, creativity and innovation

Previous research conducted in creative settings, such as theatre, design, art, and fashion, has to a large extent emphasized that the creative industry faces certain forms of management and organizational challenges, due to the uncertainty of producing creative goods and/or services and the fact that customer demand for them is unknown if they are truly new (Townley, Beech, & McKinlay, 2009). It is evident that organizations within creative industries are known for their creative ideas in terms of products and services, but there is less research about whether this creativity also relates to and influences innovation (Lampel et al., 2000).

Research on creativity has, to a large extent, examined the stages of idea generation whereas research on innovation has also predominantly included the latter phase of idea implementation. Even though these two concepts are related, they are not identical, and there is no common agreement among researchers on the boundaries or similarities between them (Anderson, Potočnik, & Zhou, 2014). Innovation in creative industries is, to some extent, blurred since any creative product or service can be regarded as an innovation; these constitute the visible tip of the iceberg of every-day creativity. However, the extent to which significant innovation exists and can be distinguished from everyday creativity may vary among creative activities (Caves, 2000). That is to say, creative industries provide and contribute to innovations in different ways, directly or indirectly. Creative industries provide services and products that may be inputs to innovative activities of other organizations both within and outside the creative industries. In addition, creative industries often demand adaptations to new developments in technology, which provide a demand for innovations from technology producers. Hence, creative industries both supply and demand innovative solutions within and to surrounding industries (Müller, Rammer, & Trüby, 2009), which is why innovation in this setting deserves further research.

Research on creativity has traditionally studied the intellectual and individual skills (Tanggaard, 2012), in which the individual is usually argued to be the source of novel ideas. Recognizing creative ideas in this way involves an understanding of the requirements of creative thought as well as of the particular work styles of creative people (Mumford, 2000). This view assumes that we can think of a person as more or less creative in terms of cognitive processes and personality (Sternberg, Pretz, & Kaufman, 2003). However, only focusing on celebrating the creative individual provides less attention to the materials, collaborations, and context in which creativity emerges (Aspers, 2006; Tanggaard, 2012), which is why studies based on a larger context are gaining increased interest. The fashion industry provides a context in which both material and intangible production processes are co-created by socio-economic
relations. Most fashion companies collaborate with external partners in nearly all phases before the clothes reach the end consumers. Through time and across space, value is created in collaboration with other organizations which are included in the industrial production process (Hauge, 2012). The fashion industry hence challenges the view of creativity and innovation pertaining or relying on individual characteristics. It provides a context in which individuals are interrelated in creative and innovative activities.

To grasp innovation in the fashion industry, it is important to identify some of its characteristics. Fashion is a wide concept suggesting that a product, a service, or even a social behaviour can be fashionable if a certain audience at a certain time and in a specific social context widely approves of it (Saviolo & Testa, 2002). The field of fashion has intrigued researchers in various disciplines. It poses the challenge to understand the social and the cultural dynamics of appearance, dress, and fashion, including practices of consumption and production (Rocamora & Smelik, 2016). When related to dress, fashion is a set of arrangements that involves the production and distribution of clothing. Yet, fashion is also the production of aesthetic ideas, influencing the reception and consumption of styles (Entwistle, 2000). Fashion is hence both an intangible idea and a material object (Riello, 2011).

The fashion industry started its development early in the industrialization era. New technologies and mass production provided consumers with clothes at fixed prices and in standard sizes (Wilson, 2005). Fashion in its modern sense emerged during the second half of the 19th century. It then became an international movement with diffusions from centres in Paris, London, Milan, and New York. Mass-produced, ready-to-wear or prêt-à-porter reached a broader audience, making the division between high fashion and every-day fashion more blurred (Entwistle, 2000). Today fashion is a global industry in which design, production, and distribution are located all over the world. Clothes are often designed in one country, manufactured in another, and sold worldwide. Fashion logistics is complex since products and materials are sourced offshore contributing to increasing lead times (Christopher, Lowson, & Peck, 2004). The finished fashion garment is the result of a long chain of activities, in which a fashion organization’s competitive success depends on the effectiveness of the textile production pipeline in collaboration with several individuals such as designers, producers, distributors, retailers, mass media, research and trend institutes, consumers, product category associations, banks, and governments (Saviolo & Testa, 2002).

The fashion industry revolves around seasonal design and production (Easey, 2009). A season refers to the period of time in which the fashion collection is sold (Jackson, 2007). Fashion cycles within the European fashion industry
used to have longer periods in between introducing new products to the markets. However, in the early 1990s, the coordination between retailing and manufacturing improved to increase speed and flexibility to market shifts, which became known as quick response. This has resulted in an ever-changing fashion even within a single season. Fast fashion organizations, working with shorter cycles from design to production, might operate with lead times as short as 15 days to a month. These organizations’ way of raising consumers’ expectation of constantly new styles also creates pressure on other fashion brands to change their product development and market response process (Tran, Hsuan, & Mahnke, 2011). This development has continued to the present day with the current rate of flexible and speedy production meaning that four to six collections per year are common for a fashion brand (Bailey, 1993).

Even though the traditional seasons of Autumn/Winter and Spring/Summer may be less visible than they once were, they are still apparent with in-season changes. The rapid changes of fashion imply that colours, designs, and trends can be very short-lived, which makes fashion forecasting, planning and marketing risky and complex to manage (Hines & Bruce, 2007). As a result, several collections of garments are under production, but in different stages of development within one fashion brand. Global production and distribution involves opportunities, challenges, and constant problem solving across organizational borders to manage collaboration up- and downstream. These features require the readiness to modify projects within the fashion organization, which includes modifying the selection of textiles materials and designs (Maramotti, 2000), a situation that requires frequent innovative responses.

2.2 Fashion product development

Research on innovation in the fashion industry is commonly related to product development and new design. In a fashion setting, drawings or models can be viewed as inventions, whereas innovation of these prototypes happens when inventions are ready for sale (Loschek, 2009). According to Tran (2010), changes in style and design of fashion products or collections are by definition product innovation. Main stages of the design process and product development include briefing and first idea, conceptualization, decisions about particular selections, prototype developments, adjustments and final choices from a series of options. Each step further includes several activities, which involves creativity, decisions making and problem solving (Aage & Belusi, 2008). Product development in the fashion industry is generally more associated with style than technology. Because of this, studying the creation of new fashion products is commonly understood as stylistic innovation. Since competition in the fashion industry is style-based and spans over a longer period of time, the dynamic context in which consumer acceptance is uncertain provides a
suitable site to study stylistic innovation. This is why it has been suggested in previous research that managerial attention must focus on innovative product development in this particular setting (Tran, 2010).

According to Caulkins, Hartl, Kort, and Feichtinger (2007), product innovation can be divided into technological innovation and stylistic or fashion innovation. The former improves the product’s performance such as increases in computer processing speeds or improvements in engine efficiency. The latter differentiates newness from one model to another without improving the functionality. In clothes, the fashionable length of a skirt may differ from one season to another without really improving the actual garment. According to Capetta et al. (2006), technology has, to a large extent, been considered as the major driver for change. However, in relation to product innovation, these researchers emphasize the importance of aesthetic and symbolic elements too. Due to stylistic innovation, the product may change in its aesthetic characteristics, but what is more relevant in fashion is the creation of different intangible meanings. The fashion industry is a research context suitable to understand this aspect of the innovation processes due to its focus on style. Tran (2010) suggests that fashion represents different types of stylistic innovation, which combine stylistic identity and market orientation. Fashion companies have to innovate in order to be coherently up to date with fashion trends but also to emphasize the image of their own core expression and style. Ideas for fashion arise from trend watchers, but also from observations of events and current popular happenings such as growing societal movementes, music, films, streetlife, or art, which are interpreted with commercial intentions. Consumers may also act as an inspiration to designers through their innovative ways of dressing or their belonging of certain subcultures of aesthetic interest. However, the development of ideas and further diffusion of fashion is also dependent on mass market demand through which advertising and ‘visible consumers’, such as popular artists, play an important role wearin certain fashion. The diffusion of fashion also depends on gatekeepers such as editors of leading fashion magazines and wholesalers who decide to buy the collection or not, thus determining the availability of the collection (Atik & Firat, 2013).

Within the changing moods of fashion, there exists the constant motion of one or many temporarily dominant trends. A fashion brand organization acquires considerable external information but must also show the ability to consolidate this into their existing knowledge in a given time period (Hauge, Malmberg, & Power, 2009). One of the greatest difficulties for a fashion brand is hence to judge which creative idea that will be successful and worth support (Townley, Beech, & McKinlay, 2009). Managing the forecasting process of potential trends is important since product development and the manufacturing process require an investment well in advance of sales (Richardson, 1996).
Cillo and Verona’s (2008) study investigates and compares the innovation outcomes in fashion brand’s search for new styles. Findings include that fashion brands tend to adopt different search approaches, which, broadly speaking, are either individual designer-led searches or a market-led searches managed by a team or an entire department. According to their study, the individually based search tends to generate incremental change within the organizational path and the search is more locally oriented whereas the collective search is more sensitive towards evolutionary market changes. In the collective setting, the interaction among people in charge of the search process is carried out on a continuous basis to create a collaborated sense of the outside market. Innovation in the development process of new collections in the designer-led search usually starts from references to past collections in terms of materials, decorations or ideas. Organizations adopting a market-led search tend to forget past knowledge, which enables them to expand their innovation potential but also be open to capture market changes. Hence, these organizations focus more on distant rather than local knowledge. Cillo and Verona (2008) further suggest that a designer-driven approach, which embraces the brand’s stylistic identity, works better in periods of incremental change. However, in periods of radical change, the market-driven approach has the ability to adapt to market changes. According to this study, innovation in a radically changing context is about maintaining a balance between differentiation and what is commonly approved rather than isolation from others.

Research on cultural and creative industries has often emphasized the importance of differentiation to deliver something unique. However, a study by Capetta et al. (2006) shows that organizations within the fashion industry also develop convergent behaviours in terms of aesthetic and symbolic change. Further, they found that new standards do not completely replace previous ones. Regarding the innovation rate, the results of the study showed that incumbents are more innovative than new entrants in periods of incremental change. This is due to their knowledge of existent styles. On the other hand, the study also showed that new entrants are more innovative in periods of ferment due to their ‘out of the schemata’ character and lack of internal frames, existing routines and sunk costs (Capetta et al. 2006). When there is competition between high-end trendsetters and imitating brands producing at a lower cost, Caulkins et al. (2007) suggest a model for managing fashion innovation. They propose that trendsetters should innovate in styles, even though the product space is bounded, when the costs of innovation are low enough. When costs are too high, the optimal strategy is no innovation, but try to benefit from the initially advantageous position of being recognized as a high-end design label. However, trendsetters might run the risk of eventually being overtaken by imitators if they reduce their level of innovation too much. Hence it is suggested that the trendsetter extend this strategy with a single innovation too
These studies show that different types of brands, depending on their size and experience, may adopt different strategies for innovation. These strategies also differ depending on the surrounding context. But, the surrounding activities supporting these innovative strategies need to be further explored.

Take, for example, the activities associated with new product development. It is worth noting that in order to gain new knowledge and solutions to product development, some of the innovative activities might be outsourced. Tran, Hsuan, and Mahnke (2011) developed an integrative framework that suggests how and when innovation intermediaries, such as consultants or designers, add value to organizations in the fashion industry, with a focus on new product development. The process of new product development consists, in this framework, of five involvement points in which innovation intermediaries may add value to a fashion company: planning, concept development, system-level design, detailed design, testing, and production ramp-up. The first stage, planning, is when fashion trends are identified, market segments are defined, the supply chain strategy is devised, and design options and textile innovations are assessed. The next step is concept development, which is when the fashion company identifies lead users, best designers, and competitors. In this stage, fashion and design concepts are also investigated together with material developments such as trims, colours, and coatings. The third step, detailed design, includes many critical processes such as developing plans for design options for variety, price setting strategies, defining modular design templates, choosing materials, defining baseline sketches and measurements, identifying key suppliers, and deciding on material development. Fourthly, the testing stage includes testing prototypes, translating sketches into patterns, generating physical photos, developing promotion materials, preparing for launch, refining quality control, and verifying material development. The final stage in the new product development process is the production ramp-up. At this stage, the fashion company evaluates the production output and sends early promotion items and collections to stores.

Innovation may occur within several activities mentioned in the new product development process. According to Tran et al. (2011), innovation intermediaries can be involved in any or all of these stages. Whether this innovation means value-adding depends on the speed and the complexity of the process. It is suggested that if the process is slow and simple the value added from innovative work is decreasing costs of product development by reaching best-cost suppliers of innovation input. If the new product development process is slow but complex, value is added by providing product innovation solutions by offering new product attributes and enhancing current ones. This usually applies to high-end fashion firms that create two collections per year, and search for innovative product solutions, since a large part of their time is spent...
on planning, concept development and design activities. If the speed is fast, and the process is simple, timing is important. Here, value is added by delivering on time through increasing the speed of product development and scaling. The fourth type of value-adding capability that can be accomplished by an innovation intermediate includes a fast and complex new product development process. Here the innovation solution and fashion timing depends on reducing the hit or miss risk, improving the level of fashion and offering new product attributes.

In sum, studies on innovation in the fashion industry contribute to a broader understanding and explanation of product innovation, by emphasizing the stylistic part of product development. This contributes to a broader view of product development, highlighting the importance of aesthetic and symbolic concerns. The stylistic aspect, highly visible in the fashion industry, has been, to some extent, overlooked as most research has focused on functional or technological aspects of product innovation. The fashion industry may also contribute to the understanding of design and stylistic innovation in other sectors. Even though design and style are difficult to measure and assess, it has been acknowledged that it is becoming increasingly important as a complement to e.g. technological innovation (Capetta et al., 2006). As noted above, some researchers have already begun to explore and analyse the aesthetic and symbolic dimension of a product or service innovation. However, less focus has been given to explaining the actual innovative activities also contributing to stylistic innovation. This shortcoming provides an opportunity to study this type of innovation in more detail. Further, there is less research on the interconnection between stylistic innovation and other types of innovation in the fashion context. Social concepts of fashion, such as fashion cycles and trends or the fashion production and process, have been extensively researched in the fields of sociology, psychology and consumer marketing (Miller, McIntyre, & Mantrala, 1993), but there is less research on how these routinized ways of creating fashion relate to stylistic innovation or other types of innovations. Even though some researchers have suggested implications for the kind of management innovation that may enable stylistic innovation, the main focus and contribution concern innovation management (Tran, 2010).

Fashion involves creativity, inspiration, and intuition. However, in order to ensure the success of fashion as a business, management, organization and strategy also come into play. Managing creativity without impairing or impeding on it is one of the challenges to be overcome for success in the fashion industry (Saviolo & Testa, 2002). Due to the large variety of activities included in the creation of fashion, a study that combines the effect of different innovation types could provide a more holistic view of innovation in the fashion context. The present study attempts to provide a framework to explain the
interconnection of innovation types, such as stylistic, management and process innovations. However, the literature on innovation tends to be based on typologies of innovation and the process related to each innovation type. Below, I will first introduce a compartmentalized view of innovation types and some of the reasoning behind this view. But, since it is suggested in this study that innovation types are interrelated, implications for an integrated view of innovation will also be elaborated on.

2.3 Compartmentalized view of innovation

The development of innovation typologies has resulted in a number of different concepts explaining different types of innovation including product, service, process or organizational innovation. A dominant view suggests that organizations should focus on one innovation type at a time in order to gain the knowledge they need to become experts in that field (Roberts & Amit, 2003). For this reason, theory development and empirical studies have mapped different types of innovation and also the conditions, such as environmental and organizational, that either enhance or hamper the generation or adoption process of each type (Damanpour, Walker, & Avellaneda, 2009).

Innovation can be described as an iterative process, which, according to Garcia and Calantone (2002, p. 112), implies varying degrees of innovativeness that necessitate a typology to describe different innovations’ characteristics. In their literature review on empirical innovation studies, Becheikh et al. (2006) found that there is a strong link between product and process innovation. But they also found that product and process innovation follow different processes and might not have the same determinants. For this reason, Becheikh et al. (2006) suggested that researchers should consider product and process innovation separately. Further, there is a difference in how certain kinds of innovation are measured. Whereas technological innovations are usually assessed by patents, R&D expenditure, or a new product launch (Tidd, 2001), the non-technological managerial innovations are difficult to patent and the performance significance of such an innovation is hard to assess (Damanpour & Aravind, 2012). It is further suggested that the spread of management practices may differ from other innovation diffusion models. For management innovations, the process of implementation and adaptation is dynamic, contested and emergent since specific organizational contexts require their particular reconfiguration. Hence, as new management practices diffuse they are more likely to alter in new settings rather than being copied exactly the same way from one organization to another (Ansari, Reinecke, & Spaan, 2014). This reasoning has resulted in an often-made distinction between innovation as an outcome and innovation as a process. Research on innovation as a process explores how innovation is originated, developed, commercialized,
diffused, adopted, or implemented (Damanpour & Aravind, 2012). Process innovation has an internal focus with the ambition to increase the efficiency and effectiveness of internal organizational processes so as to smooth the production and delivery of goods or services to customers, including new production methods or new forms of organization. These processes may be either technological or administrative (Armbruster, Bikfalvi, Kinkel, & Lay, 2008; Damanpour, Walker, & Avellaneda, 2009). Research concerning innovation as an outcome has its focus on organizational conditions that could facilitate an organization to be innovative (Damanpour & Aravind, 2012). Innovation as an outcome has further been grouped into what is known in the literature as different types of innovation (Damanpour & Wischnevsky, 2006) such as product, service, technology, and organizational innovation.

2.3.1 Innovation types

A product or service innovation is usually defined as a new product or service introduced to meet a user need or a change in what an organization provides (Conway & Steward, 2009; Walker, 2007). In service industries, the terms service product innovation and product innovation have been used interchangeably to describe new developments in their core offerings, which tend to make these core service products more attractive to consumers (Oke, 2007). The distinction between a service and a product innovation relates to the intangible characteristics of services and the fact that services are usually produced and consumed at the same time (Conway & Steward, 2009). Both are mostly driven by customers’ demand for new products or services and executives’ aspiration to create new services and/or products for existing markets, or new markets for existing products and/or services (Damanpour et al., 2009).

The vast majority of research on innovation has focused on technology-based product and process innovations in manufacturing organizations. Hence, innovation has mainly been conceptualized as a technology-based phenomenon (Damanpour, 2014). A technological innovation embodies inventions from the industrial arts, engineering, applied sciences or pure sciences (Garcia & Calantone, 2002). Such an innovation involves modification or substitution of the components, methods, processes, and techniques that go into a product or service (Popadiuk & Choo, 2006). A technological innovation can be the adoption of a new idea, and thus relates to a new product or service. It could also be the introduction of new elements in an organization’s production process or service operations (Damanpour, Szabat, & Evan, 1989).

The generation of innovations within a technological trajectory explains innovation in a way that might not be applicable to all organizational settings. For this reason the concept of non-technological forms of innovation has recently gained increased research interest (Cerne, Jaclic, & Skerlavaj, 2013; Meuer,
Whereas technological innovation may refer to new products or new production methods, researchers have regarded non-technological innovations as new markets and new forms of organization emphasizing the social rather than the physical technologies within an organization (Armbruster et al., 2008; Meuer, 2014). There are different concepts used for this type of innovation: managerial, management, organizational, administrative, and workplace innovation. Although these terms imply innovation aspects with slightly different foci, such non-technological innovations have the general aim to contribute to innovative work in managing and organizing (Damanpour, 2014). Innovation concerned with organizing and managing involves activities such as learning, communicating, and collaborating within and across work activities, which also includes exploring new ways of working across organizational borders (Birkinshaw et al., 2008; Hammel, 2006). Examples of these types of innovation vary from smaller adjustments within an organizational activity to implementing a comprehensive management system involving the whole organization. These innovations may include new organizational structures and flexible working methods (Alasoni, 2009). Examples provided by the literature are GE’s development of the modern research lab and GM’s invention of the M-form organizational structure (Birkinshaw, Hamel, & Mol, 2008). Further examples given by Mol and Birkinshaw (2009, p. 1269) are the BP’s introduction of peer groups and the business-cell structure at Litton Interconnection Products. Although the research interest has increased in non-technological innovations, it is also suggested that innovative activities related to organizing and managing have been relatively less explored compared to other types of innovations such as product and technology innovation. There is, especially, a lack of empirical illustrations of how and why these innovations are initiated (Birkinshaw et al., 2008; Damanpour et al., 2009; Mol & Birkenshaw, 2009; Meuer, 2014; Volberda, Van den Bosch, & Heij, 2013). Hence, there is scant empirical evidence, to date for types of innovation, both of which have been referred to as non-technological innovation: stylistic innovation and management or organizational innovation.

2.3.2 The novel character of innovation

Depending on how innovations are studied or measured, different conclusions have been drawn regarding the innovativeness of an organization (Armbruster et al., 2008; Wolfe, 1994). Distinctions between innovations usually refer to the time involved in the innovation process and the level of novelty of a particular innovation. A common distinction in the literature is that between radical and incremental innovation (Popadiuk & Choo, 2006). Radical innovation refers to drastic and fundamental changes, which involves a clear departure from existing products or ways of operating in the organization, the market it serves or the industry. Incremental innovation represents a variation in existing routines by continuous, step-by-step improvements (Crossan & Apaydin,
An incremental innovation does not differ much from existing products or processes and it is usually implemented using existing organizational arrangements and resources (Vermeulen, Van Den Bosch, & Volereda, 2007). However, a radical innovation can also be understood as a series of incremental innovations (Conway & Steward, 2009), which implies that these two ways of viewing innovation can be related.

Innovation can further be considered new to an individual, a part of an organization, an organization as a whole, a sector, industry, organizational population, or the world (Damanpour et al., 2009; Loschek, 2009). Since most innovations are mixtures of emergent activities that might be in use elsewhere together with ideas that evolve over time, it is almost impossible to justify absolute novelty as a criterion (Anderson, De Dreu, & Nijstad, 2004). An organization might adopt or imitate an innovation of another organization, but implement and make it their own through their own activities. In this view, imitation is seen as a heuristic of social proof, i.e., organizations learn from other organizations about appropriate actions to minimize costs of search and experimentation (Ansari, Fiss, & Zajac, 2010).

2.4 Integrating innovations

Even though a dominant view within innovation research suggests theorizing stand-alone innovation types, this has its drawbacks. For instance, focusing on one innovation type at a time does not provide a holistic approach that would contribute to a wider understanding of innovation (Walker, 2007). Further, it does not explain how innovations may interrelate and affect one another. This is problematic since it is also recognized that various aspects of innovation are often combined or intertwined throughout the innovation process (Conway & Steward, 2009). A further contention against a compartmentalised approach to innovation, suggests that management innovation, could be essential for developing creativity, learning and change and that this is necessary precondition for other types of innovations such as technological or stylistic innovation (Lam, 2009). Hence, in order to sustain performance, the adoption of both technological and non-technological innovations, including multiple organization subsystems, may further improve other subsystems (Damanpour, 2014). This view is also supported by a study by Roberts and Amit (2003), which suggests that the performance contribution of innovation is a function of the composition of various kinds of innovations rather than of introducing only one kind. In addition, Damanpour et al. (2009) suggest that innovation happens in different parts of an organization, which implies the adoption of different forms of innovation, each of which may contribute to a certain aspect of the organization’s sustained performance. But, over time, the overall adoption of such different sorts of innovation across an organization would more
fully explain change, moving towards achieving its performance goals (p. 656). Together, these results suggest that research on innovation may benefit from examining the synchronous pattern of different forms of innovations.

This view departs from the previous reasoning that emphasizes separate strategies for each innovation type. Instead, the synchronous perspective emphasizes organizational outcomes as a result of the joint introduction of interrelated innovation types. Since research in these areas is still scarce, it is suggested that all possible relationships among such kinds of innovation types should be further explored (Damanpour, 2014). The combination of various forms of innovations has a positive effect on performance and the ability to introduce and integrate sets of innovation types creates value by differentiating the organization from other organizations. The integration of more unique and complex innovation types is harder to imitate since they provide a distinctively different character. By continually adopting innovation over time and hence modifying the composition of innovation types, organizations are better equipped to adjust to change (Damanpour et al., 2009).

The diversity of forms and definitions of innovation also provide a situation in which there is no clear consensus on what is meant by innovation, which in turn undermines understanding of its nature (Baregheh, Rowley, & Sambrook, 2009). Previous studies have addressed the problem of inconsistent results in innovation research by separating different types of innovation (Walker, 2007). The consequent abundance of typologies may result in the same conceptual term being used for different aspects of innovations, and the same innovation being classified under different conceptual terms (Garcia & Calantone, 2002). While the distinction between innovation types may well have aided researchers in understanding the adoption of innovation, according to Walker (2007), any classification system is inadequate as stand-alone innovations are not the norm when innovation is incremental rather than radical. According to his study, innovations originate in the surrounding environment, which encourages imitation while new ideas, practices, and behaviours are being disseminated. According to Damanpour and Wischnevsky (2006), the aggregated results of past empirical studies do not support theories that are based on a difference between such innovation types such as product and process. Hence a focus on typology does not improve our understanding of innovation in organizations.

However, there is little research on the outcomes of combining different forms of innovation (Damanpour et al., 2009). Because of this, further studies are recommended on how different innovation types may influence and complement one another, in other words, how the adoption of one kind of innovation affects the adoption of another over time (Damanpour et al., 1989). Organizations may benefit from learning to innovate in several different organizational
areas rather than focusing on one. Further, innovating in several areas would
ensure that the whole organization renews its ability to build, reconfigure, and
integrate internal and external abilities to manage environmental change and
stay effective over time (Damanpour et al., 2009, p. 568).

2.5 Innovation processes
To manage successful innovation processes in organizations, previous re-
search has expended considerable effort mapping out the stages in which in-
novation might evolve, in order to describe some of its common underpin-
nings. This stage-based approach commonly describes innovation as begin-
ning with idea generation and ending in commercialization (Baregheh et al.,
2009). This model states that innovation is first generated, then adopted, and
eventually diffused. These stages are regarded as distinct processes under-
taken by different actors. According to this schema, such models have been
studied at different levels of analysis, involving different individuals and or-
ganizations (Anderson et al., 2014). Generation is mainly seen as a creative
phase in which new and existing ideas are combined in novel ways to produce
new products, services or practices that were previously unknown. The adop-
tion phase is a problem-solving process in which already existing products or
processes are acquired to address and solve an existing problem. An innova-
tion can further be diffused within an organization or a larger population de-
dpending on its usability (Damanpour, 2014). Within this view, different stages
of the innovation process require different forms of organizing and different
kinds of people with different characteristics. Whereas the generation phase
comes forth from loose and fairly unstructured organizing, the implementation
and diffusion phases depend on tight logistics and quite structured organizing.
Therefore, according to this logic, creativity and improvising are suggested to
be beneficial in the first stages of the innovation process and routinized work
is recommended in the later stages (Mirvis, 1998). Activities involved in the
problem definition or construction of innovation phases are usually described
as systematic screening and manipulation of these representations to identify
relevant information, goals, restrictions, and procedures (Mumford, 2000).
When innovation is conceived of as intentional, individuals and groups are
assumed to undertake innovative activities with to gain anticipated benefits
from such innovative changes (Janssen, Van de Vliert, & West, 2004). But,
the traditional linear models of explaining innovation are increasingly com-
plemented by models acknowledging the overlapping relationships among
different actors and sectors, emphasizing the complexity of innovation
(Colapinto & Porlezza, 2012). Still, the idea generation and idea implementa-
tion predominantly remain separated explaining the innovation process (An-
derson et al., 2014).
The dominant theoretical perspective on innovation in organizations has been a rational approach, rooted in economic theory and assuming that the intention for innovation is to contribute to organizational performance and profitable outcomes (Damanpour, 2014). While this research tradition has generated studies of considerable merit highlighting important aspects of innovation, it is based on the assumption that human action is governed by rules, scripts, and plans. These models assume rational actors who scan their environment to make efficient choices (Ansari et al., 2010). However, relying on cognitive processes, assessments and calculations comes with the risk of imperfect information and constrained cognitive abilities (Boedker & Chua, 2013). A rational perspective has also meant that innovation studies frequently suggest an economic approach, highlighting the competitive and financial benefits from innovating in organizations. However, organizational studies concerned with creativity and learning rarely relate their work explicitly to innovation (Lam, 2009). In contrast, Kamoche and Cunha’s (2001) review of previous innovation process models concludes that sequential models of innovation include too much structure and planning and that they are based on a linearly retrospective reconstruction of the innovation process. The growing awareness that the innovation process is highly unpredictable and uncontrollable suggests that innovation models should not only focus on routines and structures, but also on serendipitous events and real-time adaptation, as innovation has to do with both. Even though rationality and intentionality may predetermine action, models of innovation as a sequence of rationally planned activities hence fail to explain innovations that are discrete but might have a big impact on other innovations, relationships, and work (Kamoche & Cunha, 2001). Non-deliberately activities which contribute to innovation are ignored (Chia & Holt, 2006). These goal-oriented, plan-based models of human conduct diminish the importance of the immediate context and it is unclear how these models might be applied when unplanned incidents emerge during mundane work activities. Hence, in such standardized models, situated and embodied knowledge is ignored (Heath, Knorblauch, & Luff, 2000) leaving no room for improvisation, throughout the whole process of innovation. But, empirical observations also stress the complex, multilevel and spontaneous features of innovation (Flöysand & Jacobsen, 2010) and offers evidence to counter the previous approach of viewing innovation as a set of predictable and standardized processes. For instance, the creative economy provides a context in which innovations may be characterized by cross-sectoral linkages and interdependencies (Colapinto & Porlezza, 2012). Hence, as the complexity and situated character of innovation is stressed, it is suggested to not only focus on planned rationality, but to also emphasize the context specific situations and relations in the innovation process. However, it is also suggested that the innovation process, especially with regards to cross-level and multilevel innovation attempts needs further research, emphasizing in situ approaches as
compared to large-scale questionnaire designs, which appears to be predominant in the field today (Anderson et al., 2014).

Throughout the innovation process, it has been acknowledged that both knowledge sharing and group work contribute to innovation (West, 2002). Even so, previous research has often proposed typical leadership characteristics and organizational structures which improve innovation in addition to characteristics required of individuals creating and implementing innovations (Anderson et al., 2014). Although it is recognized that the CEO or other executives within the top management team may not be the actual developers of innovation, it is commonly suggested that their role may be instrumental in creating an organizational context allowing for the experimentation and introduction of new processes, practices, and structures (Vaccaro, Jansen, Van Den Bosch, & Volberda, 2012). It is also suggested that managers may reduce uncertainty and complexity in relation to innovation’s pursuit by developing a shared vision, encouraging change, and developing a certain type of organizational culture in which individual people get recognized for innovative work (Birkinshaw et al., 2008; Dasgupta & Gupta, 2009; Vaccaro et al., 2012). However, emphasizing innovation as an individual effort overlooks the interaction and collective work of individuals. Knowledge sharing and mutual activities performed through situated methods are not considered (Heath et al., 2000; Warfield-Rawls, 2008). Too much focus on individual characteristics may not explain how the surrounding context contributes to innovative activities in practice. An alternative view to studying innovative activities would suggest that the primary motivation of an individual is to sustain mutual intelligibility, which is performed through situated methods, shared with others (Warfield-Rawls, 2008). In contrast to the individual view, Tanggaard (2012) also suggested that the situated character and the material basis of creativity in everyday life in which extraordinary processes are emphasized must be acknowledged. The complex processes and different actors acknowledged in the innovation process suggest that situated methods that are shared with others should be included in a study of innovation (Warfield-Rawls, 2008).

2.6 Interrelating routines and innovation

Research within the social sciences has provided contrasting theoretical traditions to understand the problem and interrelationship between novelty and persistence (Shove, Pantzar, & Watson, 2012). Even though it has been suggested that stability and change are related, rather than two forces that collide (Feldman & Orlikowski, 2011), the dualistic view of these imperatives as separate and opposing remains dominant (Farjoun, 2010). On the other hand, per-
ceiving routines as contrasting with creativity and innovation makes it difficult to explain the novel creative every-day work of, e.g., designers and architects (Feldman, Pentland, D'Adderio, & Lazaric, 2016).

Routines are generated within organizational contexts to create and re-create ways to perform work tasks in a recognizable way. A routine may be a set of recurrent actions performed by a number of actors and materials such as tools, technology, or machinery, to handle a certain task or achieve a certain result (Ellström, 2010; Feldman & Pentland, 2003). A routinized way of performing a task would then be to constantly repeat a pattern of activities. However, research has taken the conceptualizing of routines from being fixed entities or opaque black boxes to the view of routines as evolving according to their own dynamics (Parmigiani & Howard-Grenville, 2011). In recent studies, it has been suggested that routines are not only a source of stability and inertia, but they are also flexible and contribute to change. This is explained by the interplay between a routine’s ostensive and performative aspects, i.e., the structure and the actual performance of the routine (Feldman, 2000; Feldman, 2003; Feldman & Pentland, 2003). Routine dynamics, i.e., the way routines contribute to both stability and change, depend on these routines’ temporal aspect: they do not occur instantaneously or persist indefinitely. The dynamics of routines also depend on action patterns that may possibly change from one performance to the next (Feldman et al., 2016).

The dynamic nature of routines as likely to respond to change and thus evolve also suggests further research. Wright (2014) suggests that even though there has been considerable progress in the understanding of how repetitive activity unfolds in organizations, there are still gaps regarding knowledge of the patterns of action that constitute and sustain routines. It is also argued by Obstfeld (2012) that the way new activities actually get started in organizations is not fully explained merely by the routines themselves. According to Wright (2014) several studies tend to describe the routine’s abstract representation rather than how it is performed, which leaves the enacted process less elaborated on. Even though it is suggested that there is variety in the ways routines are performed, there is less research on the actual sources of this variety (Essén, 2008).

Many studies on routine dynamics rest on a practice-based approach emphasizing people’s situated behaviour and the mutual constitution of human actions and structures to provide descriptions and details on how routines operate and change (Parmigiani & Howard-Grenville, 2011). Here, stability and change are different outcomes of the same dynamic, rather than of different dynamics (Feldman & Orlikowski, 2011). The way routines are studied, using a practice-based approach, is similar to how practices have been studied, but the studies of routine dynamics does not use practice as the unit of analysis.
The unit of observation in routine dynamics is situated action and the unit of analysis is patterns of actions (Feldman et al., 2016). The difference in unit of analysis implies that a practice-based approach treats any phenomena, such as routines or innovations as constituted within practice. In practice theory, change is explained as emerging from the practice, adopting practice as the unit of analysis. Practices are routinized types of behaviour (Reckwitz, 2002). Practices allow for the coexistence of the old and the new since they allow for change and disorder, while also explaining persistence and order (Schatzki, 2001).

Some of the critiques of studies on routine dynamics and a practice-based approach consider that this perspective does not take into account the role of exogenous factors such as a broader historical, socio-political processes and the external origins of internal practices (Anand, Gardner, & Morris, 2007; Labatut, Aggeri, & Girard, 2012). However, a focus on capturing the micro-level, situated activities explained by practices, has been integrated into neo-institutional theory, to explain the relation between micro- and macro-level aspects of innovation. Some researchers have started to consider everyday practices more seriously as a constitutive component of institutions (Feldman & Orlikowski, 2011). The main focus has been on the micro-dynamics of institutional stability and change as denoted by people’s actions, relations, interpretations, and strategies (Labatut et al., 2012; Lawrence, 2004; Lounsbury & Crumley, 2007; Zilber, 2002). Among others, Lunsbury and Crumley (2007) and Labatut, Aggeri and Girard (2012) use routine dynamics and a practice-based approach to understand how practice innovation becomes established and institutionalized, and thus how institutional change emerges and becomes taken for granted.

Lunsbury and Crumley (2007) assume that practices can be understood as a kind of institution, providing order and meaning to a set of otherwise banal activities. They connect a practice-based approach to neo-institutional theory and the study of time-inflected micro-macro linkages, revealing how activity innovation enables new practice creation. Activity involves acts that usually lack deeper social meaning or reflection, e.g., pounding a nail. Practice, such as professional carpentry, provides order and meaning to a set of otherwise commonplace activities. Using this definition, practice is understood as a kind of institution or sets of material activities that are fundamentally interpenetrated and shaped by broader cultural frameworks such as categories, classifications, frames, and other kinds of ordered belief systems (Lounsbury & Crumley, 2007, p. 996). In their process model of practice creation, performativity-driven variations provide an endogenous mechanism and a starting point to understand how institutional change is catalysed, drawing on the work of Feldman (2003) and Feldman and Pentland (2003). The creation of a new
practice depends on if the innovation generated by practice performativity becomes socially recognized as an anomaly by field-level actors within professions, the industry, trade associations, and the media. A new practice creation can be the result of opposing actors wanting to develop novel activities and those rejecting innovation wanting to keep their existing practice field (Lounsbury & Crumley, 2007). This view is similar to Hargrave and Van de Ven’s (2006) dialectical institutional innovation and change model, which explains how the synthesis becomes the thesis for a new institutional innovation and change over time. However, Lounsbury and Crumley (2007) argue that more focus is needed on the actual creation of new practice, describing what is going on within practices and why innovations may lead to changes in existing fields or provide an entirely new practice field.

Labatut et al. (2012) also use a form of theoretical analysis combining institutional theory and a practice-based approach to identify processes of change and the emergence of practices. A framework consisting of three dimensions is proposed to analyse managerial technologies and their relation to organizational routines, providing insight into the analysis of the dynamics of micro-practices in institutions. These three dimensions can, according to Labatut et al. (2012) be viewed as creating a conceptual whole and can provide a view of technologies’ disciplinary effects and thus enhance the usual analysis of the role of artefacts in internal routine dynamics. These results have shown that the practices and belief systems of the designers and users of technologies are part of those technologies but also of broader institutions that define what is to be considered as good performance or economic value. The role of context, organizational structure, and practices in the construction of synergetic ostensive patterns allowing for participants’ coordination was identified based on the analysis.

Even though routine dynamics and a practice-based approach may provide answers to how and why innovations emerge at a micro-level, studies integrating practice and institutional approaches do not consider the interrelationship among practices in time and space, which would enable the study of innovations in various places over time, and, in doing so, offer an account of a larger context merely by the practices. These studies manage to explain how and why innovations come about, but practices are only used as a component within institutions. Hence, these studies do not rely on the practice approach to understand the interrelated larger context, but rather on institutional theory. However, it is also suggested that practices explain the interlinkage between the situated events and the larger context. When adopting a practice-based approach to understand this relationship, institutions and structures can instead be seen as effects of action as much as the other way around. In this view, there is no need for higher-level aggregations above practices and practice arrangements bundles (Ahrens & Chapman, 2007).
There has been a reliance in some studies on a practice-based approach to explain change and innovation, theoretically and empirically. Shove and Pantzar (2005) explain innovation in consumption by the empirical case of Nordic walking. According to the authors, this practice emerged through the active and ongoing integration of images, artefacts and forms of competence that involved both producers and consumers. The new practice is viewed as an innovation. Even though the elements already existed, (sticks, social and physical skills, and the idea of walking for fun), they were linked together in a novel way, created a new practice and by that an innovation. The way practices change over time and why has been explained by Shove et al., (2012) to depend on the constituting elements meanings, skills and tools, using empirical examples about consumption, sports and lifestyles. These researchers acknowledge that it is normal to distinguish between conditions and relationships throughout the innovation process. However, they suggest that practice theories make it possible to bridge these gaps and analyse invention, innovation, and diffusion in similar terms. The emphasis is on the active and dynamic relation between producers and consumers, creating novel arrangements and further to sustain and/or develop these arrangements over time. In organizations, practices may already exist, but each time a practice is performed it is also re-produced on each novel occasion (Nicolini, 2013). This is highlighted by Yakhlef and Essén (2013), who studied how care workers in two community care organizations coped with the demands of their unpredictable work. Due to changing circumstances, these workers improvised and innovated, using their skilled bodies in spontaneous ways. According to these researchers, the body as a carrier of practices can learn and act innovatively, but also resists bureaucratic power. When certain tasks are about to be performed, conflict with the practitioner’s spontaneous expressive-responsive performances changes in practices are created. Hence, a practice-based approach provides a promising way to understand how different aspects relate to one another, explaining innovation.

2.7 Conclusion

This chapter set out to review the relevant literature on innovation with a particular focus on studies of creativity and fashion in order to provide an overview of their strengths and limitations. The dominant views on innovation have mainly been influenced by technologically-based manufacturing sectors. However, non-technological innovations such as management and stylistic innovations have gained increased research interest. Various typologies of innovation and the step-by-step models offer a well-developed and coherent view of each innovation type. Previous research on innovation has suggested that different types of innovation may require different sorts of processes and
skills. This has been posited as the reason why the generation, adoption and diffusion may differ according to a specific innovation type. Previous studies on innovation within the fashion context complement the existing innovation literature by highlighting the stylistic aspect of product innovation and how the process of stylistic innovation might come about.

Even though the literature on innovation is wide in scope, providing well-developed models for different types of innovations, some limitations were found. These can be summarized into three related points of concern which will be further investigated in the present study. First, there has been limited research on relationships among different aspects of innovation or how combinations of innovation types may affect one another and mundane work. The internal organizational dynamics including linking different types of innovation within organizations or the relationship between learning, technologies and the surrounding environment require further research (Lam, 2009). The literature on innovation mainly focuses on one innovation type at a time such as product innovation or management innovation. The distinction between product and process innovation, or between technological and non-technological innovation is problematic since the relationship between such types and the processes among them are ignored. However, since different types of innovation might be combined in the innovation process (Conway & Steward, 2009), it has also been proposed that the impact of innovation on organizational performance depends on co-adoption of different innovation types over time. This challenges the models explaining stand-alone innovations. Adopting a single technical or managerial innovation might not allow organizations to fully recognize all the positive consequences of innovation or why innovation might be hampered (Damanpour & Aravind, 2012).

Second, separating innovation types and their processes emphasizes models explaining innovations one by one. Although research has provided many insightful theories on innovation, most conceptual models of innovative activities in organizations adopt a rational and cognitive perspective assuming that innovation is a means towards a larger end. Innovation is hence introduced to maintain or improve organizational performance or effectiveness (Birkinshaw et al., 2008; Damanpour & Aravind, 2012). Further, the innovation process is commonly separated into idea generation and idea implementation (Anderson et al., 2014). According to West (2002) innovation is restricted to intentional attempts to reach economic benefits, personal growth, improved group work or better organizational communication. This view hence provides a positively biased understanding of innovation based on the intention to pursue desirable outcomes (Damanpour & Aravind, 2012). These models of innovation further assume reflexive and purposive actions to realize such an outcome. However, with this view we miss the mode in which innovative activities emerge non-
deliberately through everyday practical actions (Chia & Holt, 2006). Unin-
tended activities contributing to innovation are hence left out of the explana-
tion. For that reason it has also been acknowledged that innovation cannot be strictly planned, but also involves flexibility and improvisation (Kamoche & Cunha, 2001). Consequently, this critique suggests further research of the rel-
ation between routines, planning, and improvisation to explain innovation in everyday work, an approach in which continuity and renewal are related through collective work. In situ approaches are stressed to explain how ide-
generation and implementation are integrated, including cross-level and multi-
tilevel innovation attempts (Anderson et al., 2014).

This leads to the third area of focus in this research, namely the research con-
text. Even though creative industries have faced an increased academic inter-
est, research relating to innovation is still limited. Research on innovation in
the fashion industry has mainly focused on product development with a spe-
cial emphasis on stylistic innovation as a complement to functional or techno-
logical innovation. Fashion is dependent on stylistic innovation (Tran, 2010),
but it also depends on technological changes such as constant developments
and innovations in fibres, textile, and the production industry (Unay & Zehir,
2012). Further, these activities can also be related to organizational innovation
since the implementation of a new technology might involve new ways of
working. Understanding innovation as relating to management and organiza-
tional activities together with technology, and stylistic innovation could con-
tribute to the understanding of how innovation types can be related and ex-
plained in an every-day setting. The seasonal, routinized ways of producing
new collections within the fashion industry is a context in which innovation
has been less researched. Routines may change by their own dynamics, and
this seems to be part of the explanation of innovation, but the newness is not
fully explained merely by the routine (Obstfeld, 2012).

To capture the relationship between stability and change in the innovation pro-
cess, a practice-based approach is adopted in the present study. In recent years,
a number of researchers have turned to practice theories to relate performances
and provide a different view on how actions unfold. Within organization stud-
ies there has been an increasing interest in the detailed understanding of how
and why real-time practices are carried out (Gherardi, 2009; Nicolini, 2009;
Schatzki, 2007). Because of this, a practice-based approach has provided new
insights in fields of research such as strategy, technology, accounting and
learning (Contu & Willmott, 2006; Miettinen, Samra-Fredricks, & Yanow,
2009). Whereas a rational approach to innovation suggests that human behav-
ior is determined by factors that can be explained by step-by-step models, a
practice-based approach suggests that behavior is understood as performing
practices that guide and are shaped by collective activities. A practice-based
approach also provides an alternative way of understanding an organization
compared to, e.g., traditional structural-mechanistic and functional-systemic views (Nicolini, 2013). This way of viewing an organization, as interrelated practices provides an approach to innovation in mundane work as an ongoing activity. A practice-based approach recognizes the inherent relationship between imperatives that have been treated dichotomously (Feldman & Orlikowski, 2011). The relational view of a practice-based approach holds there are no levels of reality, but the world consists of interrelated practices. Consisting of elements and linkages between these elements (Schatzki, 1996; Shove, Pantzar, & Watson, 2012), a practice-based approach offers a promising view in which innovation types can be understood as interrelated, to answer the question of how and why innovations emerge and develop in a fashion context.
Building on a practice-based approach, this chapter provides a theoretical foundation to explain innovation in a fashion context in terms of the relation between planned, routinized and improvised activities. This approach emphasizes the affiliation between the old and the new, planned and improvised events, and continuity and change. It is suggested that a practice consists of three elements: skills, materials, and engagements, which together organize each practice and provide the background understandings to perform particular practices. The notion of planned, improvised routines, developed in this framework, holds a theoretical assumption that routinized activities, organized by the practice, are sustained and advanced by both planning and improvising, in which innovation is understood as a consequence of this interrelation. Recognizing innovation as planning and improvising on routines further relates activities that belong to what has been explained as different innovation types and different sequences, usually described in the innovation process. The interrelatedness among practices and practitioners also contributes to the understanding of how innovations relate within and across organizations in a fashion setting. Practices relate to one another through their overlapping elements and through practitioners performing multiple practices.

In the present study, a practice-based approach provides an understanding of how daily work unfolds and interrelates to innovation. Any action or behaviour can be regarded as part of a practice; hence individuals are carriers of practices and are carrying out this or that practice (Schatzki, 2001). Sayings and doings of designing, teaching, or cooking can all be viewed as performing a practice. This way of understanding the social implies a certain way of seeing and analysing social phenomena in which practices are the unit of analysis (Reckwitz, 2002). The rendition of the concept of practice was proposed and supported by numerous researchers with varied approaches, who have sometimes differed in terminology they used (Miettinen et al., 2009; Nicolini, 2013; Nicolini & Monteiro, 2017). Seemingly, there is no unified practice-based approach, but several practice theories.
According to Schatzki (2012) there are some general commonalities within a practice-based approach of which three are particularly significant. First, a practice is an organized constellation of different people’s activities. Second, important features of human life are understood by human activities, which however are not individual activities, but occur in practices of collective learned and repeated actions based on shared knowledge. Third, human activity rests on something that is hard to express in words. This non-propositional thing is bodily and opposes the mind-body dualism. Examples of this something are Merleau-Ponty’s habits/schemas, Dreyfus’ skills, Ryle’s know how, Bourdieu’s habitus, and Giddens’ practical consciousness (Schatzki, 2012, p.14). Practices and the activities performed within them create meaning, order, and reality. Practices have a history, a constituency and normative dimension: they do not produce or depend on any hidden forces that other theories may describe (Nicolini & Monteiro, 2017).

Since there is not one unified account of a practice-based approach, this chapter will introduce and elaborate on concepts considered relevant for such an approach within the context of investigating innovation in a fashion setting. Even though it is suggested that practices develop and change over time, as Hui (2017) argues, a vocabulary for explaining how practices vary is underdeveloped. For this reason, a framework is established in this chapter through which to understand innovation in a fashion setting. This framework will be revisited after the analysis to answer to the aim of the present study.

In this chapter, I will first elaborate on the organizing of practice, hence the elements a practice is comprised of, how these elements are linked and what implications that might have for innovation. Then, I will discuss practitioners and their impacts when performing practices. The interconnection of practices and practitioners will also be elaborated on, focusing on its relevance for innovation. These three aspects of a practice-based approach form the theoretical framework that will guide the analysis of the empirical evidence collected in the present study.

In this framework, innovation is understood as planning and improvising on routines, which includes both the process and the outcome of innovation. A practice can be described as a flow of routinized activities organized by three elements: skills, materials, and engagements. However, this flow can be interrupted due to changes in one or many of the elements, which consequently has implications for how practitioners might respond in a planned and/or improvised way. Planned responses within the fashion context may be the result of earlier improvisations which have worked well. Improvisation is understood as the conception of action as it unfolds, drawing on available material, cognitive, affective and social resources (Kamoche, Cunha, & Da Cunha, 2002). The background knowledge is provided by the organizing of practice and the
interrelation among practices collectively performed. From this perspective, improvising enacts an ongoing series of innovations that embellish the original routines. Improvisation is a response to spontaneous departures and unexpected opportunities, which iterate and build on one another over time (Orlikowski & Hofman, 1997, p. 13). Improvisation is contingent on the background knowledge and experience of practitioners as well as the availability of resources which present the opportunity for improvisation.

3.1 The elements of practice

In order to understand the background knowledge that enables the routinized activities, and planned and improvised innovative responses, the elements of a practice that organize sayings and doings require an introduction. An action belongs to a practice if it expresses the elements that also organize the practice (Schatzki, 2012). In the present framework, I suggest that practices consist of three elements: skills, materials and engagements and the relationships between these. This way of viewing practices is supported by some previous practice theorists. Each of these three elements chosen for this study as the focus of analysis, will be explained with reference to this literature. According to Reckwitz (2002, p. 249) practices are routinized types of behaviours, consisting of several elements, interconnected to one another: forms of bodily activities, forms of mental activities, things and their uses, a background knowledge in the form of understanding, know-how, states of emotion and motivational knowledge. Schatzki (1996) suggests there are three major avenues of linkage that are involved. The first is through understandings of, for example, what to say and do. The second linkage is explicit rules, principles, and instructions. The third is teleo-affective structures, which embrace ends, projects, tasks, purposes, beliefs, emotions, and moods, also link actions within practices. These links are referred to as the organization of the practice (Schatzki, 1996, p. 89). In addition Schatzki (2012) developed these elements to practical understandings, general understandings, rules, and teleo-affective structures. Warde (2005) suggests that the components of understandings, procedures, and engagements coordinate what is said and done in practices. According to Shove et al., (2012), practices are interdependent relations between three elements: material, competence, and meaning. Depending on how these links are connected, sustained, or broken, practices emerge, persist, shift or disappear (Shove et al., 2012). As can be seen, all researchers emphasize the interconnections between the elements they have designated. In this study, the framework consists of skills, materials, and engagements. These have been specifically chosen as the elements of practices under investigation, suitable to explain innovation in a fashion setting. The motivation for each element and its contribution is described below.
3.1.1 Skills

In this framework, skills refer to the knowledge required to understand and/or perform a practice. Skills include professional and personal competence, knowing how to act in a social setting or how to approach or use a certain tool. Each practice contains specific forms of knowledge which form a highly implicit, and historically-culturally specific way of understanding that holds together the practitioner and his or her acts and behaviours, so that they form a practice (Reckwitz, 2002, p. 253). Understandable patterns of past, present and future behaviour, intelligible combinations of life conditions, and the relevance of the immediate and wider situation to expressivity is hence determined by practice (Schatzki, 1996). In this view, skills are acquired, performed and observed by acting within a particular situation for a specific purpose. Knowing how to actually perform something might be different from having an abstract understanding of a particular performance or being able to judge how someone else performs an activity, a distinction which Schatzki (2012) acknowledged. Even though it may be important to distinguish between practical and general understandings, as Schatzki (2012) has, with regards to how well someone can perform a practice, as Shove et al. (2012) describe with their element competence, skills of recognizing and skills of saying or doing a particular activity are both understood by the term of skills in this framework. Hence, skills do not only refer to what someone can perform, but also if someone can recognize, understand and respond to actions.

Schatzki (1996) recognizes rules as distinct and separate element of its own in practice. Rules are an explicitly formulated directive, instruction or edict, which are continuously devised and produced by humans although each individual may act according to his or her own understanding of a rule (Schatzki, 2012). Hence, understandings and rules are also closely related, which is why knowledge about certain instructions or principles will be regarded as skills in the present framework. Instructions and rules may also be a way of gaining new skills of how to perform or understand a practice. Skills are important to sustain a practice, and by that plan ahead in time, but skills are also necessary to improvise and innovate, since they involve the background knowledge that enables improvisation (Orlikowski & Hofman, 1997). Knowledge of how to perform a certain practice is constantly acquired and refined as the practice is performed. The dynamics of skills depend on alterations in rules, inscriptions, and an experienced way of knowing how to perform. The ability to perform innovative adjustments to actions is acquired when learning, performing or adjusting skills. Further, performing improvisations routinely, in a planned way, also increases the ability to improvise. Hence, improvisation is a skill on its own that may grow stronger within a practice (Kamoche et al., 2002). Skills might have to change due to an innovation, develop in an innovative way, or themselves generate innovations. On the other hand, skills may also be deeply
rooted in practice, which might hinder the occurrence of innovative activities. Skills as an organizing element fits well with a creative setting such as the fashion industry since most activities are dependent on skills that relate to the routinized way of producing fashion, including knowing how to create, produce, and distribute a collection. Artistic and creative skills that contribute to novelty, product development, and innovation are also important in this setting. Thus skills are necessary for both routinized and innovative activities.

3.1.2 Materials

Materiality matters within practice theory, but there are different opinions as to whether materiality merely mediates human activity or is constitutes part of practices (Gherardi, 2017) as it is claimed by some authors (e.g. Reckwitz, 2002; Shove et al., 2012). However, it is also argued that considering materials as an element of a practice does not capture the connective quality of materials that cuts across and links multiple practices at once, such as buildings and infrastructure, since it side-lined their spatial and spatialising properties (Blue & Spurling, 2017, p. 32). Schatzki (2012), in support of this view, uses the concept of material arrangements to describe how artefacts and technology do not belong to a certain practice but surrounds practices. Thus, the activities that compose practices are bound up with material entities in a mesh of practices and material arrangements that both maintains and alters the way individuals carry out activities. But, this conceptualization also loses some of the constitutive property of materials, describing it as somehow outside practices (Blue & Spurling, 2017). As will be further discussed, all elements in the practice-based framework for the current research study both constitute and connect practices. Here, materials are viewed as an element which organizes the activities of a practice (together with skills and engagements) and by this means materials also link practices to one another.

In the present framework, materials refer to a number of tangible items such as available objects, tools, and technologies with which to perform a practice. Materials can vary in terms of their importance to a certain practice. They could be obligatory to a certain activity or substitutable but also used in different combinations depending on when and where a practice is performed (Hui, 2017). There is no subject-subject relation priority over subject-object relations within practice theory. Most practices consist of routinized relationships between practitioners and artefacts reproducing the social (Reckwitz, 2002). Technology and artefacts are more than neutral material items; also evoke certain meanings, knowledge, and behaviour (Gärtner, 2013). In this framework, materials can both enable innovations and become the result of an innovation. People meet around materials and they do things with materials. Materials are hence relevant to innovation since any new tool, an absent ob-
ject, or a change in technology may trigger improvisation, contribute to planning, and sustain or alter routines, consequently generating innovations. But, it is also important to recognize that certain tools and technologies may sustain the organizing of practice in a way that restricts innovation. Yet, if a certain material (object, tool or technology) cannot be accessed, initial innovative planning might have to be revised and innovation may occur as a result. In the fashion industry, materials such as technology, fabrics, and garments are constantly present, organizing activities. Thus materials may sustain a practice, but materials also provide opportunities for practitioners to innovate as they are performing their activities. In this way, engaging with a certain material might contribute to new ways of working (organizational or process innovation) and new product development (stylistic or product innovation).

3.1.3 Engagements

Ends, projects, tasks, purposes, beliefs, emotions, and moods also organize actions within a practice. In this framework, ends, emotions or moods that guide practitioners to perform a practice are referred to as engagements. Engagements are a motivating force, which makes practitioners strive towards something or resist certain actions. Activities do not make sense within a certain practice if they are not organized around a purpose. Activities such as decisions and agency only acquire meaning as part of a practice and its temporal, historical unfolding (Nicolini & Monteiro, 2017). Schatzki (1996; 2001; 2012) refers in a similar way to teleoaffective structures that guides practitioners to perform particular actions for the sake of particular ends and the moods and emotions that individuals carrying out a practice may acceptably express. Ends and projects that are pursued in performing these actions are contained in the teleoaffective structure of the practices. Hence, to pursue them is to carry on the practice. Individuals coexist via particular chains of actions and particular teleological commonalities and orchestrations as part of the practice. Shove et al. (2012) refer to the element meaning, which includes symbolic meanings, ideas, and aspirations. They suggest that meaning has less the ongoing, unfolding characteristic of ends and projects, but treat meaning as an element of practice. In this framework, engagements are an organizing element of practices, with a guiding characteristic. Engagements may both hinder or encourage actions depending on what seems to be the right thing to do in a certain situation. Engagements hence involve an emotional aspect and reasons for proceeding towards a certain outcome.

Engagements may support routinized behaviour and planning ahead, but also connect to improvisation due to the anxiety which improvisational performance entails (Kamoche et al., 2002). The engagements that encourage carrying out a practice are of importance to sustain activities within practices. How-
ever, these engagements may also alter due to changing surrounding conditions, which in turn may initiate innovative responses. The dynamics of engagements involve strong beliefs guiding actions together with change or alternative views which result from changes in circumstances. Aesthetics and design activities are indeed organized in part by emotions, such as a desire to create new designs. Engagements are important to create novel products and to work in innovative ways. Engagements may also hinder innovation in this setting when these are related to routinized behaviours involving some emotional resistance towards change. The potential tension between choices based on economic and artistic decisions may also create conflicts that could both hinder or encourage innovations in the fashion setting. Emotions and moods associated with this dynamic, so characteristic of the fashion industry, also form part of the organizing element engagements.

3.1.4 The interrelatedness of elements

The links between the elements of a practice are just as important as the elements themselves. All three elements mutually affect and shape one another, which is important to understand change and innovation in practices. The organizing of a practice suggests that it is stable to some extent, but it is also evident that the linkages between these elements which organize the sayings and doings are all subject to challenges and changes in different ways. Hence, these linkages, can further the understanding of how activities are performed in a routinized way, but also how innovations occur due to planned and improvisational performances.

Practices change when new elements are introduced or when existing elements are combined in new ways (Shove et al., 2012 p. 120). What is new, however, does not have to be new to the world, but new to the practice. Hence, a change in technology links to new required skills, which might change the engagements in performing a practice. A change in engagements might call for new or altered materials and skills. These situations are referred to as contingent events (Schatzki, 2001) or everyday crises of routines (Reckwitz, 2002). These events explain how and why novelty emerges in practice. Innovation in practice is about the way in which the constituent elements of a practice fit together in new ways. When we are aware of the practice, its elements and linkages, innovation can be explained as incremental and discrete. Practices inherently combine reproduction and innovation (Warde, 2005). In this view, the typologies of product innovation, process innovation, management innovation or stylistic innovation are less important since they interrelate and affect one another within the organizing of practice. The process and the outcome of an innovation are also interrelated in practice. Implementing one innovation, e.g. a new way of working, may require new skills, new materials
or the altered use of materials, and this alters or creates new engagements towards working routines. These engagements might, in turn, create a need for further new materials, which requires new skills, and so on. Viewing practices as interlinked elements hence provides a way to study and analyse innovations not only as stand-alone types and stages in a particular process but as interrelated performances, as suggested by the organizing of practices.

3.2 Change among practices

A practice-based approach has commonly been associated with micro studies, facing the criticism of neglecting the larger picture (Hui, Schatzki, & Shove, 2017). However, recognizing practices as collective routinized behaviour implies that a practice might involve practitioners at different locations and levels, and at different points of time (Becker, 2004; Reckwitz, 2002). Practices are joined together when performed at the same time or bound to one another in different ways, both harmonious and conflicting (Nicolini & Monteiro, 2017). The difference between smaller social phenomena and larger ones is the difference between less and more extensive bundles of practices. Social development then rests on the emergence, persistence and dissolution of bundles of practices (Schatzki, 2012). A practice may involve two or more practitioners from different organizations or organizations may relate through one or many practices. This provides an opportunity to study how the combinations of internal and external activities of an organization contribute to both establishing and altering organizational work routines. From a practice perspective, routinized work and deviations from the same routines emerge from activities that alter the way work is performed in one part of an organization, the whole organization, or among organizations, depending on the number of practices and practitioners involved. It logically follows that any process can be understood as a seamless integration of practices (Shove et al., 2012).

In order to understand how innovations come about in relation to other innovations within and across practices, their interrelatedness is an important aspect. Various practices form constellations (Hui et al., 2017), which enables the study of innovations in various places through time. The interconnectedness among practices also explains why practices, competing for the same resources, such as time and practitioners, may be less aligned or hinder innovation. Tensions and inconsistencies are created within and among practices from misalignment between elements, practitioners, and practices. Tensions arise due to competition between old and new activities or the introduction of a new element such as technologies or rules. The resolution of these tensions often triggers the expansion of practices and, by that, creates novel ways of performing a practice or new alignments between practices (Nicolini & Monteiro, 2017).
The way practices compete or collaborate in different times and places have been conceptualized as bundles, complexes, constellations and systems of practices. But, even though these concepts are useful to understand how practices connect to one another, these concepts do not fully explain the relationships between the connections that hold practices together, as suggested by Blue and Spurling (2017). In other words, the way different practices affect one another has not been fully explored (Warde, 2005). According to (Nicolini, 2017) concepts such as nets, networks, congregation and assemblage are commonly used figuratively rather than analytically. Few pragmatic indications are provided on how to approach this world empirically and operationalize it.

In the present framework, it is not suggested that practices are linked together by surrounding contextual features or arrangements. Rather, I propose that it is the practices and the interrelationship between practices that create the context that is held together by their own features. These are provided by the elements skills, materials and engagements, and their interaction. When practices connect and influence one another, different qualities may influence and contribute to innovation, but it is the practices and their interconnections that define these qualities. Knowledge is shared among practices and practitioners, innovations are adopted and ways to proceed are imitated, planned and improvised (Warde, 2005). For example, introducing and using a new object such as computer software may influence more than one practice and change the way work is performed in all practices dependent on this software. Skills may be shared in different practices, the same materiality can be used in different practices, and the engagements organizing performances of a practice might be the same as for carrying out another practice.

Since practices are shared, related and performed at different locations, it is also important to understand that practices do not exclusively influence one another positively. As mentioned, practices to some extent compete for scarce resources such as time, practitioners or space. Some activities within practices cannot be perform at the same time, or one practice may be dependent on activities performed within another practice. However, these situations may also hold a seed for innovative activities since they have to be resolved in the best possible way at that particular point in time. The fashion industry provides a suitable context to further explore how practices and practitioners integrate, both in opposing and compatible ways. The routinized seasonal production implies a number of practices that have to be coordinated in a routinized, yet creative way, both locally and globally.
3.3 Practice as shared performances

Practices are not a set of individual activities or an innate mental faculty, but are collectively performed activities (Gherardi, 2012; Schatzki, 1996; 2005). Due to the focus on practices as the unit of analysis, a common criticism towards practice-based approaches is that they neglect the individuals that perform the activities organized by practices (Nicolini & Monteiro, 2017). I take the view that even though individuals are not viewed as rational thinkers and decisions-makers driving innovations by themselves, each individual has an important role as a carrier and a performer of practices. Bodily doings and sayings, and bodily sensations and feelings are the media in which life and mind/action are present in the world. This means that an individual can understand other practitioners’ conditions by observing what they say and do. Individuals participate in practices and talk with and about each other in mutually intelligible ways. One individual’s condition hence generally depends on how other practitioners act towards and talk about him or her, about one another and themselves (Schatzki, 1996, p. 82). Even though the performed practices are shared, there are various practitioners with various abilities. The lived body has many characters of bodily experience, which is a rich but sometimes tacit knowledge expressed in different contexts (Hindmarsh & Pilnick, 2007). Although the expressive significance of bodily activities is socially instituted, each person exhibits a unique style: a unique subset of particular actions and words and unique ways of performing common activities. Even natural reactions exhibit nuanced variations (Schatzki, 1996).

Since every practitioner carries and carries out many practices, they also become unique crossing points of practices and of bodily-mental routines (Reckwitz, 2002). Being a carrier of several practices, a practitioner performs activities which may involve tasks and purposes that characterize business practices within a particular organization but also those that do not belong to the particular organization (Schatzki, 1996). The experience of carrying out one practice could hence affect how the same individual carries out another practice; an experience that might alter the way these practices are performed and initiate innovative activities. With experience, practitioners learn within the practice what is appropriate and what is not appropriate. Practices are also dynamic since people in myriad situations adapt, improvise and experiment, which provides the opportunity for constantly innovative activities (Warde, 2005). The purpose of performing a practice is to produce sameness complement to what is, by definition, different and changeable. Practice is thus inherently an act of creation, invention, improvisation, and innovation. Each time a practice is performed it is reproduced on each novel occasion (Nicolini, 2013). In this view, the interrelationship between routines, plans, and improvisation as innovation is close since it is the smaller adjustments or deviations from routines that trigger innovative activities.
3.3.1 Performing a practice

Since practices are dynamic, they invite both resistance and the opportunity for practitioners to reflect about what to do in a certain situation which has prompted change (Nicolini & Monteiro, 2017). The smooth teamwork or tacitly agreed on ways to conduct a task in a routinized way may be altered when new practitioners join an organization and learn to perform a practice (Hindmarsh & Pilnick, 2007). Learning is, to a large extent, about imitating the more experienced practitioners, but, in their learning process, a novice’s actions may inspire innovative actions too due to not performing in the commonly agreed routinized way. Since practices are shared, learning what a practice is and enacting it is inseparable. This is one reason why practices change and enable innovation (Barnes, 2001). Experienced practitioners may impart their knowledge to novices to maintain their power and position. However, novices may try to do things differently to gain independence and to claim originality for themselves. In this way performing a practice is to imitate and repeat what already exists, but also an active negotiation of interests, interpretations, and knowledge (Alkemeyer & Buschmann, 2017), which can, in itself, be innovative. The relation between imitation and invention has been explained by Tarde (1903). An imitated action contains a potential surplus, allowing it to deviate into something else. For this reason, Tarde suggested that the most imitative person was also an innovator. A practice, which has been repeated in a routinized way, could turn into an innovative act in an imitated, yet unintended way. This means that every imitated activity holds the seed for something novel (Barry & Thrift, 2007, p. 517). Shared activities, involving the imitation of publicly observable skills, speaking, signalling, expressing emotions and so forth explain how learning and innovation is a collective action. People shape their situation and are simultaneously shaped by their surrounding context (Yakhlef, 2010). Imitation, learning and adapting are also related to the inherent and continual change which shapes fashion. Due to individuals collectively performing the practices of this industry, but with individual specificity, fashion combines consistency and creativity, rules, and innovation (Esposito, 2011). Hence, fashion provides a well-suited context to further explore the relationship between imitation and innovation.

The relationship between routines, improvisation and innovation has been researched and elaborated on using the jazz metaphor (Kamoche & Cunha, 2001; Weick, 1998), improvisational theatre (Sawyer, 2000) and improvising in dance performances (Slutskaya, 2006). In these settings, it might seem like actors are improvising on stage, but solid rehearsal lays the foundations (Orlikowski & Hofman, 1997). Even though artists improvise, they also retain certain works in their repertoire and rehearse them repeatedly, which interrelates previous background knowledge and routines with improvisation. In this way, an act of improvisation can, in time, become one of innovation.
In an organizational setting, the background knowledge required for improvisation, can be referred to as the organizational memory (Walsh & Ungson, 1991), which includes the frames of reference, routines, and structures that contribute to the knowledge within an organization and its collectively held beliefs, behaviours, and artefacts. According to Moorman and Miner (1998), a high level of organizational memory is therefore present in activities familiar to an organization such as well-established team routines, and minor modifications to existing products or processes.

When innovation is planned for, tools and resources can be gathered in advance to implement anticipated change. In contrast, when fast action is required, an organization with high organizational memory might, therefore, rely on existing routines. But, since the extemporaneous nature of improvisation holds there is close to no time in between conceiving and implementing an innovation, the improvisation-effectiveness relationship will be even more dependent on existing organizational memory in new product and process development and innovation (Moorman & Miner, 1998). These researchers’ findings support the importance of common background knowledge (organizational memory) for a positive outcome effect of improvisation on design-, cost-, and time-efficiency. Within the present framework, the practices lay the foundation to this background knowledge, which enables planned innovation. But, at the same time, routinized activities, created by the organizing of practices, also promote the background knowledge required to perform improvisational innovations and gain new knowledge.

Dreyfus and Dreyfus (2005) identify five stages of skill acquisition, which tie rules, understandings, and knowledge together: novice, advanced beginner, competence, proficiency, and expertise. These stages are useful to explain how a practitioner engages in a practice and by that learns how to perform, plan, and improvise in practice. Being a novice, the learner is provided with a set of instructions to follow and gain experience. However, if a person only seeks to follow general rules, he or she will not go beyond the level of competence. At the level of competence there is also an emotional investment since the learner feels responsible for his or her choices. Within this process of skill development through repetition and rehearsed practice, improvement does not arise by intellectually analysing insights and mistakes, but to let them sink in, to eventually become an expert. The expert has the ability to make more subtle and refined discriminations than the proficient performer. Whereas the proficient performer sees what needs to be done then decides how to do it, the expert sees immediately how to achieve the task.

It is hence suggested that the expert is not following any rules, but does what normally works. The expert is still able to reflect and view a situation in alternative ways but through intuition rather than calculated rationality. Learning
hence depends on taking responsibility for mistakes and not trying to prevent them by fool-proof rules. Reflection and deliberation could be sought whenever there is time, but when entering this detached mode, expert intuitive judgment is lost (Dreyfus & Dreyfus, 2005). "What normally works" is understood, in the present framework, as improvising routinely or improvised routines. According to Radman (2012) the non-reflective, implicit guide, which provides possible actions for us to cope with the world occurs before the "self" knows what to do. In other words, this what happens in the background. It is routine rather than reasoning that guides behaviour. Automatism enables our participation in the natural and cultural setting in effortless ways, rather than the threat of consequences for the violation of authority. This is how we figure out what is going on in our surroundings and how we respond to it through embodied coping and corporeal cognition (Radman, 2012). By reducing the distinction between thinking and acting, an embodied view of learning and knowing includes what takes place in the tacit mode (Yakhlef, 2010). It is also suggested by Glaveanu (2012) that expertise is an important condition for a higher level of creativity since an expert does not have to pay as much attention to the rules and norms as the novice. Instead, the expert can refine routines in an innovative way. The skilled body is a meeting point of mind and activity (Schatzki, 2001) in which reflection and action are interdependently performed. Innovative activities emerge by adapting bodily expressive-responsive abilities in real-time changing circumstances. When a practitioner gets involved with the practice in an experienced way, the bodily skills take over. Learners, who have not yet achieved the skills of an expert, may step back to explicit rules and instructions to cope with a situation. But experts also develop their practical skills to cope with the practice they participate in (Yakhlef & Essén, 2013). Everyday practices are hence evident patterns of actions arising from habituated tendencies and internalized dispositions, and not only from deliberate, purposeful, goal-setting initiatives (Chia & MacKay, 2007) but from an interrelationship between improvisation and routines.

The background knowledge provided by practices makes it possible to plan activities ahead, but it is also the background knowledge that provides practitioners with skills to improvise. Improvisation might occur when facing unexpected events that make prior planning irrelevant or incomplete in essential ways. Such events often depend on a context in which it is difficult not to act or complete a new planning cycle to move on with work ahead (Moorman & Miner, 1998). Improvisation is a concept that works well within a practice-based approach to understand and explain innovation. It responds to the criticism of neglecting the activities actually performed by individuals (Nicolini & Monteiro, 2017) since improvisation emphasizes the ongoing and situated novelty in mundane work performed by individuals. Innovation understood as improvised routines answers to the critique of linear sequential innovation models, which has been and still is the dominant image in innovation literature.
by converging the ideation and implementation phases (Moorman & Miner, 1998). However, improvisation does not contradict planning, it is rather considered complementary performances to planned activities (Leone, 2010). Planning and improvising are also concepts that correspond to a creative setting such as the fashion industry. Creativity may or may not involve improvisation. For instance, a creative idea might never be executed, but creativity may represent a very valuable competence for improvising in organizations (Miner, Bassoff, & Moorman, 2001). The fashion industry is continuously developing new products and designs, but in a cyclical planned way. However, planning in this context also relates to improvisation due to the problem-solving often facing the fashion industry (Maramotti, 2000).

3.4 Conclusion: Innovating as planning and improvising on routines

The present practice-based framework suggests a combination of the organizing of practices, the interaction of practices, and the performing practitioners to explain innovation as relational and ongoing in mundane work. Similar to how Glaveanu (2012) treats habit, improvisation, and innovation, this framework also suggests that routines, plans, improvisation and innovation cannot be ordered in a continuum, as separate entities, but are embedded within one another. In this view, plans, improvisation and innovation does not break with routines, they are grounded in forms of routinized actions. Adopting a practice-based approach suggests that whenever there is a change in one or more of the elements organizing a practice, practitioners may plan and/or improvise to adjust to that change. Hence in the present framework, innovation emerges from practice and the way practitioners perform according to the new organizing of practice. However, planning and improvising do not have to result in innovation. The phenomena are closely related to other motivating factors such as doing a good job, enjoying an activity, performing better or making others happy. The innovative aspect is related to responding to a change in a novel way. The novel action may intentionally or not intentionally lead to new products, processes, services or ways of organizing that can be easier to observe and evaluate than plans or improvisation (Glaveanu, 2012).

The reproduction of practices emphasizes processes of routine, habituation and tacit knowledge (Warde, 2005). But, the dynamics of everyday reproduction of practices are not a mechanical iteration of the same activities. The reproduction of practices is rather a process of innovation by repetition caused by constant adaptation to changing conditions (Corradi, Gherardi, & Verzelloni, 2010). Any changed behaviour or outcome lies in the development of practices themselves, which is why practice has the capacity to explain both
reproduction and innovation (Warde, 2005). Practices are never ready to the extent that there is a best practice or an ultimate way of performing any practice. Hence, practices constantly change and develop, which in turn provides an understanding of how and why innovation comes about. A practice-based approach makes it possible to understand the interrelationships throughout the emergence and development of innovations as opposed to delineating different sequences. The active dynamic relationships among producers and users and the activities performed, bridge these gaps by relating any change in, e.g., products to the way practices evolve (Shove et al., 2012). The relationship between the stable and what is changing indicates an interdependence between routinized work, planning, and improvising. The ongoing involvement between practices and their practitioners denotes what already exists and what is combined or performed in new ways.

The present framework builds on previous theories within a practice-based approach to guide the analysis of the corpus material generated in the present study. To explain how and why the suggested interrelationships play out, or not, the empirical evidence should also contribute to this framework. The suggested framework will hence be revisited in an attempt to provide a richer explanation of innovating as planning and improvising on routines. Figure 1 summarises the theoretical foundational framework detailed in this chapter, incorporating the organizing of practices, i.e. how elements change and interrelate, how practices integrate through their elements and practitioners in time and space, and how practitioners act towards changes in practice.
Figure 1: An overview of the theoretical foundation of a practice-based approach to explain innovation in a fashion setting
4 Research design

A practice-based study has ontological implications, which affect its methodological associations and the actual methods used to generate knowledge. This chapter describes the underpinnings of the present study, adopting practice as the unit of analysis. The research setting, the fashion industry, and the two organizations in which the study was carried out are presented. The three practices at the centre of this study, Designing, Producing and Selling, are further introduced, followed by the methods employed to study the situated practices and the mode of analysis.

4.1 An ontological approach

A practice-based approach builds on a flat ontology, which implies a non-hierarchical, but a relational view. The social is a field of practices centrally organized around shared practical understandings (Schatzki, 2001, p. 3). A relational ontology recognizes that everything exists in relation to each other. Its purpose is to study particularities such as peoples’ sayings and doings, and their interaction with other people and things over time (Feldman & Orlikowski, 2011). To gain the detailed knowledge of what is going on within and among practices and what is shared among practitioners require watching, talking to, and hanging out with practitioners acting. Mathematical or computer-based methods cannot achieve a close investigation of these matters. Statistics provide overviews and may be useful together with qualitative studies, but statistics alone does not substitute for social affairs and how to resolve problems (Schatzki, 2012). Traditional cognitive theory considers learning as an individual mental process. According to this approach, knowledge is developed through formal and institutional education provided by experts of learning. Learners memorize, understand, and are able to reproduce the content learned (Fox, 1997). A practice-based approach provides a different view of knowledge and learning in organizations compared to the cognitive approach (Strati, 2007), as it views learning as situated in organizational practices (Gherardi, 2000). Further, an individual’s extensive bodily repertoire of doings and sayings is social and acquired through learning and training in the context of other’s activities (Schatzki, 1996). Knowledge is a set of practical methods acquired through learning. Knowledge is inscribed in objects, embodied, shared, and only partially articulated in discourse (Nicolini, 2013).
Knowledge is a situated accomplishment, dependent on its social context (Ewenstein & Whyte, 2007).

A qualitative research approach is emphasized to directly experience practices (Schatzki, 2012). Learning about practices through surveys or interviews alone does not correspond to the processual view of a practice-based approach since these methods in isolation cannot grasp how activities in organizational work unfold (Nicolini, 2009). Generalized findings or factual statements provide a snapshot picture of organizational work (Cunliffe, 2010; Van Maanen, 2011), a description that would not be able to represent the dynamic organization of a practice nor how practices are interrelated or performed. Since surveys and sit-down interviews occur at one remove from informants engaging in the natural activities they describe, these methods in isolation provide answers capturing only a particular moment (Kusenbach, 2003). On the other hand, embracing a methodology that allows for close observations and engagement yields detailed descriptions of how practices are organized and interrelate in a multi-sited setting (Barley & Kunda, 2001). While performing activities, practitioners use words to describe these and their own practices. These words, together with the observed actions, are important clues to understand and gain access to the activities and practices that make up their practice arrangement bundles, their contexts, and how such activities take place, developed, and might develop over time. For this, some form of interaction-observation is required (Schatzki, 2012).

To gain knowledge about innovation it is important to understand how it unfolds over time and how timing affects innovation (Poole, 2004). Some innovations occur quickly while others might take several years. To avoid snapshot views of innovative activities that may actually have required an extended work process in order to develop, the investigation of innovation usually requires a longer period of research (Anderson et al., 2004). A longitudinal study is also suggested to understand the combinative effects of innovation types (Damapour et al., 2009, p. 652). Further, it may be difficult to locate certain processes and outcomes at a specific point in time. For example, winning a competition can be located either when the results are certified or during the entire time over which the competition takes place (Schatzki, 2012). To grasp the ongoing nature of innovation, and the interconnectedness of activities that contribute to or hinder innovation, this study was conducted for a period of two and a half years.

4.1.1 Unit of analysis

The unit of analysis in the present study is practice. At a given point in time, a practice has a set of established elements organizing the practice. However,
the sources of change lie in the practices themselves (Warde, 2005). Recognizing the social as practices rejects the distinction between the micro, meso, and macro levels of performances. This is because one practice can be performed by different practitioners at different locations and, in doing so, span across several organizations. Practices are also related to and affect one another through their elements and activities, as performed by practitioners and artefacts (Nicolini, 2017). To grasp the detailed work within practices, previous scholars have suggested ethnographic studies or ethnomethodology to study work practices in situ (Gherardi, 2012; Nicolini, 2013). According to Schatzki (2012, p. 11) there is no alternative to hanging out with, joining in with, talking to and watching and getting together with the people performing a practice. Similar to ethnography, there is not a single way to do ethnomethodology; it can include different topics and styles of analysis. Ethnomethodology rejects the idea that science is about general patterns, but emphasizes singular events. People who act and talk together make sense of each other’s actions in real time. (Lynch & Peyrot, 1992). Ethnomethodological studies take what appear to be mundane or routine activities seriously. By this, a particular way of understanding a problem of order is provided but also where possible solutions may be found to that problem (Llewellyn & Hindmarsh, 2010). A practice-based approach informed the present research design. Inspired by ethnomethodology, the focus has been on the actions, i.e. the sayings and doings in their everyday work. The emphasis has been on studying how different forms of knowledge about making fashion are produced and shared, within and among practices, to understand the interrelation among routines, planning, improvising, and innovation within and among practices.

4.2 Research context

This study set out to research innovation in a fashion context which was chosen for its particular combination of creative setting, organized according to industry specific routines, mainly based on seasonal production. The fashion business is a global, large and diverse sector containing both traditional manufacturing and creative sectors (Aspers & Skov, 2006), which responds to innovation in designs, technology, production, and consumer demands. The tensions between business and artisanship mean that the traditional production and sales oriented side of the business interacts with the expressive and creative side that makes every fashion brand unique. Fashion hence deals with the paradox of unpredictability and planning, and of creativity and control (Esposito, 2011). The organizing of creating fashion and its business-artisan tension invite innovative solutions to interrelate commercial and unique styles. This includes the work of management, design, production, marketing and the surrounding supplier and buyer activities. Hence, the fashion setting
was chosen based on its relevance for theory development. For the reasons
detailed, it provides a generative research site in which to explain innovation.

Fashion can be created, produced, distributed and consumed in different ways,
from the most exclusive luxurious garments to the cheap mass produced easily
accessed clothes. Luxury fashion is mainly represented through high-end con-
glomerates. Within fashion, the three main conglomerates are LVMH (Meët
Hennessy - Louis Vuitton), PPR (Pinault-Printemps-Redoute) and Richemont.
Luxury fashion is dominated by very strong brands with a superior pricing
power whose consumers are not price sensitive. Apart from the high quality
of the fashionable garments, these brands also sell heritage and history, which
presents almost unbeatable competition to new brands (Lantz, 2013). At the
other end of the spectrum is fast fashion. Due to globalization and lean pro-
cesses, fast fashion companies manage to produce collections in a short time
at a much lower price level (Hines & Bruce, 2007). In between fast fashion
and the luxurious fashion labels we find a mid-segment. Even though such
mid-segment fashion labels are not competing at the same price level as fast
fashion or with the same image as the luxurious brands, they are still facing a
tough situation with some competition from both. The designer is more im-
portant compared to fast fashion. Many of the fashion brands within the mid-
segment are more concerned with expressing their particular style than pro-
ducing fashion trends. One reason might be the speed provided by new tech-
nology, which makes fast fashion brands able to produce these trends in
shorter lead times. Instead, the brands in the mid-segment provides looks and
emphasize how to communicate the brand in the retail space to their custom-
ers.

Carry-overs or evergreens are clothes that remain in production and are
sold from one season to another. These are continuously sought for by cus-
tomers and are important to sustain the core expression of the brand (Lantz,
2013).

Within the fashion context, there is a high degree of self-managed creativity,
but a variety of managerial decisions control access to resources and influence
the market. These include choices about production, distribution, circulation,
and consumption (Townley, Beech, & McKinlay, 2009). Fashion is not cre-
ated only by the creative designer, but is a highly collective activity
(Kawamura, 2005). Artists within creative industries, such as the fashion in-
dustry, are dependent on activities performed by other individuals that respond
to economic incentives. However, artists and designers have their own prefer-
ces for how to execute creative work, which may complicate the decision
making (Caves, 2003). Designers’ creative freedom is to some extent limited
due to aspects both within and outside of the fashion brand. These retains are
for instance, related to the brand’s image, production constraints, suppliers,
capacity considerations, the availability of raw materials, and the restrictions
imposed by the whole supply chain. All these factors influence one another
and thus the creation of fashion itself. Due to cost, availability concerns, and marketing issues, the choices of materials for fashion production are limited (Atik & Firat, 2013, p. 845).

Fashion labels are more or less forced to produce new fashion collections on a regular seasonal basis (Richardson, 1996). The introduction of each collection depends on fashion weeks, the media and sales windows. Timing is thus important when presenting a new product line, and it is also crucial in the actual production of fashion. Apart from having technical skills of producing fashion, it is essential to have the knowledge and understand the cycles of the industry (Aspers, 2006, p. 757). Despite the importance of managing and analysing information on trends, markets and past sales, together with striving for a successful combination of fabric, style and price, it is also argued that creativity is key to business success as products are becoming more complex and varied (Le Pechoux, Little, & Istook, 2007). Being creative in the fashion context means introducing a new design, a new element or an original solution to a problem (Loschek, 2009). Taken together, the fashion industry provides an exciting context to study innovation due to its strictly routinized way of coordinating work throughout a long chain of activities which simultaneously demand routinized novelty and creativity.

4.2.1 The Swedish fashion context

The present study was conducted in Stockholm, Sweden. Since the mid-1900s, the Swedish fashion industry has undergone some important changes. The labour intensive production of clothes no longer occurs inside the country. Production is outsourced to low labour cost locations. Large retail chains dominate the fashion scene and the prices of clothes have decreased (Gråbacke, 2015). The Swedish fashion industry is now a knowledge-based and innovation-focused industry. Thus, the core product for Swedish fashion brands organizations is the production and management of ideas (Hauge et al., 2009). The Swedish fashion industry has developed rapidly, especially in the area of fast fashion, which is mainly represented by Hennes and Mauritz AB (H & M). In addition to fast fashion, Sweden also has many designer brands (Zhang, 2015). In Stockholm, a number of fashion brands were established in the 1990s and the early 2000s. They differed from their predecessors by specializing in marketing by connecting to certain lifestyles and values, creating collections that materialized concepts and styles applying to a large consumer group (Gråbacke, 2015).

Scandinavian aesthetics can be traced back to the once dominant agricultural and fishing societies, which contributed to a look mainly characterized by simplicity, minimalism, humanized function, and low-cost production. Clean
lines, craftsmanship and light colour tones are often emphasized in these designs (Grundtoft, 2013). Despite the variety, most brands are known for their denim-based design, clothes that are functional and easy to wear, and values expressing equality, modernity, and simplicity. This might be related to the cold and sometimes harsh climate, and also to a democratic view of fashion in Sweden in which everyone should be able to afford it (Falk, 2011). Scandinavians are particularly known for being conscious of the origins of their garments. Several fashion companies have signed up to ethical contracts. Lifestyle choices are increasingly reflected in the modern-day consumption of fashion (Grundtoft, 2013).

A large share of Swedish fashion brands consists of small and entrepreneurial companies. In 2014, during this study, 62 percent of all such fashion companies were run by one person and 33 percent employs one to nine persons. Hence, 95 percent of all fashion companies in Sweden consists of less than ten employees. Four percent employs 10-49 people, one percent employs 50-249 people and only 0.1 percent employs 250 people or more. These figures correspond to other sectors in Sweden too. Total sales for the Swedish fashion industry during 2014 were SEK 264 billion, which was an increase of 11.4 percent compared to 2013, mostly due to an increase in exports. 65 percent, or SEK 173 billion, was exported while 35 percent, representing SEK 91 billion, was earned on the domestic market. The Swedish fashion industry employed 56,048 persons during 2014, of which 74 percent were women. However, on an executive level, men were dominant, representing 71 percent. Nevertheless, there are twice as many females at the CEO level within the fashion industry in Sweden compared the average for all business sectors combined (Sternö & Nielsén, 2015).

Despite the number of small fashion companies, Sweden has an excessive share of large retail chains representing the total sales, of fashion. More than half, i.e., 57 percent or SEK 151 billions of total sales belongs to one company, H & M, of which 96 percent was earned on exports. Excluding large retail chains (earning more than one billion) such as H&M, Lindex, KappAhl, MQ, Dressman, Gina Tricot, and RNB Retail and Brands, export was down to 24 percent. In 2014, the total sales of all large retail chains summed to SEK 74 billion. Together these companies increased sales by 16.8 percent, while the other fashion companies together increased their sales by 3.5 percent (Sternö & Nielsén, 2015). According to the managing director at Stockholm Modecenter (interviewed on 2012-06-15), the large number of big retail chains decreased the market share for independent-stores and increased the number of large shopping malls. The decreasing number of independent stores cause mid-segment fashion brands to open their own stores, which left the fashion market in Sweden with three main categories: large retail chains, independent stores, and brand stores. The increasing number of large retail chains in the
Swedish fashion market, including fast fashion, has not been ideal for competition and choice. According to Sundberg (2006), the increase in large retail chains, that manage to keep prices on clothes low, may also explain why the price level on garments decreased during the same time period.

Even though there is a dominance of large retail chains, the number of fashion companies has increased during the past years. According to the managing director at Stockholm Modecenter (interviewed on 2012-06-15) this might be the effect of Sweden moving from a textile industry to a fashion industry. The fashion industry combines creativity and a sense of commerce in developing concepts and garments, which might encourage more people to try their luck in this business. According to the CEO at the Swedish Fashion Council (interviewed 2013-06-18) the increase in fashion brands might have to do with the inspiring number of previously successful brands in Sweden together with an increasing number of training positions.

Notwithstanding the increase in the number of Swedish fashion brands, a report by Sundberg (2006) concludes that even though the average age of a Swedish fashion company is 16 years, one third do not last longer than three years. While design is one of the most important skills within a fashion company, a successful business in fashion has to master other competences such as production, sales, marketing, organizing, leadership, finance, logistics, and buying (Sternö & Nielsén, 2015). According to the marketing manager at the Swedish Fashion Council (interviewed 2013-06-26) these factors, together with long production cycles, mean there is a long time period before the first money is earned. Before the designer is able to sell anything she/he needs to pay the suppliers producing the fabrics, accessories, and the actual clothes. Some designers manage to sell their first collections to stores, but a large group is forced to sell these on commission which adds some extra months before they receive any income from their first collection. In the meantime, they have to start up the next collection and paying suppliers for their work on this. Hence, fashion brands tie up considerable capital (Gräbacke, 2015). According to Sundberg (2006), few Swedish brands reach the quality of high level or exclusive fabrics and production, compared to their international competitors. Swedish fashion companies are, in a way, forced to adjust to the Swedish price level to be able to sell their clothes on the domestic market. Hence, they have to lower the quality to cut the price. However, Falk (2011), found in a later study that the Swedish fashion scene can be understood as more creative and artesian-driven due to a new group of fashion creators, the avant-garde, in which the fashion creation itself is more emphasized than the actual brand.

In sum, the Swedish fashion industry consists of companies of different sizes and with different business models. The large retail chains and the designer
brands operate in diverse ways. This diversity is related to the number of collections per year, speed of production and distribution, and the balance between creative and financial aspects. There are several contextual factors, such as global production and price levels, affecting fashion brands in different ways. Taken together, these aspects are all considered to provide an interesting research site from which to add to the explanation of innovation.

4.2.2 The informants

The empirical study of innovation in a fashion setting was conducted between February 2013 and November 2015. The study mainly included two fashion brands located with their main offices in Stockholm, Sweden. These organizations will be referred to as Fashion-Y and Fashion-X. Fashion-Y had been, at the time of this study, established around 20 years ago, with about 70 currently staff at the headquarters. Fashion-X had operated for 15 years and they had about 20 people working in the main office. Both organizations provided four collections per year on a regular basis and produced their clothes outside of Sweden in countries such as Turkey, Portugal, and China. The fashion collections were further sold around the world, but Sweden was the main market for both organizations. The two organizations created fashion within the middle price segment, i.e., they did not compete on price with fast fashion brands, nor provided high-end luxury fashion. However, since they were in the middle, they faced competition from the surrounding price segments too, which is why margins and quantities were important in production. These two companies fall under the category of fashion brands established in the 1990s and beginning of 2000, specializing in marketing connecting to certain lifestyles and creating collections that materialized such concepts and styles (Gråbacke, 2015). Studying two established mid-segment fashion brands has some implications for the findings of the present research. The characteristics of these brands and the way they produce and distribute fashion do not correspond to the whole fashion industry. Hence, the findings of this study are indeed coloured by the situated events related to their experience, the number of collections produced, the speed, price level, and the quantity involved in producing these collections and their emphasis on expressing their certain style (Lantz, 2013).

The two organizations complement each other for the purposes of this study since I could follow the practices that create a fashion collection in different ways. In Fashion-X, I followed the main and pre-collections from season to season. Due to a loss in profit, an organizational change was initiated, which in turn affected and was affected by all three practices under study. In Fashion-Y, the conventional way of producing fashion, and the damage it causes to nature and society, initiated a change in producing fashion, which again also
affected and was affected by the three practices under study. Hence, in Fashion-Y, I studied a project group developing sustainable fashion, within the organization. The purpose is not to compare the two cases to find the best way of innovating in this particular setting. Rather, these cases both illustrate how innovations came about as and how the interrelatedness among practices and practitioners further interrelate the innovations and their processes.

I also participated in seminars, fashion shows and other events in which different aspects of the fashion industry were illustrated and debated, especially in relation to the fashion weeks in Stockholm. Prior and at the beginning of the study of the two companies, I was also in contact with organizations to some extent aiding fashion brands, such as the Swedish Fashion Council, Association for Swedish Fashion Brands, and Stockholm Modecenter. The main reason for these meetings was to receive a broader understanding of the fashion industry as a whole, such as the routines this industry is bound to and what impact these routines might have on innovative activities.

Even though the fashion industry has been purposefully selected for this study, I was not able to fully decide my field sites. The choice of these two organizations was an emerging process determined when attaining the field (Burell, 2009; Green, 1999; Nadai & Maeder, 2005). A random selection of cases was not necessary since I was not striving to statistically generalize my findings (Eisenhardt, 1989). It should also be noted that since the study was conducted under an extended period of time, there was also some turnover among the practitioners involved. Since practice is the unit of analysis, this has not been a problem for the study. Rather, the turnover of practitioners was a way to understand why innovations occurred. It should also be highlighted that quotes used in this study have the signature of practitioners working in their positions at the time, even though they may have changed jobs during the study.

4.2.3 The practices under study

During this study, I followed practice activities from the early designs to the finished garments, ready for sales. Three practices were at the centre of the study: Designing, Producing, and Selling. These practices were not given prior to the study, but identified during the fieldwork, through the elements that comprise the organizing of practice: skills, materials and engagements, and the sayings and doings performed by the practitioners. Practitioners usually say which practice they carry since these words are used in discussions (Schatzki, 2012). The main activities performed and described by the informants and company documents were hence gradually categorized into these practices. Importantly though, it was clear that there are no clear borders between the practices, on many occasions they overlap, which also explain how...
they interrelate. Since practices are situated and change as they are performed, explaining the stability and consistency that constitutes a practice is, to some extent, more of a puzzle than explaining their differences (Nicolini & Monteiro, 2017).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Practice</th>
<th>Practitioners</th>
<th>Main activities</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Designing</td>
<td>Designers, assortment planners, design assistants, patternmakers, managers, buyers, suppliers, models</td>
<td>Drawing, product developing, patternmaking, fitting, sewing, creating concepts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Producing</td>
<td>Buyers, sourcers, assistants, assortment planners, patternmakers, managers, product developers</td>
<td>Sourcing new materials, buying materials, ordering, controlling production, sewing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Selling</td>
<td>Sellers, PR and communication workers, designers, distributors, managers, store planners</td>
<td>Selling the collection, communicating to external buyers and customers, writing</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 1: Overview of practices under study, practitioners and activities performed

A narrow perspective of the empirical data, placing three practices within two fashion companies and two specific planned innovation projects as a point of departure for the study, provided both focus and coherence. However, the practices under study were not bound only to the two organizations. Both organizations collaborated with or were dependent on other organizations, such as suppliers, retailers, the media, consumer and logistics practices, and these practices were interconnected through their elements and practitioners in mundane work. These practices have not been studied in detail, and cannot be explained in the same way as Designing, Producing and Selling. But, their relation to the three practices in the centre of the study has been considered to explain innovation in this setting. This allowed for interpreting what has been closely observed in relation to a larger context. To some extent, it was hard to determine exactly where the practices within each organization began and ended. Suppliers, buyers, artists, and consultants who performed activities that were involved in the practices under study further blurred the boundaries between practices and organizations. These relationships across practices and organizations were of great importance to understand the unfolding of innovations in in terms of initial planning, improvising and routines.
4.3 Corpus material generation

A breadth of methods and techniques of interpretation is required to develop a practice-based approach (Warde, 2005). This study used audio-visual recording, note taking, examination of documents, observations and interviews, all of which took place over a two and a half year period of time. This allowed for embedding myself in the everyday work and practices, observing what practitioners do, discussing their doings and sayings with them, and integrating in the doings and sayings over a longer period of time, capturing the meanings and textures of their everyday experiences. For a practice-based approach, it is also important to understand practitioners’ unconscious routines, which involves what is taken for granted, or assumed, which is usually hard to articulate in direct ways. Conducting a close study also provides the opportunity to see the small deviations in ordinary work (Silverman, 2010). Below I will present and discuss in further detail the methods used in this study. Even though they are presented one by one, they were altered and combined throughout the study.

4.3.1 Interaction-observation

As I started my interaction with Fashion-Y, I initially received my own desk, in their head office, at which I was able to work about one or two days per week. I also obtained my own key and my own e-mail account which was not primarily used to send e-mails. I used my own work-account for that, but it allowed me to access the calendars of all organization members, which was, of course very helpful whenever I wanted to make plans with them, such as scheduling an interview or attending an event. It also gave a brief idea about the organization’s planned activities. All the staff used this system, and whenever there was a meeting in which I could participate, I usually received an invitation via this system too. I had my own office space at Fashion-Y for four months, with the opportunity to help out with simpler work tasks. In this way, I could interact with other people in the organization, ask about their work activities, observe how they performed their work, learn work related terminology, and observe how different work activities were related. Having my desk prior to the start-up of the project I was about to follow gave me insights into how and why the project group was formed and how the criteria for the work were established. The group eventually consisted of participants representing all three practices in this study: Designing, Producing, and Selling.

From autumn 2013, interaction-observations focused on the work of this specific group and the innovative activities surrounding the development of sustainable fashion products. I participated in follow-up meetings in which obstacles, opportunities, planning and procedures were discussed and elaborated on. These meetings, commonly scheduled for one hour, were held one to three
times a month depending on the intensity of the processes and developments of the products and were recorded and transcribed. The number of participants varied, in general, five to ten people were present during these meetings. In these meetings, practitioners updated each other on their work and shared experience, contributing to the product and process development. I also participated in workshops at the office which were related to the project. These were pre-planned with an agenda and aimed to share knowledge to enhance the product and process development. During the meetings and workshops, I interacted only to understand what was going on. However, both provided time in between activities in which I found the opportunity to ask questions and learn about the purposes of why certain activities were performed. In order to understand the relationships with supplier practices, essential to the innovative activities, I also had the opportunity to participate in a four day trip to Portugal where we visited a number of agents, suppliers, and plants relevant to the project.

In Fashion-X, I was invited to participate in events, and conduct interviews and interaction-observations related to the office work. During spring 2013, the study started with a few interviews and meetings mainly to get to know the staff and their main activities. From autumn 2013, I followed the work of three seasons, involving the six collections available, through the three practices Designing, Producing, and Selling. Throughout the creation of collections, I participated in tollgate meetings, which are a full day activities. In these, both the men’s and women’s collections were run through thoroughly. There were three tollgate meetings per collection and, depending on the stage of the collection, the focus shifted from design, fabrics, prices and margins, colours etc. The participants also varied slightly according to the focus of the meeting. I also participated in internal and external line releases for these collections. The internal line release was similar to a rehearsal and involved only people within the organization. At the external line release, distributors were invited to the final presentation of the fashion line, which provided a way to study the interrelatedness with these practitioners too. I also participated in meetings involving one or two of the practices such as handing over designs to the production team, the analysis of previous sales or retail meetings.

Interaction-observation provided the opportunity to experience how work was organized and performed in situ (Ybema, Yanow, Wells, & Kamsteg, 2009). I was not able to grasp what people thought in every situation since observing people at work does not reveal their privately kept ideas. But interaction-observation reveals body language and movements (Yakhlef & Essén, 2013). The way participants acted and responded to the activities of others gave an insight into what was acceptable or not, and how and why practices may have altered or proceeded through engagements. Although I interacted in the practices I studied, I had a different role than other practitioners (Burell, 2009), as
I was conducting research. I did not have the experience of a skilled practitioner performing Designing, Producing or Selling, but, as a learner and interaction-observer I had the opportunity to ask questions and interact the best way possible.

I also investigated artefacts such as documents, sketches, technology, and clothes. I saw or heard how individuals used these and could ask questions about this use, or have the chance to use them myself. During the work of a collection, creative ideas were translated from sketches via prototypes to finished garments. Individuals and artefacts hence guided me further into the field (Green, 1999) to study how skills, engagements, and materials together organize, sustain, change, and align practices. As I learned how bodies, tools, and technologies interacted in a practice (Mol & Law, 2004). I experienced how this knowledge also gave me some sort of trustworthiness in the organizations where I conducted my study, which made it easier for me to communicate with the practitioners in this study.

Whenever participating in meetings or other events, I wrote down what was discussed and what people did. In my field diary, I also kept drawings of how we all sat around a table at the meetings or workshops and how practitioners related to each other in various settings. I also used a camera in some of them. Visual methods are of direct relevance to practice theories since these techniques involve capturing the complexity associated with organizational activities as they continuously unfold. In combination with interviews, note taking, and text documents, visual records enable a focus on the dynamic becoming rather than the static being, and on movements and knowledge that might otherwise remain invisible and unseen (Bell & Davison, 2013). In my field notes, I also recorded information about visual content from PowerPoint presentations and the e-mails I received. Field notes turned out to be a useful way to overlap data collection and data analysis (Eisenhardt, 1989), which provided an iterative process of collecting, coding, and analysing data, to develop a gradual understanding of the practices under study. These field notes worked as a template for upcoming interviews and further observations.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Observation</th>
<th>Duration</th>
<th>Organization</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Daily work</td>
<td>21 days at the office during 2013</td>
<td>Fashion-Y</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Follow-up meetings on sustainability product development</td>
<td>42 meetings (about 1 hour/meeting)</td>
<td>Fashion-Y</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tollgate meetings</td>
<td>11 meetings (1-2 days/meeting)</td>
<td>Fashion-X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Line release (internal and external)</td>
<td>8 (1 day/meeting)</td>
<td>Fashion-X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Design workshops</td>
<td>4 (1 day/workshop)</td>
<td>Fashion-Y</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other meetings/workshops</td>
<td>9 (about half a day)</td>
<td>Fashion-X and Fashion-Y</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Travel to Portugal: meet suppliers</td>
<td>4 days</td>
<td>Fashion-Y</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 2: Overview of interaction-observations

4.3.2 Interviews

The discussion in the following section refer to methods used for both organizations. Interviews were conducted as I found it relevant to obtaining information for the understanding of the practices under study. At the initial stage of this study, interviews served the purpose of becoming more familiar with practitioners, obtaining descriptions of their work, and their professional contexts and relationships. Some were purposely sampled while others were snowball sampled. In the initial interviews, I asked about skills required to perform their work, how they would gain knowledge within their organization and the industry and with whom the practitioners worked and what artefacts and technology they used. I also enquired about engagements within their work such as what makes them perform or not perform certain activities. These interviews gave me practitioners’ view of the routinized activities they have to cope with in their daily work and how and why these routines might alter. These questions also informed me of how ideas and concepts related to fashion collections were created and developed into stories and products. I was informed of the considerable amount of work it takes to find the right materials and the producers able to create the initial idea. I realized the importance of having a common language to communicate in, not only for the technical aspects, but also for the more abstract aesthetic feeling of a certain design.

Since several practices were performed simultaneously, in different places, it was not possible to observe everything going on at once (Zilber, 2014). For this reason, interviews were a suitable complement as they allowed to get a broader picture of work activities, especially those including several practices. Interviews also gave an opportunity to follow up on previous meetings, workshops or other interviews. They were usually semi-structured with guiding key questions but some interviews were less structured, only consisting of two or
three themes that I asked the practitioner to elaborate on. The length of the interviews also varied ranging from 15 to 90 minutes. I always started by asking if there was a time limit, from which I prioritized my questions or themes. These themes were related to my experiences from the interaction-observations. From the interviews I learned about the past, present, and what participants wished to achieve in the future within. The formal, recorded interviews were conducted in Swedish and decided on in advance, with consent, and took place at the participants’ workplaces. During interviews I wrote comments about the mood, gestures or if there was something that seemed to affect the answers. These Swedish interview transcripts were also summarized in English in the field diary too, together with the additional notes.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Duration, minutes</th>
<th>Profession</th>
<th>Organization</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2012-06-15</td>
<td>80</td>
<td>Managing Director</td>
<td>Stockholm Modecenter</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2012-10-11</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>General Secretary</td>
<td>ASFB</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2013-01-28</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>Head of CR</td>
<td>Fashion-Y</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2013-02-19</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>Designer I</td>
<td>Fashion-X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2013-03-15</td>
<td>90</td>
<td>Designer III</td>
<td>Fashion-Y*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2013-03-21</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>Pattern Maker</td>
<td>Fashion-Y</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2013-03-21</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>Designer I</td>
<td>Fashion-Y</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2013-03-27</td>
<td>90</td>
<td>Marketing Director</td>
<td>Fashion-X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2013-03-28</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>Designer III</td>
<td>Fashion-Y</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2013-04-04</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>Head of Assortment</td>
<td>Fashion-X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2013-04-04</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>CFO</td>
<td>Fashion-X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2013-04-16</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>Group interview</td>
<td>Fashion-Y**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2013-04-30</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>CEO</td>
<td>Fashion-X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2013-06-17</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>Initial Team Leader</td>
<td>Fashion-Y</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2013-06-18</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>CEO</td>
<td>Swedish Fashion Council</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2013-06-26</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>Marketing Manager</td>
<td>Swedish Fashion Council</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2013-07-03</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>Sales Representative I</td>
<td>Fashion-X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2013-07-04</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>Designer II</td>
<td>Fashion-Y</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2013-07-04</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>Head of Product Communication</td>
<td>Fashion-Y</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2013-07-09</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>Acting CEO / CFO</td>
<td>Fashion-Y</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2013-08-14</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>Designer II</td>
<td>Fashion-X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2013-09-20</td>
<td>90</td>
<td>CEO</td>
<td>Fashion-X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2013-10-22</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>Head of Sourcing, Knit</td>
<td>Fashion-Y</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2013-11-05</td>
<td>75</td>
<td>Head of Design</td>
<td>Fashion-Y</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2013-12-03</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>Designer I</td>
<td>Fashion-Y</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2014-01-24</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>Head of Assortment</td>
<td>Fashion-X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2014-01-29</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>Deputy CEO</td>
<td>Fashion-X</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
I also conducted informal interviews. After observing a meeting or a workshop I usually ended up with some questions and so tried to talk to someone immediately afterward. These informal interviews were not recorded but notes were made from these conversations, which I later transcribed into my field diary. Compared to a formal interview, these interactions were more similar to conversations and I was more dependent on the time the practitioner was willing to give me at that moment. Sometimes I only obtained a quick review while walking, but on other occasions, I received an in-depth explanation and interpretation of an event. While it may be hard for people to comment on their work tasks while performing them, sit-down interviews keep informants from engaging in the natural activities they are describing (Kusenbach, 2003). For this reason, informal interviews in relation to work tasks were conducted quite frequently.

Combining observations and interviews also provided a way to move with practitioners and artefacts through the daily work routines. This was an alternative way to observe and capture the evolving and dispersed character of practices constituting an organization (Raulet-Croset & Borzeix, 2014). It was also a means to access the relationship between individuals, places and time (Anderson, 2004). This made it possible to capture the impressions and feelings in relation to the performed activities, which were hard to grasp in a formal interview situation (Raulet-Croset & Borzeix, 2014). This combination of methods was particularly relevant when visiting events such as fashion shows, PR events, workshops or the Portugal meeting with suppliers for one of the organizations.

4.3.3 Secondary sources
I also studied texts and pictures produced for daily work activities by the informants in this study. Examples are meeting protocols, garment sketches, educational handouts, PowerPoint presentations, and charts, and electronic documents from the intranet, webpages, and e-mails. The production and use of materials are important to the practices under study, revealing how practitioners assemble, read, and exchange texts and pictures in mundane work. The
main reason to study documents and other artefacts such as computers, scissors, pens, textile samples and so forth was to understand how these materials were embedded within organizational activities. According to Suchman (1987) in Heath et al. (2000), it is necessary to turn away from the experimental, the cognitive, and the deterministic view to understand how documents, artefacts, and technology feature within practical action as they reflect the circumstances in which such everyday activities are produced. She suggests turning to the naturalistic, the social, and the contingent.

In my research, I view documents, artefacts, and technology as materials, which is an element of practices which organize them. Unlike the organizing elements of skills and engagements, materials are visible to observe. The interaction between materials and practitioners provides an understanding of the interlinkage with the two other elements. It is suggested by Boedker and Chua (2013) that the best way to investigate artefacts is to investigate what the artefacts do to individuals and how artefacts shape their actions. In this setting, I observed how practitioners made use of artefacts, if they used artefacts in different ways, the impact of a possible change in, e.g., technology and how that would affect alignments with other practices.

4.4 Mode of analysis

A process such as the innovation process usually involves multiple levels and units of analysis, with blurred boundaries that may be hard to isolate. Innovation has a fluid character, which spreads out over time and space (Langley, 1999). In this study, practice is the unit of analysis, which provided a way to connect what have traditionally been viewed as different levels of analysis such as the industry, organization or individual. A flat ontology implies there are no hierarchies, hence no different levels to analyse. Since practices are shared, they are also carried out in different places creating actions by individuals, organizations, and their surrounding environment, all interlinked with each other through performed practices. Further, analysing through a practice-based approach does not search for mechanisms or forces (e.g., logics, structural mechanisms, and value systems) that explain how and why situated activities are performed. It is rather about unravelling the interrelationships that links to the here and now among practitioners with those of the there and then of other practices and practitioners (Nicolini & Monteiro, 2017).

4.4.1 Designing, Producing and Selling

In order to analyse the interdependence of innovations from a practice-based approach, the practices under study and their respective organizing elements had to be recognized. This regularity within each respective practice should
not be explained in terms of mental habits or externalized routines, but how and why habituation is obtained and sustained, how and why individuals perform routinized behaviours or deviate from them, and how these routinized activities interrelate and are kept together by other practices (Nicolini & Monteiro, 2017). The practices and their elements were derived in a relational deductive-inductive way. Identifying the practices was, to some extent, deductive since the theoretical framework, based on a practice-based approach, guided the definition of the practices and their elements. Although the organizing of practices served as a frame of analysis, it was not initially known exactly which practices to study, their relation to one another and their internal organizing. Hence the particular skills, materials, and engagements were explored during the study in an inductive way.

A careful reading of the transcripts and field notes initially offered a holistic view of the activities included in creating a fashion collection. From interview transcripts, everyday work observations field notes, photos and organizational documents such as organizational charts and work descriptions, sayings and doings were categorized into the elements skills, materials, and engagements. These elements were further categorized into the three practices, which were found to organize the main activities of creating a fashion collection: Designing, Producing and Selling. The way practitioners described their work activities and how individuals were grouped into organizational units provided a background understanding to further develop the particular practices under study. Hence, the practitioners did not directly articulate the particular practices, but the practices corresponded to how the organizations divided activities and responsibilities. The three practices and their elements were evident in both organizations under study, even though they each had their situated uniqueness and the organizing and development of elements differed to some extent over time. The practices further matched with the information received from the interviews and documents of other organizations working in the fashion industry.

4.4.2 Interrelating innovations

Turning to a practice-based approach suggests an analysis of how practices develop, through their internal elements, and the overlapping of elements of surrounding practices. After mapping out the practices and their elements, the analysis hence turned to the innovative activities performed. This study aims to contribute to theory of innovation and builds on previous research that identified different types of innovations and how innovations unfold. Firstly, the framework developed in Chapter Three was used to trace how, why and when innovative activities interrelated in mundane work. Initially, all the field notes
(including interview transcripts, my own written comments, photos, and documents provided by the organizations) were written into shorter summaries of what occurred at the particular events.

Secondly, these summaries were related back to the practices and illuminated how the practices contributed to innovation. During this analysis, the relationships between innovation types and planning, improvising and routines started to emerge. Themes were derived that explained the reorganizing of practices, integration among practices and practitioners, practitioners’ responses and the creation of practice memory in relation to innovation. Some events which played an important part in enhancing the initially planned innovations were chosen and then traced back and forth in time to explain how innovative activities emerged and became interrelated through a combination of improvising and planning. While the three practices and their elements could be recognized in both organizations, the way they affected one another and developed differed to some extent. Nevertheless, innovations in both settings could be explained by a change in one of the elements, which led to a change in the two others. The reorganizing of practices required innovative responses which also influenced the organizing of practices, contributing to the explanation of how innovations interrelate. Using this mode of analysis, it was possible to establish that a change in any of the elements triggered several innovative activities. For example, a change in skills, which could initially trigger a management innovation would also require a change in materials and engagements, generating further innovations such as stylistic and process innovations. Any planned for innovation such as a new way of working with suppliers was further related to other types of innovations enabling the initial innovation through further planning or improvising. For example, a process innovation such as a new ways of producing clothes may be triggered by a change in any of the three elements, and thus generate innovations such as stylistic innovations or management innovations.

A change in one element might affect more than one practice or an element in one practice might alter an element in another practice. For this reason, the interrelationships between the three practices Designing, Producing and Selling have also been analysed. The three practices at the centre of the study were also dependent on other surrounding, industry specific, practices, with which they were aligned, to greater or lesser extents, over time to facilitate or impede the whole production and distribution of fashion. Thus the analysis of such interconnections was important to reveal the depth of the picture which emerged from the rich data gained through this interaction-observation approach. It emerged that some elements were more practice specific while others had more of an overlapping character. This contributed to the explanation of how innovations interrelate through situated performed practices, but also how situated practices related to one another.
Practitioners’ words and actions were also analysed to illuminate several aspects of what pushed forward the innovation process. How their previous experience from performing the same practice or from performing other practices were related to the way practices change was examined. The ways in which people learned practices were also analysed. For instance working with new instructions, imitating activities already performed or introducing new ways of working with other practitioners. The way practices are carried out may also hinder innovations, which were also revealed by investigating how individuals reacted to the changes in elements, reorganizing of practices and the integration among practices.

The table below provides an overview of how the three practices Designing, Producing and Selling and their respective elements relate to one another. To some extent the elements overlap, but they are also practice specific.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Skills</th>
<th>Materials</th>
<th>Engagements</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Designing</td>
<td>Creative, statistics, textile/material, communicating concepts and ideas</td>
<td>Textile/material, garments, pen, paper, sketches, computer, software</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Producing</td>
<td>Creative, statistics, textile/material, develop concepts and ideas with suppliers</td>
<td>Textile/material, garments, pen, paper, computer, software</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Selling</td>
<td>Creative, statistics, textile/material, communicating concepts and ideas with customers</td>
<td>Textile/material, garments, pen, paper, computer, software</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 4: A simplified overview of practices and their elements

4.5 Interacting with practitioners

Studying practices as an interactive observer required me to carry out two practices simultaneously: the epistemic practice and the practice under study. The practice of studying practices hence required its own organization within the field (Nicolini, 2009). I only conducted direct observations, i.e., I was not using hidden microphones or conducting under cover observations (Czarniawska, 2007). I made a mounting for the recorder, placing it very obviously during meetings and interviews. With time practitioners became used to this. Sometimes there were jokes about what I would do with all the recordings, but no one seemed to be bothered about being recorded. This also applied to
the use of the camera. I always asked for permission to film or take photographs of a certain event before doing so. I also received approval to study documents, explore the company’s calendar or check the online internal network. All the recordings of interviews and observations have been made with the permission of the involved practitioners. Quotes were translated by me from Swedish to English and are attributed to the position the respondent had at the time, irrespective of whether they then altered their role. Whenever group constellations changed, or new practitioners were present, I introduced myself and my research again. This happened on several occasions during the corpus material generation, when the situated practices Designing, Producing and Selling interacted with surrounding practices and when new practitioners performed the situated practices at the centre of the study.

Both organizations in this study are referred to with fictitious names, not at their request, but a decision made by me. Due to the turnover of practitioners, the longitudinal aspect, and the focus on practices, I did not find it relevant to use their real names. Both brands are well-known, at least in the Swedish context, and I did not want any preconceptions about the brands to spill over, in order to give a clearer focus on the practices and their connections to innovation.

With time, practitioners became used to my presence and I sometimes received comments such as *do you think we are innovative now? or what did you think about that?* (from a researcher’s perspective). Jokes were sometimes made, holding the hand over the recorder, to indicate this was not the right thing to say or the right approach for a certain situation. Despite the familiarity, there was still an apparent difference between me and the practitioners under study. This was exemplified during one of the follow-up meetings. One of the practitioners referred to a previous meeting with scientists in textile engineering. She started by making a joke that this group consisted of scientists and scientists are, to some extent, special (while looking at me). Two of the practitioners concluded that the world of research and their (real) world complement one another even though we do things differently. According to the practitioner, the way we ask questions differs, but we need to see each other’s way of working and pose such questions.
5 Designing, Producing, and Selling

This chapter introduces three practices Designing, Producing and Selling, which are in the centre of this study. Each practice is introduced according to its routinized activities and the planning required to keep the seasonal production of fashion. The elements organizing the practices: materials, engagements, and skills are further elaborated. The purpose of this chapter is not to describe an ideal type of a practice, but to provide an understanding of the activities performed by practitioners in mundane work within the fashion industry. This background knowledge provides a foundation for understanding how the three elements together organize and re-organize each practice, and how these elements overlap to align practices. It also establishes a basis for understanding how practitioners might respond in both planned and improvised ways to these routinized activities within the three practices and any changes affecting them. A practice is not performed in isolation, but in relation to other surrounding practices. For this reason, this chapter ends with a few examples of how practices interrelate with one another in the mundane work of creating a fashion collection.

5.1 Creating fashion collections

The work of creating a fashion collection is dependent on many activities that have to be coordinated according to industry specific routines which themselves are dependent on the seasonal nature of the production of fashion. The making of a collection could be described according to a time line. Every collection has an official start-up, follow-up meetings, and a final date for sales. However, a collection is also the result of previous collections in terms of the experience and accumulated knowledge of those who contribute to it. Due to the long lead times and number of collections introduced throughout a year, work on different phases of several collections happens simultaneously. Collaborations with suppliers and distributors may vary among these collections; there are different themes to communicate, and constant adaptations to surrounding issues throughout the work of all fashion lines. These issues usually affect the work of several collections, which is why a time line does not provide the whole story.
Below is described the work needed for a collection which is supported by the three practices of focus in the present study, Designing, Producing, and Selling. The purpose is not to provide a description of an ideal type of practice, but an understanding of the organizing of practices and a background to appreciate what is involved in innovation in this context. Moreover, presenting one practice at a time does not mean that work is first conducted in one practice and then handed over to the next. These practices are interrelated throughout the creation of fashion collections, which is emphasised in detail in the final part of this chapter. These descriptions of these practices are mainly based on observations and interviews conducted in the two fashion brands, Fashion-X and Fashion-Y, and through interviews with practitioners from surrounding practices, and documents describing working routines within fashion brands. The activities described in this chapter mainly relate to the mid-segment of fashion brands, with a cycle of four fashion collections per year.

5.2 Designing

The creative process is always developing. Even though there is an initial structural and creative aim, there are always things affecting this along the way – Head of Design, Fashion-Y (Interview 2013-11-05)

The Designing practice involves several practitioners performing a number of activities organized by the elements materials, skills, and engagements. This work, creating the styles of a collection, is mainly performed by designers. However, it is also dependent on a number of other practitioners carrying out activities in relation to the designers’ creative work. The head of assortment holds a more commercial responsibility, making sure the collection consists of a certain number of styles, which are kept within a certain price range. In-house buyers and external suppliers provide the fabrics and accessories from which the garments are made. Sales and store personnel provide information on customer demands and previous sales statistics. Patternmakers create the patterns according to which the fabric should be cut according to. Design assistants help most of the activities involved in the Designing practice. Models are scheduled when garments need to be seen on a body. Marketing and management usually hold the overall responsibility for how to express the design of the brand, how to distribute time, and decisions on the strategy for price levels.

5.2.1 Planning for structure and creativity

Before the creative work of designing a collection starts, the head of assortment creates an assortment structure. This structure can be seen as an order or
schedule for the design team to work to. Designers are allocated a number of styles of each type of garment to design together with the price ranges for each garment group. If a designer is to create ten shirts, these shirts may further be divided into basic shirts and more fashionable ones. The knowledge required to create an assortment structure is partly based on previous sales and input from wholesalers and retail stores. At an early stage, retailers share their experience and statistics on clothes and colours customers bought and items that seemed to be missing in previous collections. This is also an opportunity to receive feedback on fittings and styles that are currently in store. If some garments did not sell, the shared experience is used to assess why, which provides a way to detect errors and do something about them. Since the work of an assortment structure starts more than a year before the season that the garments are sent to stores, a Spring/Summer collection has to rely on the only statistics available, which relate to the Spring/Summer collection from two years earlier. One of the reasons for making an assortment structure is the limited time to design and produce the garments of a collection. There has to be an initial plan to work to. The list of garments is also a reminder about all the pieces to consider so that the collection does not end up with, for instance, only 20 dresses and no blouses. It is also a price frame since the structure includes prices in store for each finished garment. The price frame indicates how much to spend on each garment in terms of materials and time.

_Representing a commercial view and they (designers) represent a totally creative view. My role is not to inhibit the creative spirit, but you always have to hold the reins – Head of Assortment, Fashion-X (Interview 2013-04-04)_

The other part that contributes to the collection structure is something that is harder to explain. It is a sense of something, an urge for a certain colour or cut, or a feeling that something is right. In the conversations for this research, it was usually referred to as a gut feeling or intuition, gained from accumulated experience and knowledge. Even though the reason for inspiration might be hard to explain, creative intuition is commonly relied on as the basis for creative decisions. The inspiration for such intuition may be received from significant events that influenced people’s beliefs or behaviours or some trend or movement that is taking place in society which could affect how people want to dress.

To create a structure and the styles included, one must have a feeling for the composition of the fashion line and the interrelationship of the garments. Each garment has its role to play in terms of its price, fashion, and function. In addition, colours and styles should relate to a theme or concepts that visually represent the whole collection without losing sight of commercial necessities. Creating an assorted structure of designs for a fashion collection can hence be
explained as a combination of creativity and gut feeling, finding what is unique for the brand in a world full of trends and tendencies. At the same time the work has to be very structured, sales oriented and commercially accepted. This balance between creativity and business was often referred to by many of the participants in this study: a balance that was sometimes hard to maintain due to the creative nature of Designing.

The assortment structure may vary from season to season. Sometimes there could be an urge for more party dresses but fewer daily dresses or more coats than jackets compared to previous collections. Sometimes the general price has to be modified due to supplier changes or customer requests. Each fashion company has their own way of developing the structure of a collection, but it is common to have a few garments that are continuously in production and available in stores season after season. These are referred to as carry-overs. To some extent, carry-overs mediate the core of the brand compared to all the new styles in a collection.

A carryover is supposed to be a product that is so damn good that we cannot take it out of the assortment because it sells so well. Hence, everyone keeps asking about it all the time – Sales Representative I, Fashion-X (Interview 2013-07-03)

The rest of the collection is divided into product groups that refer to the level of fashion or price. Some clothes are updated versions of those from previous seasons, for example, a new colour or fabric in a style that used to sell well. The most fashionable clothes are the ones that stand out compared to the rest of the collection. Even though they should be designed within the same frame as the rest of the collection, these garments are usually the ones seen in fashion magazines or in advertisement expressing the brand’s core image and the theme of the collection. All styles are continuously reviewed. Even the carry-overs go through changes now and then, such as adding a centimetre to their length or narrowing a width to make sure the classics also stay up to date; this is yet another balancing act between commercial fashion, brand values, and creativity.

5.2.2 Materials: from sketch to finished garment

The Designing practice involves materials that are relatively stable, and constantly used. They can be observed during the work, examples include scissors, measure tapes, pens, papers, computers, textile samples, colour samples, needles, erasers, and so on. Visual inspirations are essential, especially as the collection emerges, when themes, concepts, and expressions are discussed and decided on. Visual inspiration can take the form of any picture found in a
magazine, or from an art exhibition which captures a sense, or a mode, or a feeling. Vintage garments, or a detail on a garment can also work as a source of inspiration.

The materials from which garments can be produced have different characters. Hence, the knowledge about and choice of available fabrics and accessories are important to create a certain style. Fabrics may give a sense of heaviness or a lighter feeling to a garment. Textile samples in different colours and structures are provided ahead of each season and a designer has a range of qualities, fibres, and expressions to compare and consider. Touching, sweeping and holding the textile in different lights give an idea of how it will look and behave in a certain garment. Colour samples serve a similar purpose. Colours from different suppliers are compared and tested on different fabrics in order to achieve the desired effect. As the collection emerges, each design is represented by a sketch and several sketches are usually drawn for every garment before the final version is decided on. Designers use different techniques as they create their styles, but it was commonly mentioned that the initial sketches were drawn by hand with a pen on paper.

In the beginning, it feels a bit freer to start with only a pair of scissors, the fabric, paper and a pen, and a pencil sharpener, and an eraser. Then it is possible to just rub everything out; the ideas and colours, like a collage. And then you start to make something more concrete out of it – Designer II, Fashion-X (Interview 2013-08-14)

Even though a lot of tangible materials organize the Designing practice, activities are also dependent on computer software. Communication, both within and outside the organization, is commonly run by e-mails. Technical garment sketches are drawn in custom software. The purpose of technical sketches is to make it clearer for the patternmaker and the suppliers how they should construct the garments. These sketches show in detail where the seams, buttons, buttonholes, zippers, pockets, etc. are placed. Instructions are added to the sketches such as which button or zipper to use and how the garment should look on the inside. These sketches hence mediate communication among several practitioners and organize the work activities for making the designs into garments. Designers usually make the first version of these garment sketches, and then the sketches might be added by others, with further details and information from patternmakers and practitioners performing Producing and supplier practices.

Most activities are in front of a computer... You can, of course, do sketches by hand and when you select fabrics, you are working with the fabric samples. But all information should go into the computer. Garment sketches must be drawn...
for our suppliers, and these sketches must go into the computer, hence all in-
formation must go in there, so most of the time is spent in front of the computer
– Designer II, Fashion-Y (Interview 2013-07-04)

Updates on styles, communication, and collaboration with suppliers, and sales
statistics are organized by enterprise resource planning (ERP) software. As
each garment develops, instructions are updated in the ERP software to keep
everyone, including suppliers, on the same track. Each garment has its own
folder and receives an article number. The latest version of a garment, in terms
of colours, measurements, fabrics, accessories and patterns can hence be
found in this database. As the work proceeds, members of the organization
and their suppliers can report and access updates on each style that is part of
the collection.

To some extent the materials organizing activities in Designing transform as
the garments and collections emerge and developed. The initial design starts
with pens and pieces of papers to create the first sketches. These sketches are
made into technical garment sketches provided with technical information on
how to construct and produce the garment. The technical sketch is then trans-
lated into a pattern by a patternmaker. These patterns are either made from
scratch or previously used patterns are re-used and modified into new patterns,
either by hand or by using the computer. Computer-made patterns are often
easier to send to suppliers since they can be sent via the folder in the ERP
software. The supplier then prints the pattern on paper and uses it for cutting
the fabric and sewing the garments. The design then turns into a prototype,
which is sent back to the fashion brand to be assessed and perhaps adjusted.
These adjustments will then be added to the folder containing information
about the garment and its pattern. Sometimes details must be further explained
to the suppliers, so extra technical sketches might be added for details such as
pockets, collars, or cuffs. A supplier might want to change a solution and thus
modify the pattern to enhance the quality or save fabrics. In that sense, the
design is negotiated with the suppliers as well. After the prototype stage, the
design turns into a salesmen sample. If everything has worked well, this is
how the final design should look like in terms of details, measurements, col-
ours, and so on. Some adjustments might still occur, but this is more or less
the design that goes in to production. Hence, the transformation of materials
organizes collaboration among practitioners performing the Designing prac-
tice, both inside and outside the fashion company.

Along with this process of the transformation of materials during the emer-
gence and development of a collection, updates are continuously made to the
ERP system and visual, tangible overviews are created to keep track of where
the collection is heading. There is usually a board on a wall dedicated to the
emerging collection on which sketches, inspirational pictures, textile samples
and colour samples are placed. This overview aids the process of putting abstract expressions into words that describe the looks and describe how the clothes can be worn and combined.

5.2.3 Engagements: novelty within frames

Designing is about communicating an expression; creating something new, making beautiful and wearable clothes to be appreciated by the end consumer. The creative work is, to some extent, abstract in its form. It is sometimes hard to grasp what the initial sources of inspiration are. Phrases such as having a sense or a feeling for something were commonly used to describe why a certain design took shape. There is an artistic motor which drives Designing to developing and finding new paths but at the same time, the garments should serve a purpose, which is to be attractive enough for the customers to buy and wear them. When designing new clothes, designers usually want to convey a certain feeling or a purpose for wearing this or that style. The final design is often set when these arrangements are reached. New garments should be recognizable in accordance with the expression of the fashion label, but also provide something exciting and new to the end consumer. In interviews, meetings, and during workshops the message came through that whenever a fashion brand deviated from its own main expression, trying to adjust too much to current trends or other external demands, losses in sales occurred. It is always a tough balance to manage to try to find a way to stay exciting and continue to attract customers without losing the core expression of the brand. The expectations are hence twofold: providing customers with novel designs, but within the frames of a stylistic expression belonging to the fashion label. Engagements in communicating and balancing those expressions are part of organizing the Designing practice.

You sense, ok, what is this brand? What are the expectations of this brand and what are we about to do? What is our thing? What is unique and how can we create surprises within the frames of the brand? It is about finding that arena – Head of Design, Fashion-Y (Interview 2013-11-05)

The core expression is guided by watchwords with which the fashion label identifies. These are more than just words; they are the building blocks that one must be able to trace in all styles and represent the brand’s core key values. These watchwords are repeated, almost like a mantra, in meetings, workshops, and presentations and are available at each organization’s website and communicated to customers. When designs are discussed in internal meetings, they are commonly compared to the sense that these watchwords are supposed to express. This sense will then guide the decision if a style stays within the collection or not. Hence, such words are repeated to provide both familiarity
and novelty within Designing. Each collection usually has its own main theme and concepts, which guides and inspires the collection in combination with the core key values. The theme might appeal to multiple senses through images, music, art, the structure of various materials, or the smell of something. A theme can relate to a certain artist, architect or something that is occurring in society. Designers can work with these themes in different ways but the themes are there to create a thread which runs throughout the collection.

Depending on the feedback from previous collections, decisions are made to emphasize a certain focus on e.g., enhancing jersey garments, increasing the proportion of trending fashionable items, increasing sales, or adding more sustainable fibres. Concentrating on a theme or a goal is important to designing, and can be emotionally driven. There are hence several ways in which engagements organize activities in the Designing practice, ranging from inspiration, an urge to create beautiful clothes, being appreciated by customers and the media and to improving the styles and materials used.

5.2.4. Skills: technical, analytical and artistic knowledge

In order to understand or perform Designing, skills organizing activities must be taken into account. These include being able to interpret statistics about sales and how the surrounding world will respond to future trends, and further how to make a design into a finished garment. Skills are required in how to make certain shapes, express certain feelings or stay exciting and interesting to the consumers.

It is quite complex; you must have a grounded knowledge in fitting and fabrics and a technical knowledge. And then there is the artistic side. Some of these things you can learn and above all develop, but there has to be something to start with. Time and experience is, of course, one aspect, but you must also be hungry and interested to develop and find new pathways. One of the most difficult things is to make everything work together, the creative and artistic together with the ability to analyse. Analysis and sales and the reality of consumers are woven together with some sort of artisanship and creativity – Designer II, Fashion-X (Interview 2013-08-14)

The above quote illustrates the combination of skills which relate to the use of materials and engagement with the practice. For instance, an every-day t-shirt must be easy to wash and sold in store within a certain price range. The knowledge about different materials is also important throughout the continuous work of a collection. The fabric first decided on might be cancelled for various reasons. Some suppliers demand the purchase of a certain quantity that might be difficult to achieve. Other textiles might just not turn out the way they were expected to. In these situations, new alternatives have to be decided
on, sometimes at a short notice. Hence, skills to cope with rapid changes and problem solving in these situations, organize the activities of Designing.

In addition, there is an artistic component, which can be learned and developed over time. These are tacit, creative skills that are closely related to the engagements of Designing, such as searching for new inspiration. Communicating and collaborating through skills are important too. A designer must be able to express the design visually and in text to buyers, suppliers, and customers. If patternmakers and textile buyers cannot understand a design, they have to interpret what the designer is after, which could be very time consuming and cause further misunderstandings. Time and experience are important in learning how to combine creativity and artisanship with the ability to analyse what customers would like to buy, which is why skills are under constant development and why they organize activities within the Designing practice.

5.3 Producing

To some extent, designers provide their idea on a paper and we create the product – Senior Buyer I, Fashion-X (Interview 2014-02-12)

The Producing practice includes activities that make a design into a garment such as sourcing and buying fabrics and accessories, patternmaking, sewing, placing orders, and communicating with suppliers about updates along the production line, all of which are organized by skills, engagements, and materials. Practitioners that carry out the Producing practice include buyers, the head of assortment, product developers, designers, suppliers, pattern makers, and management. Everyone is involved in creating the fashion collection from its smallest accessories to the ready to wear garments.

5.3.1 Planning for problem solving

Throughout the production of a collection, new issues daily appear which need to be resolved, and work priorities might have to change during the day depending on which collection a certain issue belongs to and how close it is to the next deadline. With experience, new problems do not emerge very often but there are different versions of common problems and every case is unique. Some issues appear to be difficult to deal with, even though they have been experienced before. For example, if there is something wrong with the fabric, it has to be decided how to proceed. The choice is to wait for new fabric, which might delay the production, continue despite the flaws, or decrease the number of clothes if only parts of the fabric contain faults. Even though the problem might be familiar, each situation and context may require different solutions.
Depending on the effect of each situation, different practitioners must be involved to resolve it. If a problem has a large impact on the end customer the production team usually discuss it with the head of assortment. If the problem appears in an earlier stage, the designer might be included to decide on a solution in line with the initial design. Some issues are caused due to miscommunication, but unexpected ones sometimes just happen. To avoid these issues, prototypes are sometimes ordered from different suppliers to eventually receive the best possible quality and price. However, this is also costly and cannot be conducted for all garments. If something goes wrong in production, there is usually no time to start all over again since the final collection needs to be ready by a certain deadline, and production is time consuming. For that reason, alternatives to an initial idea could be thought of in advance, if production problems are anticipated.

When I think about my job and what I do, it is very much about problem solving. Sometimes, when we look at a collection, we see all the problems all the garments contain. Sometimes it is even hard to like a garment due to all the issues during production. However, this is nothing that the end consumer sees in the end - Senior Buyer I, Fashion-X (Interview 2014-02-12)

There is no guidebook that provides the best answers, and there is no guarantee that the solution and decision will be the best one until it is tested. But the experience of a failure provides the knowledge to try something else next time. If a textile turns out the wrong way, one option is to search for a similar textile and decide how to proceed by comparing the two. In this way, the Producing practice mediates between the fashion brand and suppliers to make sure the initial look of each garment is created according to plan.

When textiles and accessories are decided on, an order is placed for both prototypes and sales samples, but the order for the material of the collection for sale is placed after the sales period, when the styles to be produced and the numbers of each style are known. There is not much room for negotiation about prices regarding textiles in the early stage. However, if the final order reaches a high number there might be some room for negotiation on fabrics and sewing.

5.3.2 Materials: sourcing, testing, and updating

The Producing practice is organized by materials such as samples of textile, yarn, accessories, colours (lab dips), and garments. These samples are controlled for and tested during production using measuring tapes, needles, washing powder, and so on, together with the experienced hand. Sourcing for new materials, such as fabrics, buttons, and zippers are ongoing activities within
Producing to find better prices, qualities and deliveries for the coming collections. Producing finds materials to match the intended expression of Designing, but materials are sometimes developed together with suppliers to reach the requested look intended by Designing, with regards to colours and finishing textiles.

For example, when it comes to knitting, we have yarns that look like this (shows a knitted sweater). But, we wanted to do add something to it, so I discussed it with the supplier if we could develop their base and add this, and this, and this. If they find it interesting and if they find us interesting to work with, they agree on developing their base. We manage to do that maybe one, two or three times per season. We can’t do it for every aspect we would like modified since it requires us to order a certain amount – Head of sourcing, Knit, Fashion-Y (Interview 2013-10-22)

When colours are decided on, a lab dip, which is a colour sample on the actual textile, is ordered from the supplier. Sometimes the colour appears the way it is intended in the first sample, but sometimes this is hard to achieve, especially since a colour can look very different depending on the textile material and its finishing. If a colour is a bit different from what was expected the design team has to decide if it can be accepted or how to proceed. If a lab dip has a different colour than expected, whether or not to ask for a new sample has to be considered. Usually, it is a question of time since the whole procedure has to start all over again. It could also be a question of previous experience with a certain supplier. It is easier to use the colours already provided by the suppliers, but if the collection has a special seasonal colour, that is usually preferred. However, a small company placing small orders sometimes has to adjust to what is available from the supplier. Dyeing specific colours on textiles usually comes with a minimum quantity, which might be hundreds or thousands of metres of textile. Managing colours for a season is hence a combination of activities including visiting textile fairs and meeting with textile suppliers to try to match the seasonal colours desired for the collection with what is provided by suppliers.

While a lot of activities include working with textile materials and tools to assess them, computers are often used tools too. Communication, such as emailing with suppliers, sourcing and learning about new alternative materials, and filling out lists of orders are examples of computer work. The ERP software of folders for each garment is also updated, according to changes made throughout production, using the computer. As well as communicating with suppliers, ordering samples, and negotiating styles with both Designing and supplier practices, the Producing practice is part of the transformation of materials, from a sketch to a finished garment. Producing and Designing are both
in contact with suppliers to assess and develop each garment towards its final design.

5.3.3 Engagements: product development and collaboration

Sourcing materials and producing garments involve finding the best quality at the best price in relation to the intended design and the frames of the structure of the collection. At a certain point in time, a decision has to be made, but the search for new materials is an ongoing driver of the Producing practice. Every new collection requires new qualities at the target price. This search for quality includes different things, such as finding high quality fibres, or good working conditions of the textile production, or finding fabrics which make the garments behave in the desired way in terms of washing, not pilling or the sense that they evoke. However, textiles with better qualities come at higher prices and this creates a tension between commercial priorities and the artistic expression of creating a collection. What constantly drives Producing is the goal of negotiating better prices and qualities together with the creativity of visualizing the final result, which when manifested in the finished product, is quite rewarding.

When you walk into a store on a Saturday afternoon and find all the beautiful things you made or was part of making. Thus, when you see the products you developed. That’s fun and hopefully you forgot all the problems that surrounded them (ha, ha). It’s a good feeling when you work with something that becomes tangible, which is an obvious result – Senior Buyer I, Fashion-X (Interview 2014-02-12)

There is a desire to be able to translate the idea of the designer into a physical garment, which is driven by artistic, technical, and financial aspects. Wanting to find better solutions and communicating with people all over the world are drivers of this practice too. Since production is worldwide, language barriers and cultural differences are constantly present. These situations force novel, innovative ways of communicating. One of the organizations in this study had a period of expecting too many errors from a supplier. They realized that the textual language was translated incorrectly, causing misunderstandings. As a solution, they started to communicate using more pictures than words, a solution that proved to be very helpful for all practitioners across these organizations and their language barriers. Hence, engagements organize activities of Producing such as communication and collaboration together with a constant strive for product development.
5.3.4. Skills: technical and creative knowledge

An important task for practitioners of the Producing practice is to be able to understand the idea of the designer and translate it into the garment the designer intended it to be. Although the main work of the production team consists of using its knowledge of technical aspects of producing fashion such as knowing what fibres, chemicals, and qualities to use, practitioners must also understand the technical aspects in relation of the creative expression.

"It is important that I understand everything (from the designer). Otherwise, the suppliers will not get it either – Senior Buyer II, Fashion-X (Handover meeting 2014-01-21)"

In addition, suppliers develop new fabrics and accessories collections, which implies both technical and creative knowledge is continuously changing. When the designs of a collection emerge, Producing and Designing need to interact with supplier practices to be up to date on the latest samples available. It usually boils down to three main issues: price, quantity, and time i.e. the final price of the finished garment, how many pieces to produce, and if there is enough time to produce each garment according to the initial ideas. Sometimes the production team knows how to proceed due to previous experience, but sometimes it has to extend the discussion with potential suppliers. Previous experience with suppliers and fabrics is assessed to end up with the most suitable and profitable solution. For instance, how did a certain supplier manage deliveries last time, or how reliable were certain suppliers on keeping their deadlines or communication? A lot of work is related to sourcing materials and communicating with suppliers. Time is restricted, due to the seasonality of production, so the production team must also know how to prioritize to reach the intended expression by a certain deadline. Such skills develop through the combination of technical and creative knowledge.

5.4 Selling

"Today, people have less time and it’s harder to reach people through all the media noise. It is actually a tough challenge. Back in time you could write a newsletter and everyone would read it, but that is not the case today. Hence, it is, of course, important to think about how you communicate – CEO, Swedish Fashion Council (Interview 2013-06-18)"

The selling practice is about communicating a certain design or collection to the customer. It involves activities such as creating marketing strategies, vis-
ual communication, meeting and selling the collection to external buyers, creating texts about the collection, and providing the contents for sales books, webpages, and distributors. Practitioners include sales representatives, PR and communication workers, designers, distributors, managers, and retail planners. Everyone performs activities to make sure the expression of the brand and the collection is well communicated, to increase sales.

5.4.1 Planning for communication and feedback

If Producing organizes how to interpret the designers’ ideas into physical garments, Selling includes activities that interpret and communicate the sense and values of the collection to appeal to the end consumer. The knowledge within the Selling practice is also important to Designing and Producing. Practitioners within Selling are usually closest to the end consumer and their expectations, hence Selling is a link between the fashion brand and its consumers. There are different approaches to balance the relationship between in-house and customer requirements. On the one hand, the fashion brand needs support in terms of feedback from customers, sales statistics, and other experience. However, re-sellers expect some support too in terms of sales arguments, displaying clothes and communicating the brand.

*Twice a year you present the main collections to the customers. In between these periods you try to help the re-sellers to sell the clothes by informing their store personnel and so on. We have about a month to sell the collection at the beginning of the year and one month in the middle of summer. In a tail-heavier organization, you might help out with various things in between (sales periods) such as marketing and reporting to production and design what works and does not work in store. If you don’t do enough externally it might hit back on sales. Your customers don’t think you do enough. However, if you don’t engage internally, design and production might miss out on important information and feedback. Hence, it can be difficult to find the right balance. This might be even more difficult in a small company – Sales Representative I, Fashion-X (Interview 2013-07-03)*

In addition to the collection, something else needs to be delivered. Customers that are willing to spend money on their clothes also want something more, they want a reason to buy something, and the garments have to contribute in some way. It is within the Selling practice that this contribution is created by using the brand’s core values guided by its watchwords, which express the combination of familiarity and something new. This work requires great knowledge of the brand, what it stands for, and an understanding of the inspiration, concepts, and story behind a collection. It also requires paying attention to the customers and what they expect the brand to deliver.
To some extent it is the end consumer who decides what we deliver: we start with the customer and ask what the customers want. Then we package the garment in a new and exciting way in a fashion show. However, the start-up of the design process is close to the customer, asking what the customer wants rather than trying to present something new to the customer. It takes about six months for a collection to reach the store after it is sold. Then the store sells it for about four to five months and then the Head of Production gets the information about which products sold or did not sell so well. The products that sold are then brought to the next collection with minor changes. Hence, in the end, it is the end consumer who decides if a certain garment should continue or be replaced – Sales Representative I, Fashion-X (Interview 2013-07-03)

The knowledge created by Selling, via consumer practices, is hence part of creating the structure of upcoming collections, in combination with the forecasting and artisan knowledge of Designing. In this way, Selling organizes activities that communicate the intended emotional aspects of the collection. They also provide feedback from their customers, useful for the upcoming collections about which Selling, again, will communicate the intended emotional aspects.

5.4.2 Materials: communicating novelty and familiarity

Activities within the Selling practice includes distributing the finished collection, packaged and displayed in different ways. Apart from the physical clothes, the collection is presented using sales books, fashion photography, packing and shopping bags, and decorating artefacts that the brand wants to connect to their design. These additional decorating artefacts could involve interior design or jewellery made by other designers to add to the intended expression of the brand. These materials organize the activities within the Selling practice and are at the same time created through these activities. Labels, hangtags, and information provided on hangtags are usually created within the Selling practice; these items should reflect what the brand communicates in a longer perspective to make the brand recognizable to their consumers. Artefacts are hence used to communicate what is novel here and now, but also to create long-term familiarity with the brand.

Since Selling includes receiving information and communicating and collaborating within and across organizations, a computer is an essential tool. ERP software is used to keep track of orders and provide the rest of the organization with the statistics of previous sales. This software hence links the Selling practice to other retail and consumer practices. Computers are also used to work with fashion and promotion images and update the webpage, including the web shop, and information about the brand. Communicating with customers is an important activity within Selling and most work is digitalized today,
which makes technology such as social media an important marketing tool too.

If you look at these types of companies (fashion brands) and their twenty best stores, at least ten would be web shops, and that wasn’t the case only five years back. So, that is new. And that is also a way for us to reach out – Marketing Director, Fashion-X (Interview 2013-03-27)

New customer behaviours, such as online shopping and browsing the Internet for information about brands, have changed the way marketing and sales tools have been developed.

5.4.3 Engagements: intermediary between the brand and its consumers

Attentiveness to fashion, sales, and communication organizes the Selling practice. Engagements to manage good sales include being curious about other people, an interest in what is going on in the surrounding context, and in the fashion business itself, which contribute to change in the organizing of Selling, but also explain its interrelationship to surrounding consumer practices.

You have ears, a nose, a mouth, and eyes; hence you receive things all the times in your daily routines. It is also important that you don’t have to put too much effort into it, because there are so many things you have to put a lot of effort into. If you are in this business, you are interested in it and its surrounding setting. You just have to have that. It is also important to know about references such as this collection refers to another collection, which in turn refers to another collection. If you don’t know about these references you are screwed – Sales Representative I, Fashion-X (Interview 2013-07-03)

Even though consumer inputs and behaviours are important to develop fashion collections, engagements such as confidence in the brand’s expression, creativity and strategy are important drivers of the Selling practice. To be able to understand and express the references that are important to communicate the design to consumers, practitioners of Selling must have a strong relationship with the core values of the brand.

We should never compromise our style due to something else. Without our style, we’re nothing, that’s what we are. If we made our things into something else, there is no reason for being. Then we would be another brand and another brand next season. It’s about being faithful to our product – Head of Product Communication, Fashion-Y (Interview 2013-07-04)
This shows the importance of engagements organizing Selling in accordance with the fashion label’s values, being able to understand and communicate these values to offer something competitive and unique to the consumers. It also involves choosing the right type of sales and marketing of the brand, mediating the expression in a way that appeals to the consumer. It is more than only selling the garments of the collection, it is making sure the consumers are attracted by the designs which are packaged in a competitive way.

*It is about finding the right passion – Sales Representative I, Fashion-X (Interview 2013-07-03)*

Due to the intermediary activities between consumer practices and the practices performed within the fashion brand, engagements that organize the Selling practice are about understanding how and why consumers perform their activities, and how the stylistic message from the fashion label can be integrated with those activities.

5.4.4 Skills: consumer trends and fashion trends

The Selling practice includes skills that are related to communicating the collection to its target customers. Hence knowledge is required about customer lifestyles, how to reach them while facing competition from other brands, and how to convince buyers that the fashion brand delivers what they expect and want. It is important to be up to date on what is going on in society and how to sell the brand in this context. It is also important to understand the marketing channels at hand including magazines, blogs, and social media. Competition is high and trends are changing. In this context, it is also important to be able to communicate the origin of the brand and its core values.

... I'm quite convinced that the development we've seen, i.e. why some (brands) have increased in sales while other (brands) lost sales, is not related to the actual product you sell and the knowledge you have about it. It is related to issues about branding, how well you do business, how you distribute your goods, what demands you create for your customers or what you are able to offer your customers. Not only in terms of price but also in terms of margins... It is about making the final customers feeling special about wearing a certain shirt hence there are ranges of factors. Issues that are related to colour or shape or buttons or thread or the craftsmanship might not be at the top of the list (of why someone busy your garment) I think this is a dramatic change – Managing Director, Stockholm Modecenter (Interview 2012-06-15)

When it comes to consumer wants and sales prediction, there is a high level of uncertainty within the fashion industry. New styles regularly emerge and
no single style has a complete impact on current fashion. Skills organizing the Selling practice include understanding the surrounding context, interpreting how the fashion brand fits in this context, and to packaging the collection in a way that appeals to the end consumer. To some extent, this is a combination of tacit and more creative skills, together with skills about new technology and marketing channels.

5.5 Interdependency among practices: improvising on routines

*It is like a chain: everyone has his or her own circle but it overlaps with another chain, and the whole organization consists of several chains that overlap and are plaited together – Designer III, Fashion-Y (Interview 2013-03-28)*

It is evident that the making of a fashion collection depends on all three practices: Designing, Producing, and Selling, their organizing elements, and the continuous relationships among the practices and practitioners performing these practices. Skills organizing the Producing practice could organize the Designing practice too. Tools provided by the Selling practice could also be useful for the Producing practice and so on. Skills, materials, and engagements are shared and complement one another to achieve the final result of a fashion collection. Designing, Producing and Selling together organize the activities in all the collections at the same time, but the three practices also interrelate with other practices organizing activities performed by suppliers and buyers, which interlink individual, organizational and industry activities. Studying the alignment or the misalignment among practices provides an opportunity to study innovation both from a situated perspective, and in a larger context, since activities performed are organized by practices spanning across organizations within the fashion industry.

While these practices support one another, they also compete for the same resources, such as practitioners, space and time. The work of a fashion collection starts more than a year ahead of its delivery in store, but most practitioners refer to time to be an ever scarce resource. To manage time, the assortment structure guides the work throughout the collection to manage time, but as work progress, several deviations could occur along the way.
It is a combination of creativity and gut feeling, finding what is unique for the brand in a world full of trends and new tendencies combined with a more structured and sales oriented and commercial part. Finding that balance requires a rigorous schedule, and that is the first thing that hits many people, the speed of everything and the short amount of time between the first idea to a finished collection in store. To keep up with everything and make sure a certain level of quality is delivered is the main challenge. Fast production is not difficult, others do that. But, the type of product we deliver comes with a greater challenge, and for that, we need a structured work process so that everyone knows when to do what – Head of Design, Fashion-Y (Interview 2013-11-05)

If a certain activity is delayed it forces other activities to be performed in a shorter time than initially planned for. Some fabrics might be hard to buy or require a certain minimum quantity. A certain design might be too costly due to complicated cutting and sewing, or a sample from the supplier might just come out the wrong way. Sometimes, garments affected by these circumstances, are deleted from the collection, but sometimes these unexpected changes are kept in the design, which again shows the importance of alignment among interrelated practices.

5.5.1 Follow-up meetings

To keep track of all details and to make sure the fashion collection runs according to the proposed schedule, follow-up meetings are performed on a regular basis. Three tollgate meetings are usually held during the creation of each fashion collection. In the first, the garment sketches are introduced. The design team presents its ideas, inspiration and the concepts that the collection is based on. Mood boards with inspirational pictures, colours, and early sketches are presented. Based on previous experience, prices and qualities are discussed. At this meeting, it is not possible to know all the details such as the exact cost, or the actual fabrics and accessories which will be used.

In the second tollgate meeting, prototypes are presented, which makes it clearer in which direction the collection is heading and if the collection is commercial in terms of prices and styles. However, prototypes are usually not made in the final intended fabric. Colour samples are added together with other details to give the best possible understanding of the final result. Hence, everyone has to use some imagination at this stage to understand what the actual fashion collection will look like. This is, to some extent, a lively meeting in which prototypes, textile samples, and garments from previous collections are compared and used to explain the future end result. These tollgate meetings allow for some negotiation around the initial structure, designs, and time and budget management. Clothes are compared for their contribution to the collection and smaller adjustments may be added. From the prototypes, it is apparent if suppliers have understood or misunderstood the instructions
about the garments. The look of a prototype may also encourage the design team to change their minds on how to proceed with a certain garment. The sales team can provide input if they believe a garment is commercially viable or not. However, the really edgy fashion garments are left to the designers to decide on, since it is also important to differentiate between clothes that provide large sales and clothes that are allowed to be ahead of the field.

At the third tollgate meeting, the salesmen samples of the collection, in the right colours and fabrics arrived and these are discussed. This assessment of the garments is a quicker one, since everything should be in place. The meeting is a check to make sure everything is right and the prices are correct. Sometimes a few garments are deleted if they do not appear to be typical garment of the brand, or if something has turned out completely wrong after all. After this meeting, the collection is set. The go button is pushed and the whole sales and communication process can start, hence it is an important deadline for a fashion collection. However, there can still be unfortunate errors after this situated event, with regards to both production and sales. When the collection is established, the planning for each type of retail store is done. The range of clothing differs depending on the size of the store and location. After the third tollgate meeting, the collection is presented to the wholesale sellers and distributors. This is also an opportunity to receive input from the sales personnel about previous sales, which provides knowledge for the upcoming collections, which are being created simultaneously.

In addition to the main follow-up meetings, other meetings regarding detailed issues are held too. Within the work of a collection, there are usually some focus areas such as improving the material, finding more sustainable textiles, developing core garments and so on. These projects usually include all practices too since a new approach to design has to be produced and communicated. These meetings are, to some extent, similar to tollgate meetings, but more focused in time and on a specific theme.

Individuals performing one or several practices all contribute to the finished fashion line and Designing, Producing, and Selling practices provide various options to act on. It is evident when describing routinized practices that there are small adjustments, changes, and innovative activities constantly taking place. Even though the practices are stable enough to define them according to their organizing elements, they are contested by some of the surrounding activities, and the organizing of practices may alter. When routinized activities fail for some reason, innovation is a means to that change. The next chapter provides two examples in which activities were planned for innovations to emerge. The first is an illustration of a planned management and organization innovation and the second illustrates a planned product innovation. It is shown
that these innovations are not developed and implemented in isolation. Planning is accompanied by situated events that require improvisation to make sure work activities proceed. The connection between planning and improvising in practice is what further interrelates innovations in every-day work.
6 Planning for innovation

The two organizations investigated in this study, Fashion-X and Fashion-Y, both planned for innovation, which included changing in existing work routines within the three practices Designing, Producing and Selling. Fashion-X planned for a management and organizational innovation and Fashion-Y planned for a product innovation. In this chapter, a background is provided of the issues and situations that triggered these innovative activities and their contexts. The backgrounds and introductions to the two cases are given according to the elements that organize all three practices in the centre of this study, in order to show the interrelatedness between the practices and activities performed. Even though the three practices and their elements were recognized in both organizations, the two examples of planned innovation also show differences in how their activities unfolded over time. In this chapter, there is also an illustration of how different elements and practices have contributed to innovation in different ways depending on the planned for innovation, the surrounding context and how practitioners responded to these situations in both planned and improvised ways.

6.1 Fashion-X: Changing work routines to balance arts and order

*The design is what makes the brand competitive. A fashion brand must have something that makes it unique, that makes it stand out from the rest – Designer I, Fashion-X (Interview 2013-02-19)*

*It is still like this, there is a clear strategy. There is no question about it. I want to point that out. The strategy is of course to be a profitable company. That is number one and the main thing I want to communicate – CEO, Fashion-X (Interview 2013-09-20)*

A planned management and organizational innovation was initiated in Fashion-X to structure and manage work routines within the organization. Such work activities were not coordinated in the most desirable way, and a major issue was the experience of an imbalance between creativity and commerce.
Fashion-X used to be more focused on the design process, but was less structured in activities surrounding it. The company had faced a loss in profit for many years. Due to the lack of organized routines, a large part of the daily work was devoted to putting out fires rather than planning for future events. In 2012, a new CEO joined the organization and assessed how it could progress. This evaluation concluded that Fashion-X could be turned around to a profitable organization if certain recommendations were implemented. Because of this, innovative activities were expected and planned for, since the organization would go through changes introducing new organizational routines to increase revenue. This change was referred to as a re-take, in which Fashion-X (re-)set its building blocks which were also referred to as the DNA of the company. This re-take focused on strengthening what was already working well within the organization and on finding new ways of doing things that did not work well. During this process of change, its core functions would remain intact. These were design, production, patternmaking, PR and communication, and logistics. One consequence of this management and organizational innovation was that Fashion-X experienced a large staff turnover. Many people left since they did not support the new work routines, replaced by new staff. A few newly created positions were also added. Hence, even though the company was founded about 15 years earlier, it was also a young and, to some extent, new organization, which significantly, the majority of employees started working after the new CEO.

It was prioritized to establish a particular work culture that would strengthen the links among all activities included in the creation of a fashion collection. The work routines used to be freer and depend on individual solutions. These were replaced by stricter routines, in which collective responsibility was emphasized. A model of four connected cogwheels was used to illustrate the importance of working together and taking responsibility as a team. These were labelled design, production, market, and sale. The cogwheels aimed to show how all activities within the organization were dependent on one another. If the design process did not work according to the intended structure, the next process, production, would not work either, which would affect the following cogwheel/process and so on. This model, created by management, also allowed for additional cogwheels outside the organization which represented customers and suppliers.

*If you don’t take responsibility and do your work it will affect the next cogwheel and there will be a gap. Someone else has to work harder to fix it and the work will be delayed. This year they (members of the organization) managed to sell the spring pre-collection a month earlier than last year. It takes a lot of effort to get things right and time is a big challenge – CEO, Fashion-X (Interview 2013-04-30)*
The making of a fashion collection depends on a number of coordinated deadlines, which depends on the industry’s seasonal cycle of production. Within Fashion-X’s organizational change, guidelines and new routines were continuously created to avoid the panic that used to precede a deadline. An important aspect in this work was to break down the large and important deadlines into intermediate targets distributed among all departments of the organization. Such an intermediate target could be a bullet point on an agenda or a handover of garments from one department to another. The deputy CEO explained the creation of the organization’s new calendar, dependent on the seasons, and how the planning of new work routines started off from the final presentation of the collection and worked back in time to determine the deadlines to eventually end up in the desired work situation.

The whole organization is dependent on dates and all departments are dependent on everyone keeping the dates. After that you can decide on the sales period, when to start and when to finish and when to place orders and so on – Deputy CEO, Fashion-X (Interview 2014-01-29)

A new enterprise resource planning (ERP) software was introduced to ease the work of managing and coordinating work activities. The aim of this new tool was to keep everyone updated on the current situation of each collection under production and to receive solid statistics on previous production and sales. Hence, the creative and artistic side of the organization was accompanied by a new structure based on figures. Previous sales figures grew in importance as a basis for the decision making on which designs to include in a collection, how and where garments would be produced, and how to sell the collection. Two different management groups were created to develop both design and business activities. One group tended to be more influenced by the figures provided from the ERP software, focusing on issues such as accounts receivable, accounts payable, payment terms, authorization procedures, revenue, etc. The other group was regarded as the more creative, organizing the tollgate meetings and the artistic influence on the collections. The CEO did not want to mix these two groups since he thought the creative people would not tolerate the issues raised in the figures oriented group. He emphasized that the two groups would benefit from each other’s knowledge, but it was also a matter of resources, of how to distribute time and people. It was considered too time consuming for everyone to participate in both groups.

6.1.1 Re-distributing work activities

Since Fashion-X used to have a stronger focus on design, the Designing practice was organizing too many activities compared to the other practices. This
imbalance of responsibility for activities caused a situation that often led to last minute panic situations, leaving too many important activities to the final deadline of a collection. The previous experience within Fashion-X was that everything would eventually work out in one way or another, which allowed this way of working to continue. This strong focus on design made the Designing practice responsible for a lot of work surrounding the collection such as the sales content and presenting the collection in a preferred way. The management and organizational innovation and its new work routines aimed to redistribute a lot of those activities to new functions within the organization. For instance, the Selling practice was assigned some of the work activities that used to belong to the Designing practice, such as promotion materials and updating content on the webpage. To manage this, it was decided that eight weeks before the line release, a marketing start-up meeting should take place with the design team. When this decision was made, further work was redistributed in relation to the line release. It was hence important that Selling and Designing aligned their skills, engagements and materials to manage the new ways of working together.

Redistributing activities to the Selling practice also enabled them to process and prepare the press for the upcoming collections. Until this point, the press had been quite interested in Fashion-X without too much marketing effort having been made. However, a new strategy was suggested to provide even more information. Magazines usually work according to themes and for that reason it was suggested during one of the management meetings that Fashion-X could create themes for magazines to use. Another idea was to invite magazines to the showrooms to introduce them to the new fashion lines. Also emphasized was the strategy of reaching bloggers in better ways, including finding better ways of lending out clothes to them and to stylists. This required an efficient and productive relationship between Designing and Selling, one which had not been spelled out before. For instance, the design department now had to decide on prints in time for the marketing department to be able to use them for PR items such as invitations and background posters. Another example was the sales book which used to be the responsibility of Designing, but was now redistributed to Selling. This required sharing information at an earlier stage about prompts such as the sources of inspiration for each collection. Some of the products had to be finished earlier in order to prepare this sales material since it was not possible to narrow down the sales window.
Even though it is up to marketing and design to add the content it is up to sales to make sure the content is delivered. To this point, too much responsibility has been on the design team to add content, but that will probably be solved in a different way as the organization settles. Now, design is also producing material such as invitations and the sales book. The marketing section will produce this material in the future – Marketing Director, Fashion-X (Interview 2014-02-06)

Work activities had to be reallocated from Designing to Producing too. Above all, the activities among the practices had to be better organized in relation to time. The creative design process had to be more focused, with time for the time consuming sourcing and production process. If the work activities were not managed on time among the three practices, there would be a risk of ending up in a situation of too many postponed activities competing for the same resources in the countdown towards the launch of a collection. The deputy CEO explained a situation that had caused a lot of work stress since too many activities had been clustered in January. These comprised the line release, handover of the Spring/Summer pre-collection from the design team to the production team, a fashion show, and the creation of a look book, i.e., a photographed overview of the collection. At the same time, designers were supposed to start up the next main collection. As this was considered to be too many important activities to occur in one month, it was decided that some of the activities should ideally happen already in December. For instance, invitations and texts for the fashion show could have been made in December. The cramming of too many activities into one period creates the risk of running late with the next collection as well, which could develop into the downward spiral of a last minute production.

The new work routines became gradually adjusted to and involved a learning process in which work had to be altered and understood in a different way. However, it was also evident that previous work routines were well established in each practice. The reorganization took some time due to this habitual behaviour and engagement in the new working routines had to be repeated on several occasions for the staff to gradually alter their work procedures. This redistribution of activities among practices required practitioners to have an understanding of the importance of why these changes had to happen and how it affected not only each practitioner, but also all practitioners involved in the creation of the fashion collection, and, by that, aligning the practices.

You have to nag, nag, and nag about it and try to work it in the follow-up meetings all the time. Even though you said the deadline is on the 15th you cannot leave it at that; it will not happen, at least not the first season. It is also important to explain why these changes are necessary since you don’t want to end up in this situation again. In the beginning you cannot expect people to look for all the information and deadlines. You have to make it clear and available and
you have to provide information continuously such as next week this and that will happen. It is also important to find a balance between what people find a reasonable timeframe and when things have to be done in reality. – Deputy CEO, Fashion-X (Interview 2014-01-29)

The tollgate meetings together with the intermediate targets became situated events in which everyone was reminded about the deadlines and the importance of the new working routines.

6.1.2 Combining accumulated and new knowledge

Due to the large turnover of personnel within Fashion-X, a lot of experiences came from different people, many of them new, all with various backgrounds and all performing different practices with situated knowledge. This experience and knowledge had to be coordinated to align with the intended new work routines of Fashion-X. In addition to coordinating previous skills, new skills had to be developed and organized within all three practices too.

Even though the Fashion-X collection is almost fifteen years old, the organization is only one year old. It is strange since there are no rules for how to do things, which would be normal for a fifteen-year-old company. It is not established how to sell to customers, and how to run the office when customers are present, including who will take out the trash bin. But, since everyone is new, and this year is running very fast, people had to put out a lot of fires to manage everything rather than creating new routines – Sales Representative I, Fashion-X (Interview 2013-07-03)

There is always room for improvement. We have changed a lot since I started. We have changed a lot in structures and routines. Or rather, there weren’t so many routines when we started, but we started about the same time, all of us – Senior Buyer I, Fashion-X (Interview 2014-02-12)

The lack of work routines had an effect on all practices. Even though the skills required to produce a fashion collection were present, they were not organized and interrelated among the practices, causing some confusion regarding responsibility. For this reason, most practitioners relied on their previous work experience to gradually form the working routines required in the new setting. During interviews and discussions in meetings, several practitioners referred to their previous work places and compared the current routines to their previous work tasks. New skills were developed collectively, and skills had to be learned in order to align the new work routines with each other.
I brought a few things from my previous work experience. Like, some things that you’re used to, you suggest to the team. That’s how I started – Senior Buyer I, Fashion-X (Interview 2014-02-12)

The whole production team was new and they had different knowledge and experiences that they had to work with, share and combine to manage a common pathway towards new structures and routines. This was described as continual improvement work. Eventually, new routinized ways of working were established through trial and error and negotiation among the organization’s members. Since several changes are made to a garment from the initial idea to the finished garment, it is important to keep track of the latest version and decision.

When the production team started, there were no routines for how to organize prototypes and samples and there were no folders in which certain products were placed together. Everything was just put somewhere. Hence, one of the first things the buyers did was to arrange for one folder for each style, to gather together all the information about one article in the same place. Another example was that the wardrobe consisted of all samples of garments in production. This meant that several versions of one style were kept together, and there was no coherent organization of all the styles. To avoid confusion about which was the latest version of a garment, it was decided that only the most recent sample should be hanging in the wardrobe. The previous samples should be stored in a box. All samples were, in addition, marked with labels that consisted of the article’s name and number, the type of sample and when it was received, which created new working routines within Producing. Skills that had organized other situated practices were hence brought via the new practitioners into Fashion-X, which, in turn, reorganized the practices performed in that fashion brand too. Skills were not only changed and aligned within the organization. In order to reach the financial goals of production, new collaborations and better deals with suppliers was also formed part of the management and organization innovation. This work was an ongoing learning and improvement process, in which Fashion-X had to build trust with their suppliers by delivering instructions earlier. But, this reorganizing was also a way for Fashion-X to find out which suppliers they could trust to deliver what was expected on time. The reorganization hence spanned across organizational borders, and the collaboration with supplier practices was very important for the innovative activities to proceed. In the tollgate meetings, the experience of previous and new suppliers was discussed and assessed in relation to how and what they managed to deliver within the time frames. Such assessments about suppliers were also part of mundane work. Below is an example of a situation in which Producing and Designing had to make a decision together based on their shared skills about a particular supplier:
Buyer I asked Designer II if they needed a new lab dip since the colour should be a bit brighter. Designer II replied that if there was time it was appreciated. The current supplier’s washings and finishing was not always the best. The designer felt more comfortable if he could see a new sample. Buyer I replied ok, and then I know. The designer explained to me that it was about a lab dip for a twill trouser that would be provided in a new colour next autumn. Buyer I now had to find out how long it would take to receive a new sample. If it would fit the time schedule, they would order a new lab dip. (2013-08-14)

A further example of changing work routines involved reducing the time spent at meetings for the production department which was divided into those responsible for knitted and woven fabrics. The way these two groups worked was similar. When everyone started in their positions, the knitted group and the woven group found it important to participate in each other’s meeting to make sure they worked according to the same processes and shared the same skills. But, in time, the two groups became more and more independent. For instance, it was decided after completing a few collections that each team would only participate in the tollgate meetings when their products were assessed. This decision was made by management and was mainly based on the time every meeting consumed. Since time was a scarce resource, the skills gained from the tollgate meetings had to be shared in a different way within the Producing practice. Allocating the two groups into separate tollgate meetings was first met with some resistance. The members of each group feared that important information would be missed if they did not participate in each other’s reviews, interacting with Designing and Selling. Instead, they had to develop routines in which the groups updated one another to make sure new skills were shared and developed to improve skills within the Producing practice.

New skills were developed in the Designing practice, which was influenced by and shared with Producing and Selling too. Due to the management and organization innovation, the assortment was restructured to increase sales and profit. A new structure of a collection was developed to make sure certain garments were created for certain purposes in terms of the level of fashion and price. Creating a clearer structure was also a way to keep the collection more coherent, to avoid ending up with a lot of garments without an obvious connecting theme. Through the development of how to build a collection, a new fashion line overview was introduced, which looked like triangle divided into
three sections. At the base, the core garments were represented. The main purpose of these garments was to increase turnover. Additional skills in Designing were required to design and decide on products that served a new purpose compared to the rest of the collection. In a similar way, skills were added in Producing, too. The core business was developed during a number of meetings in which information and knowledge about margins and designs were discussed. The main basis for deciding about the core garments was sales figures, hard facts explaining which products contributed to large sales. The middle section of the triangle assortment structure held the up and coming garments, a space to try out new things that might eventually end up at the base level, the core, if they sold well. The top level of the triangle included the high fashion garments. Since the base was wider and the top was narrower, the new assortment structure included more core garments compared to high fashion garments. All product groups such as trousers or shirts had their own triangles.

The development of the assortment structure was organized by skills from all three practices. Producing had experience of how the suppliers work and what kind of qualities and prices they offer. Internal sales personnel and distributors, who were close to the end consumer, also provided their knowledge of how buyers reason when they chose to buy or not to buy pieces from the collection. Constantly repeating this message made the design team more and more aware of prices and the choice of fabrics to target those prices. The creative skills of making fashionable clothes were already in place, but had to be accompanied by new business oriented skills too. When I discussed the Autumn/Winter 2014 collection with the head of assortment (after the external line release, Autumn/Winter 2014 on January 16, 2014), she claimed the new line was much more balanced, compared to previous collections, adding that it takes about three seasons to change something. Hence, it seemed like a lot of nagging and explaining had gradually made everyone aware of the business side of designing. From this, it is apparent that the organizational and management innovation involved a sharing of perspectives which had not existed in Designing before. The experience and numbers from previous sales contributed knowledge about price ranges accepted by the end customers and the bestselling styles, which contributed to a change in skills in Designing.

The follow-up meetings during the work of preparing a collection provided situations in which all practices came together and the elements organizing practices influenced one another. Throughout the handover meetings (from one department to another) and tollgate meetings, skills were constantly shared among practices. An example of shared skills among the Designing and Producing practice and a reminder to work according to the new assortment structure and its routines, was when the design team decided which designs they wanted to produce. The related handover meeting was a situated
event, which became a deadline for these decisions. At this meeting, the previous experiences of Producing and Designing were elaborated on, together with options of how to proceed if the initial idea did not work. Below is an excerpt from observational notes from January 21, 2014 of a hand-over meeting in which denim was discussed among two buyers, one designer and head of assortment:

The table was full of colour and textile samples. At first, it looked a bit messy. The designer started to cut some denim samples and stapled them to papers with written information and instructions about each garment. The designer said: *I would like to start with two sourcing cases.* He explained to the two buyers which fabric he was after and for what garment. But there was also a backup if his request could not be fulfilled. The designer continued to go through jeans and the head of assortment started to laugh: *That is actually three and Designer II does not know how to count.* She turned to me saying: *If you wonder what just happened, I told Designer II a maximum of three denim handovers, but he is over-delivering. However, that is a good thing because soon there will be a main SS-15, so he is working on that already.* The designer continued anyway. He demonstrated a pair of jeans with knee patches which had been produced several years ago. The head of assortment remarked that they were very slim. The washing was discussed too, and whether other jeans were designed with the same wash and colour. It was eventually decided to send the pair of jeans as a reference sample to the supplier. The head of assortment added: *We will put a note on it saying private, do not cut.* As the meeting continued the designer brought up some additional denim styles. Some, he stated, could work for this collection, but others were meant for coming collections, he was just interested in feedback. One example was a previous style that was very hard to produce due to some details, but the designer was confident that it would work with some adjustments, adding: *You should never give up.* After the meeting, the styles decided on were added to the ERP software and the work of sourcing for suppliers and materials started according to the instructions agreed on.
The excerpt shows how the head of assortment reminded the designer about the new structure and the importance of working according to it. It is also an example of product development interrelating Designing and Producing to reach the desired result based on both previous and new knowledge. Producing shared a lot of knowledge with Designing, a main point being the importance of being able understand and translate the design idea into a garment. This included knowing where to place an order, i.e., which supplier would understand and create the garment the way the designer intended it to be, to the best price. Every case of garment design and production was unique, but the accumulation of experiences gradually made this process easier to handle.

Just as previous skills were developed and new skills added to align Designing and Producing, skills were also re-organized in Selling. Selling had to follow and understand the development of the collection to be able to communicate the stylistic expression to align with consumer practices. From these consumer practices, Selling also received opinions on previous collections and sales statistics: skills that further re-organized the Designing and Producing practices for new product developments.

6.1.3 Communication tools and sales materials

The introduction of the new ERP software had an impact on all three practices. Since all information regarding the creation and selling of a collection was supposed to be stored in the software it aided decision-making regarding upcoming collections. The statistics provided by the system afforded information such as if it was the blue or the pink shirt that was a big seller, which styles provided the best margins, and so on.

*If there are no statistics, the best we can do is to guess. Now we have it black and white – CEO, Fashion-X (Interview 2013-09-20)*

The new ERP software also provided key performance indicators such as the hit-rate. The CEO explained this term. The hit-rate, i.e. the percentage of the collection that actually reached production, was running about 60. The goal was to reach 70. If it was not possible to reach a higher hit-rate, an alternative would be to decrease the number of garments in the collection. In this way, Designing was provided with a clear target. Another target for Designing was to decrease the cost of fabrics and accessories. The previous prices of production had been too high, which, in turn, had increased the price of the finished garments. The most fashionable image garments could be more expensive, but the rest of the collection had to reach a lower price level. The reasoning behind this decision was that good design could compensate for a lower quality in fabrics, but a higher quality in fabrics could not save poor design. Hence, the
materials. Designing could use for their stylistic innovations were restricted by the management and organizational innovation and its new financial goals.

The ERP software did not only provided information about past sales and present production. The aim was also to extend its usability by connecting social media and the distribution of the collections to the software. The marketing director explained that consumers were indicating they liked the brand on Facebook, they were interested in newsletters, and customers wanted to buy from the web shop. However, there was no tool to make the connections among these consumer activities, nor to make this information useful to the brand. This lack of co-ordination made it hard to follow and measure customer activities for marketing purposes.

It is costly to do the work, we have a solid foundation, a fan base, but we need to treat it carefully. – Marketing Director, Fashion-X (Interview 2014-02-06)

The intention was to connect and make use of this information via the new ERP software. As deliveries and distribution were a bit slow, the marketing director wanted to make the web shop a tool for the retail stores too. The situation at the time was that everything had to go via the office, but if orders could be placed via the ERP software, routines regarding the stock and deliveries could run more smoothly.

The work of refining the DNA of the organization, expressing the core values and concepts used for its collections, included working with relating artefacts. Collaborating with other brands, providing designs, accessories and other artefacts became more important at the office too, which is shown by an episode form observational notes on June 26, 2014:

On my way out of the office, I ran into the CEO and we started a discussion about the importance of using pictures, which was also related to defining the DNA and using concepts for the Fashion-X collection. He wanted to show me an example. We went into the men’s showroom: Here you can see how the designer has been working with more than just the clothes. It is about finding the right sense or feeling. The walls were decorated with inspiration pictures, the accessories were put together with a brass interior, and there were some books standing in the large window. The designer even brought his plants (but that was mainly because he was going on va-
According to the CEO, this way of working, embracing the concept of the DNA (arts, music, and tailoring) together with the theme concept of the collection made it clearer to communicate the whole collection to distributors and retail.

Hence, the new technology, together with the tangible artefacts, representing the brand and its design, were both important to emphasize the focus of the collections. Clearer communication would increase sales, which was all included in the work of the management and organizational innovation.

6.1.4 Motivating change while keeping the core values

Engagements altered to some extent due to the new focus of making the collections more commercial to increase sales. The urge to create fashionable and creative designs was still present, but it was accompanied by a goal to sell more, i.e., to reach out to a broader audience. With the planned for management and organizational innovation, it became more important to reach the sales goals and margins within Designing, Producing and Selling. According to the CEO, Fashion-X created fashion at the level their customers expected them to. The design and expression of the brand had always been clear, but had been communicated to a selected, narrow audience. In order to increase sales and profit, the aim was to reach a wider audience without losing too much of the design’s independent core values, a balancing act which affected the engagements in all practices in different ways. One way of reaching out, according to the CEO, was to change the way the collection was distributed. Fashion-X used to sell most of their clothes via their own retail stores. In this way, the brand had taken the whole risk of selling the collection and entering new markets. However, they were also able to control the distribution of the collection using their own retailing. One part of the overall management and organizational innovation, was to increase the wholesale share and new collaborations with external distributors were established to spread the financial risks and increase market shares. But this change was also a balancing act:

*When you let go of your own retail, but increase wholesale and independent stores, there is, of course, a risk of losing the ability to fully communicate to the end consumer. Some stores do not dare to use the whole expression of a particular brand and some stores want to make their own style and expression, choosing clothes from different brands that fit within their category.* — Marketing Director, Fashion-X (Interview 2013-03-27)

Fashion-X had an advantage since they had been in the fashion business for fifteen years. The marketing director explained that it is very different to work
with a brand that has been known for such a long time compared to working with a new brand. Fashion-X already had a story and stayed true to their original design, they built a reputation organized by engagements. The head of marketing knew from experience that buyers like to see a brand for a few seasons before they trust and buy the brand, i.e., they need to understand it and share the engagements of the brand.

New collaborations with distributors were established and a lot of work was invested in signing deals and making agreements with all the new distributors. Distributors were expected to have a stronger commitment to the brand compared to agents. Distributors also received a larger discount on the products they sold. It was important to Fashion-X that the new distributors really wanted to push sales in the markets they represented. According to the deputy CEO, Fashion-X was not interested in something half done but was looking for a full commitment from all distributors. Fashion-X wanted to share knowledge and experiences, and hence to interrelate the engagements organizing Designing, Producing and Selling with the distributors. The new collaborations also increased the demands on Fashion-X:

*We have to develop and improve even faster to supply the distributors with the things they need in order to do a good job – Deputy CEO, Fashion-X (Interview 2014-06-26)*

Together with the distributors, Fashion-X created a three year business plan which included a budget and goals. This happened a bit faster than initially expected, but according to the deputy CEO, that was a good thing. The collaboration was not only commercially driven; engagements such as sharing the same values and communicating the brand in a common way also organized activities. The same applied to collaboration with suppliers. When the production team started, the main focus was to find materials as quickly as possible, but this focus altered towards working ahead, building relationships with suppliers on a longer term basis. The extent to which these relationships were mediated by factors related to work time is clear from the following example. According to one of the buyers, it would be ideal to visit the suppliers. But due to time restrictions, communication took place over the phone or e-mail, which also contributed to more misunderstandings. From experience, the production team knew that solving problems would be much easier if it was possible to meet and discuss things with their suppliers. Even though instructions were carefully written, misunderstandings happened anyway without the option of meeting and discussing with the fabrics and garments in hand.
The new work routines and structures may have restricted creativity to some extent, but they also pushed creativity forward. According to one of the designers, there would be no reason to finish at a certain time if there were no routines that said so. Even though it could constrain creativity to think about margins and prices on materials, it also created a framework within which to be as creative as possible, to make the best of the situation, which offered its challenges to encourage and channel creativity.

*If there is no time limit, one can continue to make changes to the design, add, remove or try new things over and over again. If the most expensive materials cannot be used or the most advanced pattern making cannot be applied, it becomes a challenge to express creativity and end up with a desired expression within the provided structures – Designer I, Fashion-X (Interview 2013-02-19)*

The new structured way of working also organized creative engagements in terms of concepts. These related to how to tie a collection together, and how to make collections overlap to meet the customer demands for novelty in fashion:

*In wholesale, everyone is comfortable with buying in seasons, but more recently brands have started to offer in between collections or capsule collections. However, there is a value in building concepts for the collections. If you sell small collections too often and only what the customers require, there is a risk that the result will be too sprawling, lacking a focus. However, we want to build clear concepts and clear collections and for that we need clear starting points. Hence, we provide four collections per year. Two main and two pre-collections; two autumn and two spring collections. However, these collections are also connected, to some extent, for them to coexist in store. Pre-collections have been developed since it is not enough to have one collection in store for half a year before replacing it. Consumers require something exciting and new more often. This is also a way to adjust to current trends and seasonal weather. – Designer II, Fashion-X (Interview 2013-08-14)*

One of the sellers explained how a brand could contribute with something unique to their potential buyers due to the brand’s own unique expression and communicated values, how the creative engagements of the brand should align with consumer practices to make sure they communicate what they want the consumers to receive:
A collection must be conceptualized and clear about what the brand stands for, with a strong wow factor that breaks through. For example, too many prints on simple jersey garments might not be exciting enough. The fashion industry is currently facing a lot of players in less space. So, in order to break through to a buyer and the final consumer, the brand has to be able to show what it stands for, or it will just fall flat. For example, Fashion-X sells clothes in one wholesale chain, not because Fashion-X makes clothes this wholesale chain can’t find elsewhere, but because they want to buy a certain brand and a concept. It is hard work to manage a certain concept – Sales Representative I, Fashion-X (Interview 2013-07-03)

According to the marketing director, communication of the brand’s values had a long term perspective. The reorganization related to the management and organization innovation required the message of the brand to be pushed forward, to make sure that Selling actually communicated the DNA, developed together with Designing and Producing, of the brand to their buying customers. Hence, the engagements of all three practices had to overlap in a coherent way to reach through to the end consumers.

It was not only positive engagements that organized the practices. Collaboration among practices and feedback could also be sensitive. Since Selling was closest to the end consumer, they also shared their knowledge with the Designing practice in terms of the previous experience from sales. Some information needed to be delicately framed, especially to the design and production team since they were creatively responsible for the collection. Further, new collaborations contributed to the generation of many opinions from people who wanted to be involved in the creative work activities. This created considerable emotions related to what the brand was about, which also involved resistance to change. The extensive changes and innovative activities not only pushed creativity and work routines forward. These changes also created confusion and made practitioners fatigued, especially when activities were changing too fast or were time consuming to adjust to. In this way, engagements, together with skills and materials, both hindered and enabled innovations and, by that, interlinked the planned for innovations with improvised activities to cope with resistance and willingness to change according to the initiated management and organizational innovation.

6.2 Fashion-Y: Linking sustainability, production and consumption of fashion

A planned product innovation was initiated in Fashion-Y to create sustainable fashion, assessing the whole production chain. After a number of organizational changes during the past years, Fashion-Y had reached a stabilizing phase. As one of many outcomes of the previous change process, a corporate
responsibility (CR) strategy was formed, for Fashion-Y to be part of a solution and to take responsibility for the style solutions offered to the modern man and woman. This solution involved creating sustainable products in terms of the environment, work conditions, and financial aspects. Even though CR issues had reached a higher status in the textile and fashion industry in general in recent years, there was no global policy that all suppliers, buyers, and fashion brands could commonly adjust to.

One supplier might have twenty different expectations from their customers, which is not a sustainable solution – Head of CR, Fashion-Y (Interview 2013-01-28)

The head of CR realized that even though she provided education and workshops to many of her co-workers, they found it hard to actually implement their new knowledge into their daily work. Consequently, a project that would develop an ultimate, sustainable product was initiated. The process required to manage the product development would be a guiding principle for creating fashion and it was suggested that the process should allow for trial and error. Providing a real case example to work with, the expectation was to implement the new knowledge gained from this project in the everyday work of the whole organization. For this reason, it was important to involve representatives from all activities within the organization who could contribute to the sustainable product. This drew together from design, patternmaking, sourcing, marketing, and logistics. There was also an emphasis on including and engaging both customers and suppliers in some way due to their experience and the potential benefits of their contribution. Everyone involved was encouraged to rethink conventional work routines and dare to be innovative. Fashion-Y had a very strict, routinized way of producing their products and a well-developed schedule for their work processes, but this project sought to go outside this routinized work and not depend on the seasonal deadlines.

Prior to this project an assessment was conducted of one of the best-selling t-shirts through a sustainable life cycle analysis. In this analysis, the T-shirt was traced back to the cotton field. Even though the cotton was organic, the assessment pointed towards several possible improvements along the production chain. Some of the results were new knowledge and, to some extent shocking, for Fashion-Y. As a response, this project, initially named “Our Ultimate Product” (OUP), was launched, with the purpose of producing a sustainable fashion product. The first meeting was held in March 2013, and the initial aim was to have the product finished in store by August 2014. The initial criteria were roughly sketched, since the product was not decided in advance, but they included design and quality that would last for a long time, perfect fit and
comfort, apply to a lot of people, sustainable fabrics and accessories, sustainable production process, transparent supply chain, minimized waste, and a contributing margin.

Initially, as the project group was formed, the level of sustainability was discussed and there was a fear of being scrutinized by consumers and other stakeholders for the wrong reasons. Another obstacle was the main scarce resource: time. Even though everyone agreed this was an important issue, several members of the organization thought a project like this would be too time consuming. There were also discussions on how this project would fit into the mundane work within the organization. According to the project leader, resources such as time and money, are usually factors hindering this kind of explorations, but at this point, the management had already decided that the sustainability project would receive some extra time and money to get started.

While the aim was to create an ultimate product, the learning process itself was also highly emphasized. The importance of daring to be innovative and share experiences with each other and collaborators such as suppliers was repeated several times during the project and its follow-up meetings. Considerable knowledge about sustainability already existed within the organization, but it was sometimes hard to find opportunities to reach out and share this knowledge. Hence, the existing awareness and understanding was not available and disseminated in a coordinated way. To gain additional expertise in sustainability and fashion, external consultants were brought in to impart their experience and facilitate knowledge sharing within the organization. At an early stage, the metaphor of a tree was developed to explain the whole chain of production and consumption of fashion and how it was connected to Fashion-Y. Fashion-Y viewed themselves as the trunk, their suppliers as the roots and the customers as the branches. The planned for product innovation did not intend to change the core business of producing fashionable clothes within the brand’s stylistic expression and target profit margin. The goal was to examine and develop all the work activities that constituted the creation of a fashion collection to find innovative work routines that could increase sustainability in fashion.

"The project is about doing the same thing that the company already does today, but with a twist – Initial project leader, Fashion-Y (Interview 2013-06-07)"

6.2.1 Initial product development

The focus was initially on the product, i.e. a garment, and above all to decide which product to choose and develop in a sustainable way. At the start-up meeting, thirteen people from different sections of Fashion-Y were gathered
in one of the office’s meeting rooms to discuss potential product developments. A sustainable product meant different things to different people. Some people emphasized high quality to make sure the garments lasted longer, others mentioned the chemicals used in some fabrics, and the working conditions of suppliers was also brought up. It was also discussed whether this should be a new product or if it could be an improvement of an already existing garment. Some people argued that it would be a good thing to make the carryover products sustainable since they were produced and sold every year. The main argument against that suggestion was to start the product development from scratch, without any preconceptions. Everyone agreed that the choice of garment should also correspond to everyone’s learning interest regarding the production process. If the product were an ordinary T-shirt, there would be less to learn compared to a more complex garment consisting of several accessories such as buttons, zippers, and lining. It was also discussed if the garment should be men’s wear, women’s wear or a unisex garment. The choice of garment was further related to which fabric to use: a knit, jersey or woven material?

To gain some inspiration and knowledge before choosing the product to work with, a consulting company was hired to conduct a wardrobe study which is a way of making people talk about themselves as consumers, using their own clothes. At the introductory meeting, this method and its expected results were discussed. The aim of this wardrobe study was to provide insights into aspects that make a garment attractive and long lasting. The study concluded that a long lasting and attractive item implied making a classic, but the clothing needed to provide a sense of newness and some level of fashion. Customers should be involved and invited into the brand’s culture rather than divided into segments. Garments should be easy to care for in terms of washing and ironing, but the price level did not seem to have a large impact. The colour black was suggested to make the garment easy to combine with other clothes and accessories and choosing a quality of fabric that keeps the feeling of newness for as long as possible was emphasized. Even though the majority of the sustainable product group found the results interesting, they were not too surprised. However, the results confirmed some of the things they needed to work with, such as not making the garments too plain, but keeping them fashionable.

*It was really good because it really felt like a confirmation of things you think we should be better at. I thought it was interesting that the level of fashion was high in the products people defined as their favourites. It wasn’t just the simpler things. I sense this is something we struggle with sometimes, not to be too conservative in what we believe is a favourite – Head of Product Communication, Fashion-Y (Interview 2013-07-04)*
The product development initially involved activities within Designing and Producing. Additional workshops were held on how to design in a sustainable way and the processes surrounding different fabrics and accessories in production. One workshop, held on August 19, 2013, introduced ten criteria to use during the design process in order to make the styles more sustainable. In this workshop, already existing garments were redesigned according to these criteria. Another workshop, held on October 14, 2013, introduced a tool to assess fabrics according to different sustainability criteria. Materials were discussed and a lot of questions were raised and answered by the participants during these workshops, which provided an opportunity for knowledge sharing. Hence, substantial knowledge was proven to be present already within the organization but situated events to share knowledge in this way had rarely been provided before. To further increase knowledge sharing, these workshops were available to employees of Fashion-Y not participating in the sustainable project as well. A bit further into the project, one of the designers reflected over what was more instructive or surprising participating in the project.

What is most surprising is that there are actually other alternatives available if you want – Designer I, Fashion-Y (Interview 2014-06-26)

Even though the sustainable product innovation project did not belong to a certain collection, the design of the garment needed to be recognized as part of the brand’s stylistic expression. One of the designers emphasized that this product would not be outrageous in the sense that they would never do it if it was not for this project, but the garment should reach the criteria they decided on from a sustainability perspective. The project leader wanted to postpone the decision on fabric and design until after the summer to make sure everyone had the opportunity to reflect on the suggested sustainability options. They were also asked to consider how they would affect work routines and contemplate innovative alternative ways of working towards this sustainable product. During the fourth meeting, at the beginning of September 2013, it was decided to choose one quality fabric, Tencel, but create a set of clothes including a top, a shirt and a dress, which would make a nice package to present in store. Everyone agreed that the characteristics of Tencel, which is silk-like, was considered most suitable for lighter women’s wear.

During the autumn, contacts were established with suppliers suitable for the products and the designs were developed. At the beginning of February 2014, the whole sustainable product group had the opportunity to visit the suppliers of the Tencel garments in Portugal. Also present was an external researcher who conducted research on chemicals in textile production, a project in which
Fashion-Y was also already involved, connecting fashion creation and supplier practices. During this visit, Fashion-Y explained why they found this project important and asked the suppliers to collaborate and share knowledge with them during this process. The most important aspect of this visit was to establish the contact and meet in person to explain why Fashion-Y was interested in increased transparency. There had been some problems in receiving information on certain garment production procedures and chemicals used in them. This was mainly due to the long supplier chain in which each supplier, dependent on further suppliers, was hesitant to reveal its competitive advantage. Communication and knowledge sharing between Fashion-Y and their suppliers was eased after this initial meeting. This was critical since it would be difficult for Fashion-Y to continue the sustainability project if they could not find suppliers willing to cooperate, share experiences and be transparent about their work processes.

During the development of the three Tencel garments, new knowledge about sustainable production, innovative solutions to conventional ways of creating fashion and new ways of working within the organization and with other organizations emerged. Despite the extra time and effort to manage all the issues involved, everyone was eager to start a new project towards the end of the first one. This was not planned from the beginning, but an urge to continue grew out of the first project. One of the main reasons for continuing was the opportunity to work in a smaller group and share knowledge together with the rewarding feeling of making the first project come to fruition.

Again, the process started with discussing a potential textile to work with. Before the first Tencel products were launched, several options had been discussed, which all emphasized the potential learning process. Since the first garments were jersey, a woven garment was suggested this time. It was also proposed to use a fabric that would suit both men’s and women’s wear. These two suggestions would include new suppliers and a broader consumer group. Eventually, it was decided to use wool since this fabric was commonly used in the main collections. There were already certain standards for sustainability certificates for wool, and it was important that this fabric could be traced down to how the sheep were being kept. Other materials such as linings, thread, and buttons were needed too. Due to the excessive list of materials, it was decided to start with sourcing. When the group received sustainable enough options, the design would have to be adjusted to the materials.

The project group grew larger. Surrounding activities relating to sustainability were also developed, such as educating and providing customers with tools to care for their garments, vouchers for returning old garments and a second-hand shop. Some accessories and surrounding material were not resolved preferably during the first Tencel project, but the second round provided a new
opportunity to continue that work and develop the activities that had already started such as sourcing a sustainable option for neck labels. New collaborations were established and new workshops were held to enhance knowledge and offer inspiration for the second sustainable product development. As well, other garments were discussed, such as coats and suits. These garments were more complicated in terms of details and accessories, but because of this, they were considered to add more to the learning process. The Selling practice also found a coat to be more interesting to communicate to consumers. They wanted to make classic outerwear of woven wool since they thought it could be nicely aligned with the sustainability message. Retail questioned if these garments would be too connected to the Autumn/Winter collection. To make them last longer, over the seasons, making detachable linings was suggested. To make the garment last longer, strengthening the garments in places where they usually tend to wear was suggested. It was also proposed to arrange the design and cutting so that some pieces of the garments could be replaced if worn out, if possible. Due to wool being heavy, it was decided to make a coat, one for men and one for women. In addition, a women’s skirt was also created. Throughout the product development of both the Tencel and the wool garments, follow-up meetings were held in which everyone reported their work progress, obstacles and how to continue the work.

6.2.2 Sharing practical knowledge

Since the criteria for developing a sustainable product were not routinized throughout the work of the main collections, skills were altered and developed, which reorganized all three situated practices Designing, Producing and Selling. Producing was already familiar with many of the certificates for textiles regarding environmental and social issues. However, these certificates were very specific and each of them only covered a few issues. There was not one certificate covering the whole production chain. Hence, every step of the production needed careful scrutiny to assess its sustainability.

*In this project, we are already familiar with the material and the fibres, but we want to make the finishing better. That might include how the fibres are spun and finished. Other things of importance are the thread, the suppliers, and if production is as environmentally friendly as possible, including the type of electricity, machines, and work premises. All these things must be double-checked – Head of Sourcing, Knit, Fashion-Y (Interview 2013-10-22)*

The undertakings involved in sustainable production were discussed, identified and divided among the project members. Everyone kept each other updated through follow-up meetings. The follow-up meetings also served as
knowledge sharing among the practices. Skills organizing the Producing practice regarding fibres and accessories were useful to the Designing practice, in order to create styles within the sustainable demands. The choice of material affected the final design, and skills were developed in both practices to understand why certain materials were favoured in previous collections, and which to favour in the future. Another important source of new knowledge were the suppliers. As they became more involved in the project, they also affected the organizing skills in all practices. However, the suppliers had a lot to learn as well. At the start, they were not aware of all the demands involved with sustainable production. This also became a learning experience for Fashion-Y: adjusting and altering production to meet new routines and materials were time consuming.

_We want to try to learn, but also influence all the steps in production – Head of Sourcing, Knit, Fashion-Y (Interview 2013-10-22)_

The marketing department had the knowledge of how to communicate the brand in terms of stylistic values and customer benefit. However, in order to sell sustainable fashion, they had to gain new knowledge, which they, in turn, had to communicate to and, to some extent, educate the end customers. Consultants were hired to aid this process and Selling had to understand the new skills developed within Designing and Producing to foster their own skills on how to communicate about sustainability. Everyone within the project agreed that all communication within Fashion-Y and to their customers should be transparent and include both the difficulties and the improvements the project would face. However, the amount of publicity this project would get was modest at start, since the practitioners were themselves acquiring skills.

The new skills regarding sustainability for organizing the Selling practice later resulted in several activities related to the initial product development. Before the project started, Fashion-Y had a second-hand shop, but this concept was further developed and communicated to customers in a more active way. During the follow-up meetings, it was discussed how to encourage customers to care for their garments and hand in their used garments to second-hand stores. This resulted in a new project, which included vouchers in return for old garments. The knowledge gained from the product development project was further communicated via the brand’s webpage including information on how garments were produced, used, and cared for.

The first Tencel project also provided skills that were further developed during the second wool project. Even though the fibres and processes surrounding production were different, Fashion-Y learned how to approach stakeholders,
how to think in new ways about design and how to communicate about sustainability. Towards the end of the first sustainability project and the beginning of the next, the follow-up meetings and additional workshops emphasized the lessons learned, so as not to make the same mistakes again and to smoothen some of the processes in starting the new project.

6.2.3 Sourcing new materials and work routines

When selecting the Tencel fabric, various tools were used to assess the material according to the criteria established for the sustainable product at that time. A fibre tool was developed by Fashion-Y to rank different fibres into sustainability categories based on their impact on the environment and the work practices involved. Another tool related to the choice of materials was introduced during a workshop which made it possible to try out and combine different options such as fabrics, accessories, production, and so on, in order to view the entire effect of the production. Even though this tool gave an idea about the product’s sustainability, it was also emphasized by one of the buyers that you have to decide if you agree with the assessment criteria this index provided. There were several criteria to consider, some related to an effect on the environment, while others referred to work conditions. Sustainability was dependent on the processes required for producing or finishing the textiles, on whether fabrics needed to be freighted long distances, or on the quality in terms of long lasting characteristics. Another aspect, when selecting the fabric, was the design. Even though the design was created after the Tencel fabric was chosen, any chosen fabric should still be in line with the brand’s core expression. Hence, if a garment lost its preferred style due to a sustainable material used for it, the garments would not sell. That was not considered sustainable in the long run by Fashion-Y.

The aim of making these products is to build competence and apply the changes in future collections without compromising the design. Because that is a clear statement we made, the design will always come first – Head of CR, Fashion-Y

Every piece of the garment was assessed, including thread, buttons, and interlinings. The assessment both enabled and constrained the design of the products since the design was restricted within new frames of acceptable materials. The decision to use Tencel resulted in designing woman’s wear since the feeling of Tencel was considered too feminine for men’s wear. The look and feel of the textile were silky. The consensus opinion was that the fabric suited women’s blouses but not men’s shirts. The textile hence gave the designer the option to design blouses and/or dresses. It was also decided to make the garments black. Even though the colour black required the substantial use of
chemicals, it was considered sustainable since it was plain and easy to combine with other clothes. Thus it would be a garment the potential customers would keep for a long time in their wardrobes. The decision of using wool in the second cycle of the project provided the opportunity to design both men’s and women’s wear. These garments were made blue and grey, two colours that were also considered durable and easy to combine. All these choices and considerations were elaborated on in the follow-up meetings, with the aim of taking the new knowledge gained back to the main production of fashion collections.

_Hopefully, this way of thinking will be in the backbone of every designer. No one from outside should point this out to us, but when we are choosing fabrics, and comparing price and qualities, the environmentally friendly aspect should be included too... Everyone should be aware of the choices they make, that is when we can make a change in the long run, when everyone is aware of their choices – Designer II, Fashion-Y (Interview 2013-07-04)_

A garment not only contain fabric, buttons and thread. When garments are delivered in stores they come with labels and hangtags. Garments are also packed in plastic bags to avoid damage and dirt during freight. These items also had to be assessed and modified to more sustainable options. However, it turned out to be quite tricky to change some of the materials to more sustainable ones. No one wanted the labels in these garments to look different from the rest of the collection. A further problem was that the minimum quantity of the order was too high for this rather small project. Another issue was to find a technique for weaving the labels. Sustainable fibres were more fragile and required a different weaving technique compared to the labels used in the main collections, a fact which gave the labels a different look. The hangtags were made of paper and similar issues were brought up here. Another material that caused some problem was the brass pin, which connects the hangtag to the garment. While it was considered excessive, it was difficult to find a substitute solution. During the follow-up meetings, numerous samples of labels, hangtags, and options for how to connect them to the garment were discussed. The main obstacle, which was frustrating to the whole project, was the minimum quantity of orders. Most suppliers wanted to produce a larger number of items than was possible for this trial project.

Chemicals were one of the main issues in textiles, when considering sustainability. To receive a certain look, a fabric is coloured and finished in different ways. To complicate matters, chemicals often received new names and were slightly modified in order to stay legal. Towards the end of the Tencel project, there was a doubtful chemical included in those to avoid pilling. New tests had to be made which delayed the launch of the products for a few months.
This became a great concern in the wool project. To make the garments more sustainable, the use of this chemical had to be reduced. However, garments that pill were also considered to have a lower quality by most customers. In this case, communicating and informing about this chemical and how to care for garments to avoid pilling (without the chemical) became an additional activity.

Another issue that caused great concern was the fact that cutting and sewing results in extensive textile waste, i.e., the parts of the fabric left over when cutting the pieces that are later sewn together as garments. Many suggestions came up on how to reduce this waste and if it was possible to do something out of the waste instead of throwing it away. This was a question that particularly engaged the suppliers. A new way to handle this waste was to create something out of the material. The initial idea was to make scarves. However, after several attempts this had to be excluded as it turned out to be too complicated and costly. During the second wool project, the design of the coats and the skirt was adjusted to the width of the fabric to avoid as much waste as possible.

Another sustainability issue is the transport of materials. Due to the worldwide production and distribution of fashion, all materials need to be freighted between the various suppliers and eventually to each store.

*Other things that will be important are how everything is freighted. This does not only include the finished garments but also how the pieces such as the fibres and other materials are freighted between the suppliers. This has not been looked into at such a detailed level before – Head of Sourcing, Knit, Fashion-Y (Interview 2013-10-22)*

Another important aspect was to reduce the excessive use of the materials surrounding the garments. Most suppliers pack the garments in silk paper before they ship them off, and silk paper was also used in stores when packing the clothes for the final consumer. The heavy plastic bags in stores were questioned. The brass pin, which holds the hangtag with its style and price, was also considered wasteful. At the beginning of the project, the marketing section was somewhat hesitant to reduce some of the materials in which the clothes were packed. To them, these materials provided a sense of luxury to the customer and they did not want to take that away. However, as they gained more knowledge about these items, they became keener on finding new sustainable materials. The plastic bag became lighter and the amount of silk paper was reduced. A number of compromises were made between packaging the
clothes in a preferred way while considering sustainable choices. Hence, several changes in materials had a major effect on innovative activities and solutions organizing all three practices.

During the first Tencel project, a lot of emphasis was made on finding new labels to be sewn onto the garments to indicate the brand, material, and size, but it did not succeed. Sourcing for such labels continued during the second cycle of the project, and in relation to that, the white colour of the label was questioned. This starts to look grubby soon after using the garment, indicating that the item needs to be washed even though it would be enough to air it. This had not been questioned before, but was brought up during a workshop on October 26, 2015, in relation to how customers cared for their garments and made them long lasting.

Marketing Staff Member I: This is related to women’s jackets too, women’s jackets provided with a neck label. You don’t wash them very often, but they get grubby regardless of how much you wash your neck.
Product Developer: That goes for a lot of items such as scarves, and it’s not so neat with the white label pointing out when you have a brand that don’t show off the label.
Designer I: Yes, that is true, but I just never thought about it. I never thought about the label getting grubby.
Marketing Staff Member I: Yes, but I don't dry clean very often, and then it becomes really grubby.
Designer I: Yes, but I just didn’t think about it.

The white label had been taken for granted and its effect on how customers cared for their garments had not been considered before. The label together with other concerns related to materials exemplified above hence provided new frames for how to carry out sustainable fashion product development compared to how the practices Designing, Producing and Selling was previously organized.

6.2.4 Promoting sustainability

Providing designs that expressed the values and style of the brand in a sustainable way primarily initiated and kept the project going. The impact fashion had on the environment and the social issues involved in its production and sale became more and more evident throughout the product development, and the desire to change those conditions grew stronger as the project proceeded. When the Tencel garments had already been launched and the wool project had started, it became more evident to everyone involved that their work made a difference, which increased the engagements in this work. The collective work, learning process, and knowledge sharing were also engaging everyone.
to continue the second project. This learning process was emphasized already from the start, here stated by the project leader at one of the meetings:

*Each product group will be taken aside from the ordinary collection structure and we will make sure it is sustainable from every aspect, but also make sure the project includes individuals from every unit to provide it with the best pre-conditions from all directions. And, above all, we should view it as a learning process—Head of CR, Fashion-Y (Communication meeting, sustainable project 2014-01-20)*

Early on in the Tencel project, the importance of expressing self-esteem in the product was discussed and emphasized. Everyone agreed that the brand was quite clear in its design idiom, but that sometimes they listen too much to their customers, which restricted them from daring to do their own thing. In both sustainability projects, it was important to not only create sustainable fashion but to make sure the designs were in line with the brand’s stylistic expression. Hence, the creative engagements were an important element to organize this project. Another factor that triggered the project was an invitation to a fashion show for sustainable fashion. Fashion-Y was invited to participate together with other brands and it was considered to be a good opportunity to show the result. This also initiated a deadline for the product in spring 2014, and an initial goal to strive for.

The urge to find better and more sustainable materials was a strong impetus in this project. The Tencel fibre was considered in line with the rest of the creative expression of the brand. It was a fibre that was already in use, so the sustainability assessment would also be useful to the main collections. Tencel also absorbs colour chemicals efficiently, which required fewer chemicals compared to, e.g., organic cotton. However, Tencel had its drawbacks. It is similar to silk, but not quite like silk in terms of the luxurious characteristics silk provides. Hence, there was always some compromising between producing sustainably and receiving a certain look or feeling. To some extent, a substantial amount of work within this project relied on sourcing material, which always started with the engagements similar to detective work.

*If we didn’t have Tencel, it would be much harder to find a sustainable fibre. Organic cotton has been around for a while, but recycled fibres are kind of new. So, if we used recycled materials, we would have to work even harder as detectives with the yarn and fabric suppliers in order to find the right fabric. It is a question of time but also a lack of good enough suppliers that provide a strong range in one place—Head of Sourcing, Knit, Fashion-Y (Interview 2013-10-22)*

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The wool project was initiated with a supplier that was already producing recycled wool. They had already started sustainable processes and were keen on developing them further with Fashion-Y. Hence, in this project, the engagement of searching for sustainable options related Fashion-Y to their fabric supplier.

As the knowledge about sustainable production grew stronger, the means to communicate sustainability strengthened as well. Engagements were an important element to initially align with supplier practices, and, as the project proceeded, also align with consumer practices. As communication about the project increased, the name of the project was questioned a number of times. When the focus turned more to learning, “Our Ultimate Product” did not seem to fit as a name anymore. The learning process indicated that such a product could not be the ultimate, but continuous improvements could be searched for. In other words, the focus on the product did not seem to explain what this project was all about.

For this reason, a communication group was formed to discuss an appropriate name that would reflect all the aspects of the project. At this meeting, the project was discussed in detail to get to the core of communication. Different names were tried, but eventually The Circular Project was decided on and a logo was discussed. Circular here referred to being part of a circular economy in which everything that was consumed should also be taken care of and recycled. After the meeting, the project leader and head of CR explained how she was happy about using the idea of a circle in the name of the project. According to her, a circle invited many possibilities, there was no beginning or end, one could join whenever. She added that it was important not to rush this project, but to let it mature within the organization at its own pace. That was one of the main differences compared to the main collections created according to the common seasonal production cycles. Even though this project received extra time, time was also an obstacle towards its progression. Initially it was considered too time consuming by most practitioners. But, even though the purpose of the project made them more positive, this project also competed about time which the main collections required.

6.3 Conclusion

In this chapter, the background and activities of the planned for innovations in the two organizations chosen for this study, Fashion-X, and Fashion-Y have been introduced. Even though they planned for two different innovations, it has been shown that the elements of skills, materials, and engagements of the Designing, Producing and Selling practices, and their surrounding practices,
overlap in mundane work. This overlapping of elements integrates the practices and explains how knowledge is shared among practices. In both cases, engagements were important to understand and motivate changes included in the planned innovations and to continue improvement activities related to the intended innovation.

These planned innovations restricted materials in terms of the qualities of fabrics in both cases. New tools and technology were also developed and used in innovative ways. New skills were added and shared among all practices, including practices performed outside each organization. Knowledge sharing proves to be important for innovation, but knowledge sharing is also time consuming, as both these cases illustrate. The routinized ways of the fashion industry both hinder and enable innovations as the situated practices change. Apart from time, the quantity of an order is also a factor that challenges innovative activities. Hence both cases show that innovative activities in the fashion setting are dependent on integration among practices, inside and outside a particular organization.

In the next chapter, both cases are analysed using the practice-based approach developed in Chapter Three. The background and activities described in this chapter, have indicated that several innovative activities relate to one another, within and among practices. The analysis in Chapter Seven illuminates how and why the planned for innovations, the management and organizational innovation in Fashion-X and the product innovation in Fashion-Y, interrelate with other innovations as practices change, align or misalign. Also explained in more detail is the way practitioners respond to these changes in both planned and improvised ways.
7 Innovation in practice

For practices, their elements, and practitioners, innovations occur and interrelate in different ways. As described in the previous chapter, both companies in this study planned for innovation to happen. Fashion-X planned for a management and organization innovation and Fashion-Y planned for a product innovation. However, as is highlighted below, what was planned for was also accompanied by improvisational actions when unexpected problems or opportunities occurred. This illustrates that innovations take place as both planned actions and improvisation on routines. Due to the interaction among practices and the way practitioners interrelate in different locations over time, the fashion context provides many such innovative occasions.

In this chapter, the analysis is given for activities that occurred among practices and practitioners in real time meetings. Also analysed are such activities as described in discussions and interviews by the individuals who performed these practices. The analysis is conducted through a practice-based approach, developed in Chapter Three, and emphasizes how and why elements of practices change, how practitioners respond to these changes and the integration of the performed practices.

This chapter starts with an analysis of how and why innovations emerged during the development of fashion collections in Fashion-X. This is followed by a parallel analysis of Fashion-Y, in other words, how and why innovations emerged in relation to its sustainable product development. The analysis of each case is presented according to the themes that were derived to explain how innovations interrelate through reorganizing of practices and the response performed by practitioners. In the concluding section of this chapter is highlighted the cases’ similarities and differences. Discussed are how the practices and their elements affected one another and how practitioners responded, interrelating with each other through planning and improvising on routines and thus allowing these innovations to emerge and develop.
7.1 Fashion-X: Innovations as the refinement of practices

In Fashion-X, when the structure of a collection was decided on and the designs transformed into sales samples, an external line release was performed in which the design team presented their ideas, concepts, and styles to all the sellers, including external distributors. This situated event lasted for two days and was the result of collaborative work among practices and practitioners performing Designing, Producing and Selling. Due to the initiated innovation of introducing new work routines within the organization, each line release and the work of creating collections had gradually developed as a result of accumulated experience, changes in elements of the practices, and interconnections between the three practices at the centre of this study, and their surrounding practices. The following excerpt from observational notes of the Autumn/Winter 2015 line release, held on December 17, 2014, highlights the situated activities in which the background and inspiration of the stylistic innovations were introduced by practitioners of the Designing practice:

Soon after all the external sales distributors arrived at the office and helped themselves to some breakfast from the buffet in the kitchen, the two designers began the presentation of their inspiration for the Autumn/Winter collection. Everyone gathered in the women’s showroom in which the lights were turned down. Attention was directed at the designers and the screen on which inspirational pictures were presented. The name of the collection was *Time Will Tell* and the time reference was used in different ways. A somewhat nostalgic sense was emphasized, referring to garments designed by the label several years ago. The designers mentioned that customers sometimes send pictures of their long-lasting favourites, to share their appreciation of the brand. Visual and verbal references were repeatedly made to time as a source of inspiration. In this collection, it was stated, there was a desire to make classic garments, in a new way. The designers explained how traditional patterns such as herringbone and pinstripes were used, but in a less traditional way, combining old-fashioned fabrics and details with newer materials. Seasonal colours and shapes were introduced using pictures and even gestures with the designers using these images and their hands on their own bodies to demonstrate the lengths, cuts, and

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collars of the key styles. A new denim line was introduced this season, which was highlighted before the presentation was summed up by referring to three watchwords of the brand: art, music, and tailoring.

The presentation of the Autumn/Winter 2015 collection illustrates a number of situated activities that appeared well organized according to the practices involved. Importantly, this event was accomplished by many activities, both planned for and improvised, over a period of time, during which a number of situated events such as tollgate meetings, management meetings, and special product group meetings were held, each including two or more practices. All this integrated preparation and collaboration made for a coherent collection and smooth work processes. Innovative activities and innovations emerged to refine the organizing of the three practices through which the elements altered and influenced one another within and across practices. In previous line releases, the sales distributors had commented that the collection had consisted of more items than Fashion-X could produce and sell. The distributors’ sales markets were diverse, which had caused scattered sales orders and the prices had been sometimes critiqued as too high to make the required sales volumes. The presentations during previous line releases had run quickly, with the impetus from all sales distributors and internal sales personnel to increase dialogue about each garment and the key looks, to decide how to focus the sales to reach the required minimum quantity of orders.

During earlier line releases, more focused workshops on the items of the collection had initially been improvised, due to these requests. In these, discussions had taken place on the key looks and on each garment in detail in terms of its price, quality, and design. Clothes and accessories had been put together to create these looks as the main themes and expressions were discussed. As a result of positive feedback on these workshops, they were then further developed and established as a main routinized activity on every line release, in which key looks were prepared in advance by Designing to carefully explain the special features of each garment. This became a way for Fashion-X to receive feedback on the assortment structure, which was under development at the time. The distributors had also asked for inspirational material, such as prints and photos of the collection, to use as sales tools. Earlier, these materials had still been produced and organized by the Designing practice, which had caused misalignment within the organizing of the Selling practice. For the line release of the Autumn/Winter pre 2014 collection on October 16, 2013, the designers had come up with the idea to also use these prints to decorate the walls in the showroom just before the actual event. This had been highly appreciated by the distributors, who had asked for the prints to decorate their
own walls too. However, since this improvised activity had been performed in the Designing practice alone and had not been aligned with the Selling practice, these prints had not been prepared and available for the distributors. Since this improvised action was highly valued, it later became an additional, available material and a routinized event for coming line releases, organized by the Selling practice.

These two examples illustrate how and why practices were gradually aligned to improve the situated event of a line release to increase sales. These activities provided the Selling practice with arguments and information in order to re-organize the activities surrounding distributing the collection to the end consumers. Even though routines had been established and repeated from one line release to another, and run according to a planned agenda, these examples show how the planned agenda of the line release allowed for further improvised events, aligning practices and relating innovations.

7.2 Innovation as the integration of the old and the new

Combining old and new patterns and styles, as the excerpt of observational notes on the line release illustrates, can be viewed as a general fashion trend but also a way for the brand to express how they worked with the heritage they propose to have. During the work of returning to the core DNA of the brand, all three practices, Designing, Producing and Selling, were refined in order to manage the new work routines. Even though the organizing of the three practices was changed through the elements of skills and materials, the work of using clearer concepts and themes to each collection, and (re)connecting to the core values of the brand emerged from a change in the element of engagements. On different occasions, practitioners from all three practices expressed the view that strong concepts communicated what the brand stood for: what they wanted to communicate to consumers. Since most of the practitioners within Fashion-X were new to the organization, they had to interpret the brand’s values, strengthening the links between all three elements within all practices and aligning their previous experience by planning and improvising on existing routines and creating new ones. During tollgate meetings, concepts and watchwords were repeated and discussed. Most practitioners had opinions on how to express the brand and attract the end consumers in terms of styles and prices. As opinions were diverse, not everyone’s ideas could be implemented, but it was during these situated tollgate meeting that these opinions had to be negotiated and aligned.

Practitioners performing Selling had experience of consumer demands, in terms of styles and process. Practitioners performing Designing wanted to make sure their expression and creativity were appreciated and well received.
Practitioners performing Producing had experience from previous suppliers in terms of the quality of their fabric, accessories, and deliveries of the final garments. The commercial business activities and the creative activities associated with the artisans sometimes collided as their organizing elements overlapped. The Selling practice sometimes had experience from previous sales that collided with the new design ideas, the production practice could not always align supplier practices to match both the intention of Designing and the financial considerations. In these situated events, the planned structure together with improvised suggestions, based on previous knowledge, contributed to solutions which were sometimes innovative. The materials at hand, such as samples of garments and fabrics, were compared and assessed in relation to the skills and engagements of all three practices to negotiate the best possible solution for each garment of the fashion collection.

The organization’s watchwords contributed to building the story of the brand, by connecting the fashion produced, based on tailored cuts and details inspired by art and music. These inspiring influences aimed at providing consumers with fashion to make them well dressed but also feel like a rebel because of the music. By relating their fashion to other artists, this also promoted these artists’ work, while having them wear the fashion of Fashion-X provided a way to reach out to consumers with an additional co-created value. For this reason, collaborations with other artists and related sponsorship arrangements were one of the main marketing channels. Hence, Fashion-X found other surrounding artistic and musical practices where engagements were similar, to strengthen and communicate their own creative engagements. Fashion-X wanted to relate their expression to independent artists. This message applied to a narrower customer group but was now supposed to reach a wider audience through wholesalers. The development of the new assortment structure was based on creating a balance between creativity and business, between the original core expression of the brand and the more commercial ambitions. The new assortment structure provided a product base which would apply to a larger group of customers, increasing sales. However, the new structure also allowed for the more fashionable garments to express the particular references, concepts, and values of the brand; this became a routinized way of performing stylistic innovations.

The styles in the core business segment were mainly based on previous sales statistics. Due to progressively successful sales, these styles were anticipated to continue increasing in sales, allowing space for the most fashionable clothes at the top of the collection assortment triangle. The change in the element of materials, awareness of which was gained from sales statistics delivered via the new ERP software, caused a change in the element skills too. Thus Designing was provided with skills related to cost effectiveness and commercial adaptation, through the analysis of consumer responses and practices provided
via the ERP software. These skills further affected the element engagements, since the focus to increase sales, decrease the cost of design, and reach a wider audience became a motivating aspect of performing Designing too. The ERP software mediated an interaction among these practices inside and outside Fashion-X since it translated consumer actions into figures which influenced the development of forthcoming collections.

But, in order to stay true to the core expression of the brand, its DNA, the element of engagements also sustained the organizing of the Designing practice, to some extent, by retaining brand specific engagements for stylistic innovations. The process innovation, which integrated old and new ways of creating a fashion collection, would then result in keeping the brand specific expression while also reaching out to a wider audience. But, it was not only sales statistics that informed previous experience. Throughout the work of a collection and during the follow-up meetings these statistics were also accompanied by an embodied, tacit understanding of what may or may not work in stores a year from now. This knowledge was based on experience and learning gained by engaging with the various practices, driven by all three elements skills, engagements, and materials. For instance, the head of assortment described how she knows which shade of red to use in a certain situation:

This is nothing I was born with but something I just know and have a feeling for due to my accumulated experience – Head of Assortment, Fashion-X (Discussion 2014-02-12)

Even though the elements of all practices organized artistic and creative activities, statistics had an increasing impact on new product development. Creativity was performed in a way similar to the expertise described by Dreyfus and Dreyfus (2005), where the expert does what normally works rather than following rules. However, in order to integrate the commercial aspect of the collection, practitioners within all three practices became both experts and proficient performers. Learning how to use the new ERP tool, practitioners felt more responsible for their choices, as suggested by Dreyfus and Dreyfus (2005), but the acquisition of skills in both artistic and commercial activities had not reached the same level. Practitioners within Designing and Producing gradually acquired skills concerning prices and margins related to the cutting and choice of accessories, fabrics, and colours, which was commented on by the head of assortment and the designers themselves. Such engagements used to be more creatively oriented but were now accompanied by a commercial motivation. The designers further understood that the new analysis tool, while restricting stylistic innovation, also added something since activities had to be more creative to design and produce the intended styles while considering the new frames. The change in the material element, the ERP software, initiated
as a management innovation to organize the work within and among the practices of Designing, Producing and Selling, can hence be related to stylistic innovation. It provided new guidelines for design, process and product innovation when sourcing appropriate fabrics and accessories. During follow-up meetings, the designers were reminded of the margins and price targets and were praised whenever garments reached the target goals.

The following excerpt from observational notes of the first tollgate meeting, held three months ahead of the Autumn/Winter 2015 line release, on October 1, 2014, shows how the elements of Designing and Producing were changing towards the commercial goals in relation to their artistic activities, which received comments from Selling. It also shows how reviewing the styles of a collection according to a planned agenda brought up other relevant issues in an improvised way, and how these issues related back to increasing sales through one of the newer sales channels:

The collection was mainly presented in sketches, textile samples and references to previous styles. Some prices were indicated, but it was too early to know the final price of all the garments. The designers mainly emphasized their inspiration and why they believed these styles would be right in store a year from now. They referred to the brand’s heritage and characteristics, and how that would be appropriate in future fashion. During the presentation, the designers were constantly reminded of previous sales and price targets. There was a focus on the core garments since these items were supposed to increase sales. Even though it was hard to anticipate prices at this point, the CEO asked if there were any indications. One designer focused his presentation on the silhouettes and feelings certain fabric created. Even though these designs were appreciated, for some of the more fashionable items, the discussion also concerned the price limit in store and consequently at what price these garments would reach the quantity needed for production. Reproducing some of the styles that used to sell well was also suggested. At this point, the head of retail made remarks, based on consumer comments, on all product groups regarding their fabric, fit and colour. Apparently, sizes had differed a bit among the previous styles, which was an issue that had to be resolved. The CEO then commented that this was very important if they wanted to manage web sales. If the sizes were not
consistent, this implied a lack of reliability for the customers, which would result in decreased sales through this new online sales channel. Hence, the review of previous collections resulted in a decision to go through all the patterns to make sure they were constructed according to the same measurement list and were consistent in size.

Innovating and the interrelationship among the mentioned innovations were related to changes in all three practices. These changes can be traced in a similar way as, e.g., Shove et al. (2012) and Schatzki (2001) explain the change in practices: when new elements are introduced or when existing elements are combined in different ways. To some extent, the new triangle structure of a collection functioned as a mediator among the three practices. It provided a common background knowledge to both improvise and plan innovations and make decisions. This background knowledge emerged due to the need for creating frames of references, routines, and structures or what Moorman and Miner (1998) and Walsh and Rivera Ungson (1991) refer to as organizational memory. However, the collaboration across several organizations through the interconnection of practices rather corresponds in this context to what can be conceptualized as practice memory. From this perspective, each practice creates its own unique practice memory but is also dependent on surrounding practices’ memory too. Even though new practitioners and their experience contribute to changes in practice, shared background knowledge and commonly agreed on routines were important to manage smaller developments to products and processes, which the overlapping activities of fashion collections require. The intuitional, artistic gut feeling of Designing was accompanied by experience from previous collections and surrounding practices, affecting general fashion trends and collaborations within and across practices. For instance, the Producing practice accumulated experience from relationships with practices performed by suppliers, such as knowing the time needed to produce a certain garment, minimum quantities required and the corresponding prices. A further example is that the Selling practice, with its close relationship to consumer practices, was able to accumulate knowledge from customers’ experiences with the brand and knowledge about how to sell the brand. The integration of old and new experiences strengthened the links between the elements of each practice, but each practice was also dependent on overlapping elements, aligning the practices to create practice memory.
7.3 Innovation as creating and sharing practice memory

The presentation of the garments during the line release of the Autumn/Winter 2015 collection (introduced at the beginning of this chapter) ran according to the structure of the sales book, handed out in a first draft to everyone in advance of the presentation. In this book, each product group, e.g. blouses, trousers, skirts, and jackets, was presented one by one to provide an overview and to easily compare the styles within each product group. During the presentation, there were a few remarks by the participants at the line release regarding the descriptions and garment sketches that had to be changed prior to the final printed version. The deputy CEO replied: that’s why we don’t print these books in advance for you since there might be mistakes. Hence, this situated event required everyone’s attention and collaboration but also provided opportunities to negotiate the order in which the garments were presented and the amount of information each garment received in the sales book.

During the presentation of the Autumn/Winter 2015 collection, several references to designs of previous collections were made to emphasize the characteristics of the brand. This was a way to communicate the core values of the brand to the new distributors, to share practice memory, and to establish a way to open up to the distributors’ experience, to enhance future collaborative work by conveying what Fashion-X stood for and was striving towards. One example of a stylistic innovation, made by combining the brand’s heritage with slight adjustments based on consumer remarks, was one of the dresses which used to be a bestseller in a previous collection. The modified dress was demonstrated by the designer and described as a typical everyday Fashion-X dress since it had many tailored details such as a wrap and pleats. However, some customers had complained that the dress was too short. In this collection, the designer explained that he had made a companion to the original dress: a longer version of it.

The practice memory emerging from the practices’ interconnected skills, materials and engagements enabled improvised suggestions and decisions. Similarly to how Dreyfus and Dreyfus (2005), Glaveanu (2012) and Radman (2012) make a connection between expertise and intuitive judgment, practitioners used their accumulated experience, based on what normally worked for them, and the co-created practice memory to make faster, improvised decisions about suggestions from peer practitioners during these situated events. During the line release of the Autumn/Winter 2015 collection, suggested improvements were sometimes implemented immediately, such as changing the order of the garments in the sales book to make the overview of the collection clearer. Here the question was raised if it would make more sense to introduce the blazers and trousers separately or present them as suits. All the distributors agreed on presenting them as suits since it would be easier for them to then
show the garments to their customers. One coat came in a different colour than intended, but everyone liked the colour and it was suggested to add it to the collection. One pair of trousers turned out to be too expensive in the intended fabric, but it was suggested to produce it in a similar, cheaper fabric. One of the distributors questioned why Fashion-X would not provide more washes for the new denim line. To him, it seemed like they did not believe in this new line enough if not providing more options. So as not to lengthen the discussion of these issues concerning the assortment of the collection, the deputy CEO decided these would be explored after the review of the collection. A similar commitment about which garments to highlight during sales was also determined by not making a decision on it at this particular event. The distributors found it hard to anticipate what their customers would actually buy from the collection, but it was decided at this situated event to make common comments as guidelines about sales to avoid scattered orders. Fashion-X’s reaction to the proposal to have extensive guides to some of the garments was also postponed to the next season. Some other suggestions were rejected due to scarce resources such as time. It can be seen from these examples that the distributors made their suggestions and decisions based on their accumulated knowledge from previous interactions with customers, and the deputy CEO of Fashion-X based her decisions on her experience of what was a valuable use of the organization’s time. The final decision on each issue was an attempt to combine the accumulated experience while creating and sharing practice memory. This also shows how the implementing of one innovation, the triangle collection structure, created situations in which new innovative suggestions emerged.

The line release of a collection was a situated event that connected distributors representing different markets and organizations who did not get the chance of embodied interaction with each other very often. For this reason, these distributors saw this opportunity to share experiences and develop product and process innovations on how to collaborate around Fashion-X’s collections. This is an example of how practices span over several organizations. The feedback provided to and from the Selling practice was influenced by practices the distributors shared with other fashion brands and wholesalers. For instance, the new denim line introduced by Fashion-X prompted a suggestion by the distributors to provide a guide about it to explain the washes and variations in styles. Several customers were picky about details when it came to denim and it was important to be able to show how the different styles were designed. It was also suggested that denim trousers should be sized in inches instead of the fixed sizes of small, medium and large. The argument was that inches were commonly used in the wholesale market and customers buying jeans were more familiar with their size in inches. Hence, routinized behaviours in practices related to the consumption of fashion linked to skills within the Selling practice, which in turn initiated a service innovation of providing a sales guide
which had to be devised through combining knowledge organized by the Designing and Producing practices. This suggestion was an improvised act, based on experience, made during this situated meeting due to the product and stylistic innovation of a new denim line. The new proposal was also based on the experience of a combination of performances and their relationships to other situated events, interconnected in space and time across practices. The elements of all these practices related and overlapped to some extent, and influenced one another to devise innovative solutions to increase sales.

The idea of this innovative sales tool, the denim guide, was also expanded on by the distributors. They advised it would be useful to have similar guides for other parts of the collection, such as the suits. Also, they stated the garment sketches in the sales book did not provide all information needed to manage good enough sales arguments. They wanted to add stories of why fabrics were chosen and how the tailored details came about. Hence, the distributors performing Selling wanted to transform the tacit, embodied knowledge organized by the elements skills and engagements of Designing into an explicit, material guide to reach a wider audience.

This implied a change in all three elements of the Selling practice. Two years prior to this line release the head of marketing explained that even though there was a story behind the garments of Fashion-X, they did not previously have a means for communicating them. However, the new collaboration with distributors performing the Selling practice now offered an additional channel for to these stories’ dissemination. These embodied interactions among practices spanning several organizations changed the element of skills, by more knowledge being shared about the collection and what it stood for. The element of materials was also modified, in terms of new sales tools, due to the engagements of increasing communication about the brand and its sales. This illustrates how collective actions, as described by Reckwitz (2002), change the organizing of practices since practitioners are crossing-points of several practices. It also shows how the innovative activities emerge due to a seamless integration of practices when practices (spanning several organizations) form constellations, as also suggested by Shove et al. (2012) and Hui et al. (2017). Further, it is evident that these constellations are dependent on the overlapping of the organizing elements among practices, through which practice memory is created and shared.

During one of the breaks in the external line release presentation, the distributors elaborated on how to keep each other updated by communicating with using different media such as software tools. Due to the diversity of the sales markets, which had resulted in scattered orders, some garments did not reach the minimum quantity order required for production. The organizing of practices performed by the suppliers was not always aligned with the practices
performed by smaller fashion brands, such as Fashion-X, who require fewer items to be produced of each garment. Suppliers, on the other hand, usually needed a large order to produce garments. If the required number of items was not reached, styles could be cancelled, which was problematic to the distributors since they had to inform their customers their orders would not be produced and delivered. Some present at this event even lost customer accounts due to this. Hence, production and distribution relied on a number of practices interconnected through time and space which could not be predicted ahead of time.

This problem had been raised before. During the previous line release, on October 8, 2014, discussion arose on how to collaborate to improve communication about ongoing sales and avoid cancelling small orders. One of the distributors had some experience of a certain software for sales communication and suggested everyone should use it. However, others were not familiar with all its functions and had to learn more about it. Another suggestion by the distributors was for Fashion-X to decrease the number of styles in their collections. The argument was, if sales could be more focused, numerous items pieces could still be sold from a small collection. However, the CEO of Fashion-X believed a smaller collection could result in zero sales if they did not provide a varied selection for their customers. Here, the practices creating the assortment and distributing the collection were not aligned and the problem remained. Even though innovative solutions based on different experiences were brought up, no result interrelating all practices concerned was found. The CEO added:

*I guess we can never find a perfect solution: this is fashion.* – CEO, Fashion-X (2014-10-08)

Since this problem of the minimum quantity required for an order persisted, it was again brought up during the Autumn/Winter 2015 line release. The deputy CEO emphasized that the collection would not result in fewer styles based on opinions during this situated event. This had been tried before, but there had been to be too many diverse personal thoughts about design, which did not support the focus of the collection. Hence, the experience of narrowing the collection in an improvised way had not turned out as expected and the management of Fashion-X, therefore, rejected the suggestion this time. It was agreed to proceed according to a combination of all proposals, to elaborate on anticipated sales in collaboration, and keep close communication at the beginning of the sales period about where sales volumes seemed to cluster. In this situation, the previous experience did not fully align the practices to resolve the issue but brought up a number of activities in which tighter collaboration and communication were emphasized. At this point, the practice memory was
not yet created and shared to provide routinized solutions to this matter. However, the three practices of Designing, Producing and Selling in Fashion-X were able to adjust their alignment with the distributors to some extent, although the way this alignment proceeded was determined by a misalignment with supplier practices, only producing a certain quantity of each style of the collection. A third option was also brought up by Fashion-X, which required both the distributors and Fashion-X to buy some extra garments to reach the minimum quantity. This solution required some additional investment but would probably make the customers satisfied. No decision was made during the line release about this suggestion. The lack of shared practice memory across all situated practices creating and distributing the fashion collection made it difficult to develop routines and solve this issue in an innovative way.

During one of the breaks, the distributors also compared their experience and knowledge about the communication software, which resulted in an improvised action of sharing a folder with pictures from the press. One of the distributors showed the others grouped pictures on his computer for different brands. Since there was no PR section within Fashion-X at the time, the distributors agreed to share a folder with pictures and information useful to everyone. This collaboration about the PR would prevent each of them from doing the same work twice. Hence, while sharing knowledge, an improvised service and product innovation emerged to manage better sales, through a change in the element of materials, by using the new software, which had an effect on both skills and engagements. This encouraged further collaboration and engagement in promoting the brand. New skills on how to use the software and communication routines were developed among the distributors, as they became more familiar with the software through this impromptu improvisation. In this case, the practices performed also spanned several organizations, involving experience from previous situated events through which practice memory was co-created to establish new routine ways of working.

7.4 Innovation as imitation

The routinized ways to perform activities within the fashion industry imply that imitating and learning activities, organized by skills, engagements, and materials, are essential to align each situated practice to surrounding practices within the industry. Fashion-X was, to a large extent, dependent on the knowledge that was present in surrounding practices, to act innovatively as a response to the changes in the practices they performed. One example that showed the interconnection between imitation and innovation was the introduction and continuous use of the ERP software. This software was essential for the administration of the whole organization and its surrounding supplier and buyer organizations. In order to make the system run smoothly, Fashion-
X had to trust the software supplier’s experience of delivering solutions to similar organizations, based on their work practices. Hence, indirectly, Fashion-X learned from practices performed in other fashion brands about appropriate actions. These actions had, in turn, developed the software, which minimized the cost of search and experimentation to some extent. This is an example of how practitioners within the fashion industry imparted their knowledge to sustain routines as suggested by Alkemeyer and Buschman (2017), and how practitioners performing practices at different locations have an influence on each other (Reckwitz, 2002), creating a bundle of practices dependent on commonly agreed routinized behaviours. However, the new software was not a finished product ready to use at once. Implementing and making the ERP software work according to Fashion-X’s activities required a lot of adjustments to previous working routines but also to the software. This is in line with Alkemeyer and Buschman’s (2017) suggestion that apart from imitating what already exists, practitioners also negotiate their own interests, interpretations, and knowledge to gain interdependence and claim originality for themselves. Two years after implementation, Fashion-X was still in contact with the supplier to make refinements of the ERP software. Although the users saw this development as positive, this change in materials was slow, which required imitated and improvised activities before the new element became somewhat stable.

The ERP software was also an example of improvisation within routinized frames. The figures that represented the results of previous sales could be interpreted and elaborated on in an improvised way to make estimations and plans about future collections. To some extent, this is an example of how planning and stylistic innovation depend on imitating previously successful product innovation, and how imitating, accumulated experience and innovation are intertwined to create practice memory. This also exemplifies how the collections do not just follow one after the other, but how the diffusion of one collection, or stylistic innovations within it, are simultaneously interrelated with the generating phase of another collection. Thus it is imitated, but with new experience, and updated in an innovative way. To make use of the ERP software in terms of planning, improvising, imitating and innovating, it was crucial that the element could organize all practices performed. According to the CFO, the ERP software would not run smoothly unless everyone was willing to use it.

*It is like a box; to receive any output from the system, everyone has to add information to the system. There is no magic in that – CFO, Fashion-X (Interview 2013-04-04)*
Hence, while everyone used the ERP software to refine the working routines, the software itself did not create anything on its own; it had to be interlinked to the elements of skills and engagements and the practitioners performing the practices. This further shows how materials, in accordance with, e.g., Reckwitz (2002) and Shove et al. (2012), are considered as one of the constitutive elements of a practice, rather than as surrounding arrangements. It also shows the connectivity among practices since the ERP software changed the element of materials in all three practices within Fashion-X and their surrounding supplier and consumer practices, also interlinking their activities. All practitioners needed to adjust their activities and contribute to the content. In view of this, it can be seen that the relational interaction between practitioners and the new technology contributed to the change in practice and to product and process innovation in all three practices, such as new ways to structure the collection and by that, stylistic innovations. The CFO explained that in a larger organization you would have the old and the new software running in parallel, but since the previous routines of Fashion-X did not function as they should have, the old software was cut off before the new software was running smoothly. Hence, learning the new software also required some improvisation based on how everyone wanted the system to work.

When the design team handed over their designs to the production team, the ERP software eventually supported folders for each item. Throughout the activities of Designing and Producing, each folder was built up with information and instructions such as who would supply the materials and sewing and how to proceed. Price lists, sales orders and, later, purchasing orders were placed in the relevant folders. Hence, the material element of the ERP software created stronger links within each practice to refine it while also creating relational interactions among the practices. This new organizing material required new skills on how to use the software, affecting the engagements of performing each practice. The statistics created by the software provided new goals in producing the fashion collections. Learning the new ERP software, through the aid of previous practitioners’ experiences, made it possible to interrelate and imitate similar practices in the fashion industry and initiate innovative responses specific to Fashion-X. This illustrates how innovations are not necessarily new to the state of the art but new to the performed practices.

7.5 Innovation as aligning with surrounding practices

The ERP software interrelated all three practices within Fashion-X on issues such as target prices, quantities of orders, and the number of garments to produce in each collection. This software also highlighted whether the practices were aligned in the same direction. For instance, if the activities organized and performed within one practice did not proceed according to the initiated
timeframe, this would show up in the software, since every new update on each garment had to be reported here. Even though the content of the ERP software was created within Fashion-X, it also revealed if Designing, Producing and Selling aligned with surrounding supplier and buyer practices too. For instance, if any of the suppliers did not deliver on time or if there were any mistakes during production, this would be reported in the software and discussed during follow-up tollgate meetings. Through the orders made by the buyers, it was also possible to see if the buyer practices aligned to fill the minimum quantities of orders, and hence establish if the garments could be produced or not.

Even though the line release was supposed to introduce the whole collection, there were some items missing in the examples of the Autumn/Winter 2015 collection. For various reasons, a few garments were not finished on time, which shows that supplier practices and the three practices of creating a fashion collection were not always aligned. Delays could depend on orders not being sent in time from Fashion-X to their suppliers. For instance, garments or updates on garments were sometimes added at a later stage, which did not give the suppliers enough time to complete them before the line release. Sometimes the suppliers misinterpreted the instructions sent from Fashion-X so that the garments would be made in a way that was not intended. Due to the seasonality of production, time was constantly a scarce resource for which Designing, Producing and Selling, and their surrounding practices all competed.

In addition, Fashion-X had a history of being some weeks behind schedule, compared to the rest of the fashion industry. As a result, the management and organization innovation and its inherent refinement of all practices initiated a process innovation to coordinate a schedule for Fashion-X’s activities in creating any of their fashion collections. All major deadlines were given set dates according to the work schedules of surrounding buyer and supplier practices, which were distributed to each department within Fashion-X. Each department, in turn, had to decide how to manage their deadlines in order to contribute to the intended workflow. Hence, it was not possible to just wait for a particular style to be ready in its own time. It was necessary to make sure all styles would be ready for the final collection on time.

Since it was sometimes hard to anticipate how a sketch would actually look like a finished garment, i.e., if the suppliers could make the garment look as intended by the designers within a certain price range, decisions had to be made more quickly about whether or not it would be possible to make certain changes within a collection, postpone a certain style to a later collection, or delete the style from the collection. Each decision depended on the contribution of the garment to the collection. For instance, some image garments had
to be there to set the main expression of the collection. Because of this, additional effort was required to ensure certain stylistic innovations, such as finding the right material despite the shorter amount of time or increase the communication with the suppliers to come to an understanding of how the finished garment should look. The same principle applied to guaranteeing the diversity of the collection. For instance, all skirts could not be cancelled. Keeping deadlines was, according to the deputy CEO, about respect and trust for each other so that everyone would get the time they needed to finish their tasks. However, changing work routines and moving ahead of time was also a time consuming adjustment and the routinized ways of performing practices were, to some extent, hard to change in response to the organizing of practices in the surrounding fashion industry.

*It is not that people don’t want to change, but it is easy to fall back into old working habits – Deputy CEO, Fashion-X (Interview 2014-06-26)*

The above quote bears witness to the persistence of particular practices. Even though practices change, the habituation of certain activities may be rooted and sustained, which leads to the resistance of innovative activities. The experienced ways of performing a task, based on an unreflective expert way of acting (Dreyfus & Dreyfus, 2005), was initially an obstacle to the new work routines. This also shows, as also suggested by Schatzki (1996), how every practitioner has unique ways of performing common activities and how these activities are negotiated to maintain certain positions (Alkemeyer & Buscman, 2017). The new work routines were gradually adjusted according to the process innovation of the new schedule, through both negotiation and collaboration. This innovation also depended on the redistribution of work activities among the practices. Hence, responsibilities for many aspects of marketing the collection were expanded from a few practitioners to a collective responsibility based on the co-created and shared practice memory. Experience of collaborative activities within and across the practices created practice memory on how much time a certain task could consume, and thus when to start a certain activity in order to manage the main deadlines. Two years prior to the line release of the Autumn/Winter 2015 collection, the ongoing work, in relation to timing, was described like this:

*When you are behind time, it is easy to drag yourself into a downward spiral. You get a negative cash flow and suppliers will prioritize you less and so on. Now, we are starting to catch up, which provides us a new space to act on. If we can produce our sales collection on time we will be able to meet the large, important customers early, place our production orders early, receive the garments early, prolong the time to sell the collection, and thus sell more. This is now extremely important and is prioritized by the whole organization. It will*
affect everyone. Everything is connected and eventually it seems like there can be an upward spiral, which starts now – CFO, Fashion-X (Interview 2013-04-04)

Working according to the timeframes of the fashion industry strengthens the alignment with both supplier and consumer practices, which is why this process innovation was crucial. Routines were required to give stability and security to the situated practices of Designing, Producing and Selling. Working according to the seasonal routines, for instance sending instructions and orders and paying suppliers on time, usually makes the whole workflow easier, and offers each fashion brand benefits such as discounts, payment beneficiaries, and deliveries on time. These financial benefits were important to be able to afford the creative performances of making fashionable garments. Thus, the business and creative activities of producing a collection were highly intertwined and dependent on one another, rather than two forces colliding. If the interrelatedness among the practices supporting both creativity and business was interrupted in time and space, collaboration across organizations became more difficult and provided little time for adjustments to errors that would occur throughout the production. However, aligned practices, sharing practice memory, created margins to both improvise and plan ahead to further align with surrounding practices.

According to the head of assortment, new routines were created when needed, whenever something went wrong or when a new situation emerged. In these situations, improvised actions were implemented in situ, a learning process that gradually established new work routines to refine each practice and align it with other practices. Examples of such innovated routines were the new way of structuring of the samples of each collection organized by Producing, introducing ways of how to lend clothes to stylists and photographers, organized by Selling, and how to manage the kitchen and surrounding materials when distributors were visiting, organized by all three practices. Hence, for every collection produced, new knowledge was accumulated in all practices by improvised action responding to opportunities or problems. The increased knowledge about how and why practices needed to align also had an effect on engagements when everyone understood why working routines had to change.

It is not possible to implement any change if people do not understand why it is necessary - Deputy CEO, Fashion-X (Interview 2016-06-26)

However, since all the deadlines were tight, practitioners wanted to use as much time as possible for their own activities to manage their jobs the best they could, which illustrates how practices also compete about resources such as time. One way to support the new schedule created was the ERP software
through which everyone could follow the work within each practice. This overview also made it clearer what consequences a delayed deadline contributed to, which made the consequences of misalignment among practices evident.

It was also important to plan for unforeseen events, to create space for required improvised solutions. Since there were many activities that could end up in an unexpected way throughout the production process, starting the creation of a new collection earlier provided margins for problem solving. Based on previous experience, i.e., the co-created practice memory, some of these events could be anticipated, but the final solution was mostly specific to every situated event. Nevertheless, as the practice memory was created and shared, routines could be invented to aid both planning and improvisation in these situations. Hence, routines created according to the initial plan also allowed for routine improvisation.

Compared to the line release of the previous year, which introduced the main Autumn/Winter 2014 collection, this line release of the main Autumn/Winter 2015 was performed one month earlier. According to the head of assortment it takes three seasons before the results of implementing new ways of working are visible. Hence, to some extent, the timeframe was anticipated, but the exact reorganizing of practices to reach the routinized schedule was a combination of planned for and improvised events.

When time margins were created, it was also possible to adjust smaller activities and details within the creation of each collection. Situated activities such as the tollgate meetings provided an opportunity to understand if the activities within each practice were aligned and if there was time to make adjustments. The process innovation, which created new time margins, made it possible to highlight product groups such as the new denim line and the core garments described above. This facilitated developing product and stylistic innovations. During the second tollgate meeting, input from all practices, Designing, Producing and Selling, shaped the structure of the collection. Issues that were brought up in these meetings could also be relevant to the work routines for other collections. One such example is from the observational notes of a tollgate meeting in which the Spring/Summer 2015 collection was discussed in Fashion-X on March 13, 2014. It shows how one issue may also bring up other related issues and how different practices organize these activities through their alignment.

Each garment was presented according to product groups. The table was full of stuff: textile samples, notes,
garment sketches, and coffee mugs. Practitioners performing Producing and Selling had their laptops to double check prices and materials. Garments and textile samples were sent around the table to decide on qualities and prices. Everyone followed the discussion through their printed garment sketches while discussing prices and margins. Whether it was possible to lower the price on one of the shirts to adapt to the German market was also discussed. One of the buyers left the room to get a textile sample and a sample of a shirt. Whether the price of one shirt should be lower or if another shirt should be higher was debated. The aim was to make a difference between the shirts so they did not compete with one another. Different colours and washes were also discussed. The interaction about the shirts continued with a discussion on how to package them. Shirts could either be hanging on hangers or folded and wrapped. References were made to previous styles and details that used to sell well. There were different details on the shirts for collars and buttons. One of the sellers suggested that all shirts should be named according to the basic pattern it was constructed from. The designer asked if this was done how the different variations in details should be handled. This was discussed back and forth and eventually it was agreed that a fitting guide would be made for the shirts to organize the different styles. In relation to the organizing of shirts, the head of retail also asked for a guide that covered all carry-over products. The CEO wanted a repetition about the fit for each style of shirts discussed this far. No one but the sales representative wanted to rename the shirts.

Hence, a discussion that started out about how to separate two shirt styles, to align with consumer practices, provided an opportunity to question how all shirts were related to one another and initiated a service innovation in terms of a guide to explain this. The discussion also involved supplier practices in terms of how to package the shirts. In situated activities such as tollgate meetings, in which two or more practices interacted, such questions and improvised suggestions were shared and elaborated on. However, in order to find time and space for these issues to be solved in an innovative way, all three practices Designing, Producing and Selling had to be aligned with surrounding and collaborative practices through time and space.
Managing this alignment required refinement of the situated practices Designing, Producing and Selling, which included new work routines depending on the assortment structure, integrating the old and the new, in a way specific to the brand. Practice memory was created and shared with surrounding practices as the elements changed and influenced one another, to improve the structure and manage new time frames. Planning and improvising on routines and imitating activities within the fashion industry contributed to innovations. Initially, Fashion-X set out to find a balance between art and order, but throughout the reorganizing of practices, many kinds of innovations, namely product, process, service, stylistic, organizational and management innovations, emerged and became interrelated to progressively adjust the work routines of the brand.

7.6 Fashion-Y: Innovation as the perfection of everyday practices

When it was initially decided to develop some sustainable garments in Fashion-Y, it was evident that a new way of collaboration with suppliers had to be established for this. Within the whole fashion industry, it was difficult to trace how products were actually produced and by whom. Hence all practices and practitioners were not transparently aligned in everyday work activities. Even though the main activities of producing textiles and garments were understood within the situated fashion creating practices in Fashion-Y, the more detailed activities in certain locations were difficult to access and link to. This required several interactions through intermediary technologies such as emails, phone calls and, occasionally, on-site conversations, to convince some of the suppliers to open up their production practices to align with the reorganizing of the situated practices of Designing, Producing and Selling in Fashion-Y.

The whole sustainable project started from a change in the element engagements, above all in the Designing and the Producing practices. There was an urge to make fashion in a different, sustainable way. However, this change soon contributed to a change in materials and skills too. Materials triggered the practical work routines due to the complicated courses of tracing the production of fabrics and accessories. Skills about the whole production chain, the effect of using certain materials such as chemicals, and alternative options were continuously reorganizing the practices performed in this project too.

Before the designs of the sustainable garments were created, it was first decided that the fabric to work with would be knitted Tencel, and the colour
would be black. Hence, materials guided which suppliers to increase collaboration with, and the kind of designs, or stylistic innovation, that would suit this fabric. Fashion-Y had already used Tencel in previous collections, so they had some prior knowledge about this fabric. A few questions were initially raised around the fabric such as the chemicals, energy use, suppliers, and local production practices involved. All these issues were mainly activities organized within the Producing practice. However, the use of Tencel was also questioned from the beginning since the fabric had been used before, i.e., the newness of the innovation was debated. It was agreed that the products would be novel enough since they would fulfil the aim, which was to provide a sustainable product within the stylistic frames of the brand. Because activities would be performed to scrutinize the work routines of the product in depth and establish new ways to align supplier practices, the sourcing team anticipated several innovative improvements even though Tencel was already known as a sustainable alternative.

The introductory meetings were hence situated events in which different meanings about sustainability were elaborated on in relation to innovation. By collectively deciding that the fabric did not have to be new or state of the art, but made of an already existing fibre that could be improved, it was indirectly decided that innovation, in this case, was about improvements and learning among all practices involved. The initiated product innovation can hence be interpreted in a similar way to how, e.g., Shove et al. (2012) and Schatzki (2001) explain the change in practices: when new elements are introduced or when existing elements are combined in different ways. Since the elements changed, the organizing of the involved practices changed as well, which contributed to other innovative activities, with practitioners having to respond to changes both in planned and improvised ways. Further, in order to align with supplier practices, the elements also had to overlap in new ways to enable knowledge sharing, and the co-creation of practice memory, which were both essential to the sustainability project.

Apart from the fabric, many accessories had to be evaluated, such as plastic bags, labels, linings, hangers, and thread. New material elements were introduced in the practices of Fashion-Y due to changes in engagements and skills. Materials also became an important mediator among Designing, Producing and Selling and the surrounding supplier practices, all of which triggered the initial activities towards product development. Materials were also an element that hindered innovations to emerge. Several suggestions that were initiated failed due to the number of items that had to be ordered from the suppliers. For instance, it was suggested to change the labels, replacing them with recycled polyester, but this was not possible due to the minimum quantity required from the particular supplier. It was also hard to obtain labels that looked similar to the ones already in use, but in a new sustainable fibre. The practices
organizing the production of such accessory materials were hence not aligned with what was workable in a small sized project only requiring a small amount of each material. During the situated events, the follow-up meetings, these issues were negotiated and elaborated on to collectively decide how to proceed and what to accept as sustainable within the frames of the project. Hence, practice memory was co-created to set routines for how to plan and improvise to innovate and make decisions about the new product. Some of the initial sustainable requirements had to be rejected for the project to progress, mainly due to the minimum quantities of orders and the amount of time required. Time and quantities were hence factors that hindered the alignment with supplier practices with the result that all intended arrangements could not be made.

7.7 Innovation as intercorporeal interactions

In order to meet some of the problems related to quantity, transparency and knowledge sharing, it was decided that physical contacts with suppliers interlinked to the situated practices of Designing, Producing and Selling had to take place. A year into the project, a situated event was planned in collaboration with the suppliers: an intercorporeal interaction at the suppliers’ site between practitioners of Fashion-Y and their potential suppliers. Before this event, a lot of effort was spent explaining to the agents the reason why this visit was important to manage this project. Physical get togethers among practices such as the ones suggested by Fashion-Y had not been initiated before, and this was first met with resistance by the suppliers. Due to the situation of creating competitive advantage through suppliers, the agents organizing all suppliers were a bit hesitant at the start. However, as the engagements for sustainable fashion production, the new skills required, and material aspects were shared and understood, it had become possible to reorganize activities that contributed to new collaborations within this bundle of practices. The intention was to co-create practice memory to establish new work routines within practices across organizations.

Due to the already established collaboration with the agents representing the suppliers, Fashion-Y managed to convince them about the benefits of such embodied interactions. Materials, such as documents of the strategy and intended goals, based on the engagements and skills related to sustainable fashion, were sent to the agents to explain why Fashion-Y wanted to proceed with this project. This effort eventually resulted in a situated event in Portugal during February 2-5, 2014. Below is an excerpt from the observational notes of the situated activities that took place between the supplier practices and the practices of Fashion-Y. It shows how knowledge was shared among practices in order to increase collaboration and encourage innovative activities. Even
though the practical change would mainly affect skills and materials, engagements were, to a large extent, important to introduce an alternative collaboration, including planned for and improvised innovative actions to increase sustainability in all fashion practices performed.

Each meeting at the suppliers started in a meeting room in which everyone gathered around a table and a presentation of the project was conducted by Fashion-Y. It was highlighted that since new understandings about the social and environmental effect of textile production were available to consumers, the only option was to try and make production more sustainable. Being at the forefront of these issues was also emphasized as a competitive advantage since the demand for sustainable production would probably increase, and the suppliers involved could be a good example for other suppliers too. All the suppliers had a positive response in general, but it was also stressed that some issues could require a longer timeframe than planned for this project. This was articulated by one of the practitioners in the dye-house:

_We have to think a lot. It is very difficult but very interesting. At (Dye-house) we like these kinds of challenges._

– Engineer, Dye-house (Meeting 2014-02-03)

The change in the situated practices of Fashion-X also created what Schatzki (2001) refers to as a contingent event in the supplier practices, since engagements were altered, which, in turn, affected both the skills and materials in these practices. It is also an example of how practices and practitioners affected one another, as a seamless integration (Shove et al., 2012) and formed constellations and arrangements (Hui et al., 2017) that span across organizational borders. Here, practitioners of several organizations altered their habitual organizational routines to collectively create practice memory in Designing and Producing which was specifically related to creating sustainable fashion i.e., product and process innovations.

After the introductory meetings, all suppliers offered a tour of their respective plants. Each tour provided a situated opportunity to share knowledge about the processes behind the production and interact with practitioners _in situ_. Skills were shared among practices with the aim of improving sustainability aspects throughout the production chain. Practitioners from Fashion-Y had planned in advance to search for a solution to the amount of textile waste that
fashion production generates. There was no optimal way of taking care of these cutaway pieces; hence they constituted an additional non-sustainable byproduct of fashion production. At one of the cutting and sewing plants, a computer software program that placed all the patterns on the textile was demonstrated. The interaction among the practitioners, the issue that had to be solved, and this software provided a situated event for improvising. To have the chance to experiment with this program, the option of adding a seam to one of the sleeves was tried. Even though this solution did not make much of a difference in reducing waste, it triggered the question of whether it was possible to change other parts of the design or the width of the fabric according to the patterns. This question was hence further relayed to the knitting fabric supplier. In the end, it turned out that the machines knitting the fabric were set to certain widths and could not easily be changed unless a larger quantity was ordered. Due to this restriction in the materials, the issue was brought back to Designing, which was encouraged to create something out of the waste or make designs that used as much of the fabric as possible, to avoid textile waste. Even though the problem remained to be solved since the material itself could not be changed, this illustrates how, when trying to reach innovative solutions, intercorporeal interaction offer extend opportunities for planning and improvising intertwined. In this situated event, improvised ideas emerged through shared engagements when practitioners wanted to reach a sustainable solution, using their skills about the fabric, cutting, and design, and evaluating the materials such as the fabric, computer software, and knitting machines.

Due to language barriers, geographical distance, and habituated ways of producing garments, such intercorporeal interactions, using software and textile samples, were necessary to communicate the changes needed to proceed product and process innovations, aligning all practices and practitioners involved. This example of trying to solve the problem of textile waste also shows a situation in which practices aligned in similarly to what Shove et al. (2012) describe as a seamless interaction of practices, spanning several organizations. The elements of all practices overlapped and common background knowledge was created. The common background and practice memory further provided a basis for the improvisation needed to try innovative activities. However, despite this alignment among practices, all issues could not be solved, but a situation was created in which previous habituated activities across organizations could be questioned. The gradual alignment of practices and collaboration among practitioners generated innovative activities that had not been performed before. An idea emerged to make shawls of the cutaway textile which triggered the question of how to collect the waste and how to actually produce these shawls. Hence, process innovations were initiated and examined iteratively. Options were tried both by the Portuguese suppliers and seamstresses in Stockholm. Shawl production turned out to be too expensive in the end, but even though the innovative idea of making a new garment out
of the waste could not be realized, it inspired other options too. Collaboration was initiated with a company that was in the starting phase of making fabric into fibres, to then create new fabric from these recycled fibres. At one of the follow-up meetings at Fashion-Y, an idea emerged that this company could use the textile waste to try their new processes. However, they were still developing methods and did not have a finalized solution. For this reason, this company was later invited to meet the suppliers in Portugal. Since one of the main issues of recycling textile fibres was to get rid of old chemicals, this meeting was considered to be useful to the chemical providers too. It was also investigated if the textile waste could be used for other purposes such as for charity. Hence, the issue of reducing textile waste turned out to involve several practices outside of, but now interrelating to Fashion-Y, and initiated several process innovations to be organized in a sustainable way.

Another example of reducing waste concerned the packing of garments before transport from suppliers to customers. A situated event at the packing table in one of the sewing plants initiated an improvised solution to reduce the amount of silk paper used. Before being packed in cardboard boxes, garments were wrapped in silk paper and placed in plastic bags. Practitioners inside Fashion-Y questioned the reason for silk paper. The only answer emerging was that it had always been this way. In other words, these activities involving the excessive use of materials had never been questioned before; they were just a sustained habituated routine in packing. The idea arose to stop using silk paper as it was unnecessary. The plastic bags each garment was shipped in were also discussed. Fashion-Y had found a bag made out of a more sustainable material, but the price was quite high compared to the conventional plastic bags. To reach a lower price for the sustainable bags, a larger number of bags had to be bought. To keep the price low, Fashion-Y asked their suppliers to exchange their conventional plastic bags for the new ones and use them for all their wrapping to other fashion brands too. Fashion-Y hence had to rely on their suppliers’ activities to mediate between them and the plastic bag supplier due to the minimum quantity requirement. Hence, indirectly, this change in materials had an effect on materials in other fashion companies too, since the supplier changed materials in their packing practice, which illustrates how practices are also indirectly related in this industry.

During the situated event in which Fashion-Y interacted with their suppliers, it was obvious that the suppliers had not considered some of the questions and suggestions raised by Fashion-Y before. However, the overlapping elements among the collaborating practices caused changes in elements of the supplier practices as well. Due to the suppliers’ experience, they were able to contribute to some solutions in situ, but some issues required more time for adjustment. Even so, due to the now shared practical understandings among the
practices which had grown through the intercorporeal interaction over a couple of days, the communication and collaboration with the suppliers went much more smoothly when these discussions continued from two different sites via email or phone.

Collaborations among supplier practices also emerged due to this situated event, which had not happened before. An important change in the engagements element of the supplier practices was to reduce the fear of revealing what used to be considered a competitive advantage in terms of transparency regarding suppliers and work processes. This development made it possible for changes in the elements of skills and materials too, which in turn led to modified work routines enabling process and product innovations. Two sewing plants were considered as options for making the garments. After receiving the samples from both plants, it was found that one made the shirt better and one made the dress and the top better. So it was decided to use both plants. This decision also had effects on the alignment of supplier practices. These two plants, which had never worked together, now had to cooperate with each other for the supply of fabrics and other accessories. As it turned out, these two plants had different ways of performing work which sometimes caused problems, making Fashion-Y the mediator of some activities between them. Hence, the initiated product innovation required and instigated several process innovations outside Fashion-Y due to new collaborations as the project continued, which affected both the supplier practices and Fashion-Y’s Designing and Producing practices.

Sharing skills with the suppliers also had an effect on materials through engagements in all three practices within Fashion-Y. Understanding the whole process, the extra work and cost of changing, for example, a colour during the design and production process of a collection made all practitioners within Fashion-Y very humble about textile production. This is best illustrated with the following three examples of outcomes. It was agreed during the follow-up meetings later on that Fashion-Y should really consider whether or not it was worthwhile to make these changes in their coming collections due to the excessive use of chemicals for, e.g., re-colouring fabrics that did not meet the standard of the intended colour. It was also elaborated on during various following situated events for the sustainable products how Designing and Producing could work on improvements already in product development to avoid too many changes in styles during the creation of a fashion collection. Also, it was agreed that sometimes Designing would have to sacrifice some requirements in their stylistic innovations due to the long and less sustainable processes of changing materials, such as re-colouring and finishing fabrics and garments to achieve a certain expression. Hence, the closer collaboration
among Designing, Producing and the supplier practices initiated process innovations not only for the new sustainable product but also for product development in the main collections.

7.8 Innovating through the integration of different practices

At the beginning of the project, the intention was to interrelate the practitioners of all three practices, Designing, Producing and Selling, in the sustainable product development. The reason behind this decision was to make sure the new knowledge gained from the new products was integrated into the practices within the main collections as well. The intention was also to share knowledge among the practices by overlapping the elements of skills, materials, and engagements. Fashion-Y had no experience of an innovative project like this so part of its purpose was to create and share the knowledge accumulated from the sustainability project within the whole organization and its surrounding practices.

During the project, sustainability became increasingly important in Fashion-Y’s new business model, and future sustainability goals were planned for in the whole organization’s strategy. However, at the beginning of the product development, attendance at the follow-up meetings was sometimes low. Other activities competed for time. Finding sustainable materials such as buttons, threads, plastic bags and so on, took quite some time, and occupied most of the time in these meetings. Some practitioners who usually did not take part in the design and sourcing activities found it hard to sustain the motivation for participating in the meetings on these issues. In particular, the Selling practice did not understand its obvious potential contribution to the project. However, Designing and Producing lacked the knowledge of how to communicate the product development within the organization and especially to the end consumers. They also considered one of the project’s purposes to be to gain knowledge of the daily business and to manage that, it was important that everyone participated. In this respect, choosing appropriate materials was considered part of making strategies and sharing knowledge about the whole project, so it was important that everyone understood the reorganization of practices and how the practices aligned. On several occasions, there was a discussion about how to involve the Selling practice. Their initial resistance had a negative effect on the other two practices since it was assumed that Selling did not share the engagements of the initiated changes. The Selling practice prioritized other activities within the organization that were time consuming, and their organizing elements were not aligned with the change in elements in the other two practices of Designing and Producing. However, as the sustainable
project proceeded, the organizing elements in Selling had to change too, especially when some of Selling’s activities became more important for the project to advance. Other practitioners continued to question the absence of Selling until the idea came up to rename the project. At this point, Selling found its first clear purpose for collaborating on sustainable production. Their knowledge in communicating the learning process which Designing and Producing had initiated was required in order to progress the project.

Aligning the Selling practice with the sustainability project emerged through a situated event on January 20, 2014, in which three practitioners were invited to a communication meeting with one of the designers and the project leader to devise a new name for the innovative project and decide how to proceed with communication about the new products. The project leader prepared an agenda with which these issues could be elaborated. Hence, a planned framework, based on the practice memory created within Designing and Producing, was set to enable improvised solutions aligned with Selling. Changes in skills, materials, and engagements in Designing and Producing were shared with Selling through a presentation of the project and the reasons behind it. The metaphor of the three was used to illustrate how and why it was important to align all activities from making the fibres to selling the clothes. Both the designer and project leader emphasized the importance of moving towards sustainable production, how they had been struggling to find such new sustainable materials in small quantities, and the importance of transparency in production. After reviewing the products, the project leader further stressed that communicating sustainability was also a new issue for the organization which required a learning process on its own.

*It is not only the product we need to care about, but also how to communicate about sustainability. Since we have almost no previous experience, that will be kind of a learning process in itself.* - Head of CR, Fashion-Y (Communication meeting 2014-01-20)

The Selling practitioners responded with questions regarding where to sell the clothes, how long they would be available, and how much attention these garments would get. Due to this being an early stage of the project, it was modestly decided to focus the communication of the project on the learning rather than the actual outcome. Everyone agreed that it was important to find a balance between offering information to end consumers who shared an interest in these issues and avoiding overly exploiting the project. The new knowledge gained and work performed so far made the practitioners proud, but there was also some anxiety about how this project would be received and if they had
enough knowledge to respond to questions from consumers and other stakeholders. The project had mainly focused on aligning with supplier practices, and this work was still ongoing.

Since the new knowledge gained differed from information that was previously communicated to customers, it was decided to add this new content into the marketing channels they were already familiar. Technology such as the website and social media would convey the interactive communication between the practices producing the product and consumer practices since this technology was already organized by the Selling practice. It was also decided to communicate through Fashion-Y’s own retail stores, but this required planning as practice memory had to be shared with retail practices in advance. Integrating Selling into the project was necessary to integrate it with consumer practices. To use the metaphor of a tree, developed by Fashion-Y, this would interconnect Fashion-Y (the trunk), with both its suppliers (the roots) and its customers (the branches).

Prior to this meeting, a competition within the organization had been announced to find a new name for the upcoming products. However, as the new suggestions were reviewed in relation to the shared background knowledge of this project, no one at the meeting seemed satisfied with them. Everyone agreed that the suggested names, including words such as change and future, promised too much of the finished garment rather than communicating the ongoing learning and reorganizing of practices involved in producing sustainable fashion. These unsuitable names indicate that practitioners outside this project were not yet interrelated with the ongoing changes in the elements of these practices and the reorganizing of practices these changes provided. Such external practitioners viewed this product innovation in a different way, focusing more on the outcome rather than the activities related to the products.

Practitioners within Selling suggested defining the purpose of naming this project. They wanted to know if it would be for internal use or a way to communicate to end consumers. Based on the names from the competition, the keywords used to describe the project, such as sustainable, green, project, eco and lab, and the purpose of naming the products, everyone started to improvise on names. Everyone seemed to be searching for the same name, but they also found it very difficult to capture everything in one. In this case, the elements increasingly overlapped among practices, but even though skills, materials, and engagements were shared, engagements seemed to complicate the naming of this project. The changes in the engagements in Designing and Producing were more rooted which was evident in the names they proposed during the meeting. While the designer and the project leader wanted to make sure the reorganizing of practices reaching the product was emphasized, the Selling practice emphasized a simple and straightforward name, which should not
promise too much, nor be political. More details about the project and the 
products, with emphasis on materials and skills, were requested by practition-
ers of the Selling practice, such as how these garments would be treated in 
relation to the rest of the collection, the colours used, and if the garments were 
tended for men, women or both. Also, the core, organized by engagements, 
relating to conscious choices and the circular economy were highlighted 
again. These questions, again, made it evident that Selling had not been part 
of the gradual understanding and change in elements which aligned the other 
two practices in this particular project.

Based on gradually shared knowledge, an improvised play-around with words 
such as green, eco, circular, lab, project and workshop developed again. Eventu-
ally, collaborative improvisation resulted in The Circular Project. At the 
same time, it was suggested to use a silver ring as an additional logo on the 
hangtag of the garments. The designer started to draw a ring by hand and 
added an arrow to it to emphasize the movement of the project. The name of 
the brand was also added to the new name. The previous name, Our Ultimate 
Product, had a focus on the innovation outcome, the new garments, but the 
new name focused on the actual project, including the surrounding innova-
tions. Eventually, the word “project” was toned down because everyone 
thought of a project as an event that had an end. Even though the first products 
were not yet launched, it was decided to continue producing more products 
made of other materials, hence the focus shifted from product to project and 
further to something including several innovative initiatives of sustainable and 
long-lasting fashion. Improvising on a new name, based on previously gained 
experience, hence became a means to align the three practices of Designing, 
Producing and Selling, in an effort to proceed with work towards sustainabil-
ity.

So far, the situated practices of Designing and Producing had already stretched 
across organizational boundaries to interrelate with suppliers in other sites to 
collaborate on the product innovation. Aligning the Selling practice in this 
sustainability oriented process included further collaborations with consult-
ants who were experienced in communicating sustainability. The Selling prac-
tice had to alter routines due to the change in all three elements, which differed 
from previous ways of communicating. Hence, the Selling practice not only 
interacted with Designing and Producing to innovate on communication ac-
tivities, but also with other practices outside the organization. This is another 
example of the relationship between innovation and imitation. The external 
communication practices performed by the consultants were based on previ-
ous experience in collaboration with other organizations wanting to communi-
cate about sustainability. The sustainability process of Fashion-Y had to rely 
on this consultants’ previous experience to develop their own communication
strategies. Hence, even though this situated project required its own communication, it was also affected by, to some extent, established ways of communicating about sustainability.

Aligning Selling within the sustainability advancement made their contribution more obvious, within the situated practice and among the other practices as Selling’s participation in the follow-up meetings increased. Selling’s main contribution was evident later in the Tencel project when labels and promotion were planned. During the follow-up meetings, the final work on the Tencel garments and the new woollen product development overlapped, which made it more obvious for Selling to participate in the continuous reorganizing of the bundled practices. Gaining new knowledge about producing sustainable fashion and connecting to consumer practices, Selling also shared knowledge gained on how to act as a socially and environmentally conscious fashion consumer in general and actually developed activities for consumers to engage in. Hence through materials, skills, and engagements, Selling intermediated in the knowledge gained from supplier practices, Designing and Producing and from consumer practices to communicate with consumers and contribute to the innovative activities required in this project.

Within the development of the second product, new related service innovations emerged such as vouchers for returning used garments placed in Fashion-Y’s retail stores to increase recycling, providing information on how to care for garments to make them last longer and offering a repair service and guarantees for the new woollen sustainable garments. The product, process and service innovations that emerged from the reorganizing of Selling were still dependent on the alignment with Designing and Producing. For instance, when Selling introduced care products for their customers, the sourcing skills of Producing were important to make sure the care products were sustainable too. The change within the Selling practice also had an effect on surrounding materials: thinner plastic bags were introduced in stores to reduce excessive materials. At the beginning of the project, changing the plastic bags was met with resistance, since it was thought that a heavy plastic bag represented something luxurious, an experience Fashion-Y wanted to provide their customers with. However, the changes in skills and engagements about sustainability also changed materials in this case. To some extent, the product, process, service, and organizational innovations created through integrating the three practices provided an explanation to the question raised by Blue and Spurling (2017) of what holds the practices together. The innovative activities, integrating all these innovation types, were organized by all three practices, and, by that, the interrelated elements also held the practices together. Hence, as the gradual change in elements affected all three practices, in similar ways, the alignment among the practices grew stronger.
7.9 Innovation through experiential knowledge

The knowledge gained and the innovativeness around the sustainable Tencel garments turned out more successful than initially anticipated. Even though there were some obstacles in the beginning to the project and its purpose, participating practitioners highly appreciated the collaboration among practices. There was an effort made to find situations in which knowledge could be shared across practices within Fashion-Y. The sustainable project with its follow-up meetings became such an event. Issues that did not directly relate to the development of the specific product but to the whole organization were often brought up since the collective knowledge sharing provided good feedback about other issues within the organization and with the supplier and consumer practices. For instance, if a problem emerged with a supplier during the sustainable product development, this issue could be similar to other supplier problems that needed to be solved. The problem solving would then apply to all these issues. Hence, changes in the practices performed in the sustainable project were interrelated to the same practice activities outside this project. Since the sustainable product development received more time than product developments in the main collections, there was also more time to go into depth and find more long-lasting solutions which would benefit activities within the whole organization through sharing knowledge across practices.

_It is actually fun to receive a more comprehensive picture of the whole process. Even if you can’t be everywhere, it is very interesting to see how everything work – Designer I, Fashion-Y (Interview 2013-12-03)_

The engagements of working together, creating practice memory, with a sense of contributing to something in addition to fashion, combined with learning new skills and working with new materials, and old materials in new ways, triggered a second cycle of product and process development of sustainable fashion even before the first products were launched. Based on the experience within all three practices, the planning of the second sustainable product innovation, again, started from the choice of the material. During the situated activities related to the first Tencel products, new ideas about creating a second product started to emerge. Everyone wanted to choose a product group that included learning but within the frames of what was anticipated to be attainable knowledge.

During spring 2014, lessons learned from the first project were summarized and scrutinized to lay the foundation of a new plan of how to progress the reorganizing of practices related to this new project. Timing was emphasized. A clearer schedule including responsibilities was requested. Work for the
main collections was performed in that way, but this routinized way of working had not been adopted within the sustainability project. It was suggested that practitioners that were not included in this project could still have the same responsibilities as they did in the main collections, e.g., to make sure accessories were ordered and delivered to suppliers on time. During the first project, these activities sometimes fell through the cracks and were delayed, since they were not organized by the practices in the same way as the main collection was organized. Hence, the habituated way of performing and creating a fashion collection was sought for, even though the intention was to make it a separate project with a specific focus on sustainability and fashion.

In the main collections, the responsibilities for woven and knitted garments were separated, although the practices were carried out in similar ways. The Tencel shirt was made in a knitted fabric but used a pattern for woven garments, which caused some confusion. The participants in the sustainable project were also practitioners for both woven and knitted garments. Due to that, the habituated ways of separating production were confused. This experience ended up in a decision to focus more specifically on either knitted or woven materials and to make sure a schedule was created to run in parallel with the main collection schedules. Hence, even though the reorganizing of practices created new, sought for, routines, the habitual ways of performing the practices also maintained routinized ways of performing work. During autumn 2015 a schedule was initiated in a situated follow-up meeting. The launch of the garments was planned at the end of August 2016, and preceding activities were planned accordingly. This shows how co-created practice memory could now be used to create routines for how to proceed and, in doing so, for how to continue new innovative initiatives.

The final choice for the wool fabric supplier was decided on since this supplier had already shared engagements regarding sustainability with Fashion-Y. Hence the alignment with the supplier practices went more smoothly in this project since the elements organizing the practices were overlapping to a large extent already before the project actually came about. Some of the suppliers providing accessories such as buttons and lining to the Tencel project continued their collaboration with Fashion-Y during the second project, which also facilitated some of the initial work activities across practices. Hence, the supplier practices that were already well aligned would continue but the new project also gave an opportunity to create further alignments.

During the wool project, new practitioners of the situated Designing, Producing and Selling practices joined the product development team whereas other practitioners left, mainly due to new positions being created or staff on parental leave. The woven wool also required some different skills to the knitted Tencel, which also meant some of the practitioners were relocated. Hence the
link between the elements of skills and materials also contributed to forming the second of practitioners. The combination of previous and new practitioners created a situation in which the novices, in this particular event, had to learn from the more experienced, but the new practitioners also found opportunities to question some of the previous habituated activities. One such example was the neck labels. During the first project, new neck labels in a sustainable material were sought for, but not found in the right style and quantity. Because of this, suitable neck labels were continuously sought in the second project too. One of the new practitioners started to look for new suppliers, and while doing this, she also questioned why the neck labels were white. The question was brought up during one of the situated follow-up meetings, with the response that the labels were white just because they always had been. A white label tends to look shabby quickly even though its garment is not, and might trigger further washing by consumers. Washing a garment too often is not sustainable, especially with wool garments, which could easily be aired. Changing the neck label to grey was proposed as a way to change consumer practices to promote sustainability. This shows how a problem that persisted from the previous project had a new opportunity to be solved due to the extra time involved and a new practitioner’s improvised action. While learning from and imitating the more experienced practitioners within the situated project, and interpreting this knowledge and therefore not performing in the commonly agreed routinized way, imitation and innovation became interrelated. This also illustrates how a change in materials in fashion creating practices is interlinked with consumer practices concerning garment care.

In the second project, the Selling practice now saw the importance of participating from the start to align with the reorganizing of practices they would eventually communicate to consumer practices. Selling also received valuable feedback from consumers regarding sustainability from the Tencel project and the new customer care initiatives, which they shared with Designing and Producing. Selling was hence mediating practices, within and across organizational borders, which triggered initial innovative ideas. The experience within the Selling practice was also important due to their increased work of aligning with consumer practices. During the first project, the main focus was to align with supplier practices. But with Fashion-Y’s increased experience, the new challenge was to communicate about and share the experience with consumer practices. In terms of the tree metaphor, this more conclusively interrelated the roots, trunk, and branches.

New skills in Designing gained from the initial project influenced the design of the new styles in the second project. The Tencel project brought up the problem of textile waste. This had an impact on the Designing practice’s contribution to the second product development project. The new design sought to use as much of the fabric as possible and the design of a skirt and a coat
emerged from the width of the fabric. Hence, the material again provided some frames for the design, but this time skills had already been accumulated from the previous project, which then reorganized the Designing practice. In one of the follow-up meetings in early autumn 2015, one of the designers demonstrated a toile of a new skirt and how the cutting had come about. To minimize waste, the stylistic innovation, the skirt, had emerged from a whole piece of fabric and then it had been folded into the finished design. Hence, the engagements of increasing sustainability in fashion by reducing textile waste also organized by materials created new skills in Designing to perform this stylistic innovation.

7.10 Innovation as expanding organizational memory

During the Tencel project and the later wool project, a number of workshops were held to inspire product development and create frames of references, routines and structures, or practice memory for knowledge sharing. A planned agenda and a nominated purpose preceded every workshop, but the intention was mainly to provide loose frames to enable emerging ideas. Hence, the workshops were situated events that combined planning and improvisation. Even though a certain workshop could aim to aid the designing process, the presence of practitioners from Designing, Producing and Selling contributed to knowledge shared from different perspectives on product development. To decide on the first sustainable product, a group meeting was led by an external consultant in which all participants were asked to elaborate freely about the brand and its values. After the meeting one of the designers commented on the differences and similarities among all practitioners:

_We represented different sections, which provided different views on things… People from marketing think about the products in a different way. When we (the design team) think about the product we think about quality, the look and different shapes, the physical product. But they (marketing) think about the product and everything that surrounds the product, what associations the product should have, how the person wearing the garment should feel. We think about that too, but not in the same way. We don’t use fancy words to describe it. Their job is actually to communicate this to the customer so that the customer feels attracted by it. I thought it was good to hear how it works and to realize that we all think alike in some way_ – Designer II, Fashion-Y (Interview 2014-07-04)

This quote is a testament to how the practices were organized in varying ways by their elements and how these elements overlapped to co-create the fashion collection of the brand. The similarities and differences became evident in
workshops, when all practices, with their particular skills, materials, and engagements came together to improvise and resolve issues related to sustainable fashion. Even though the elements organize each situated practice in different ways, the overlapping of elements among practices provided additional insight to how and why practices also depend on one another. As a result, practice memory expanded as knowledge was shared and elements overlapped in these situated events.

Such situated events and workshops also related to one another, since emerging ideas and new knowledge created in a particular situated event sometimes needed to be elaborated on in new follow-up constellations. One such example was a workshop held prior to the wool product development, which related to two other workshops a few months later, when the product development had already started. The practitioners in the first workshop were invited to participate in a creative brainstorming meeting to come up with new ways of doing business, creative solutions to product developments and new ways to interact with users to make them part of the journey (of producing sustainable fashion) too. These invited participants knew the new products to be developed would be of woven wool. This workshop consisted of practitioners performing the three practices Designing, Producing and Selling within the sustainability project and practitioners performing practices relating to these practices, external stakeholders who were considered sufficiently creative to contribute with ideas when developing a new sustainable product. All were familiar with the sustainable work of Fashion-Y, and some had collaborated with Fashion-Y during the first project. Below is an excerpt from observation notes of the planned activities held at this workshop on February 4, 2015, which aimed to find innovative solutions regarding product development, consumption, and sustainability:

The invitation came from the group leader of the sustainability project and a brief agenda was prepared for the situated event, including brainstorming exercises. Even though a presentation was given which included the previous project and visions for the upcoming wool project, there were no exact expectations from this workshop other than brainstorming in relation to the new sustainable products. The workshop was situated in one of the larger meeting rooms in Fashion-Y’s office. To provide everyone with the same background knowledge, the workshop was introduced with a story of the work performed so far and activities in circular design such as
minimizing the negative environmental impact, decreasing waste and increasing garment care and recycling by consumers. The decision to use woven wool for the next sustainability project was also emphasized. After the presentation, an external practitioner who had experience of similar events led the rest of the workshop. The concept of creativity was scrutinized and a short drawing and story-telling exercise was performed which made all participants interact in a playful way. After the introduction came an exercise in smaller groups which aimed to interrelate practitioners from all the practices. With different background knowledge and ways of working with sustainability and creativity, they had to collaborate on different tasks. Another exercise followed which encouraged ideation, how to implement new ideas, identify customers’ needs and wants and make a novel idea unique. All groups were encouraged to contribute to each other’s work. Smaller group discussions were alternated with whole group ones to share the knowledge among all the practitioners.

Allowing practitioners from different practices to collaborate on sustainability and innovation brought up innovative suggestions. Above all, questions were raised regarding consumer practices and how to engage consumers for them to understand what sustainability is and therefore how to co-create sustainability with consumers. Hence, how to align Designing, Producing and Selling with consumer practices about sustainability seemed to be the main issue to resolve in an innovative way. Visiting practitioners suggested searching for ways to align the practice memory created mainly within Producing, particularly about the supplier practices, with consumer practices. The argument was that if knowledge about the whole production chain were not communicated, consumers would not understand the novelty of this project. The importance of aligning retail practices was also emphasized. Hence, the pre-planned agenda of the workshop, including the exercises, provided a situated event for different practitioners to improvise about current issues on how to further interrelate practices from suppliers and buyers to reach out with an innovative product in an innovative way. Innovative suggestions were brought up, such as gamification to enhance communication, using smart textiles that encourage sustainable behaviours, and making consumers pre-pay for a garment that would include repairing or updating it according to new trends. All suggestions related to how to align all practices from the suppliers to the end consumers. In these, the three practices of Designing, Producing and Selling acted
as intermediaries through their innovations in sustainable fashion and connected process and service innovations.

About nine months later, on October 26, 2015, a further situated workshop took place in the same location, this time only consisting of practitioners within the sustainability project. In this workshop, the developments and upcoming events of the project and the ideas from previous workshops were further elaborated on. Another situated workshop occurred within Fashion-Y, in between these two situated events, on sustainability related to design, sourcing, and patternmaking. The aim of that situated event was that sustainability project practitioners from Designing and Producing would share their knowledge with their Fashion-Y counterparts not participating in the project.

The number of interrelated workshops illustrates how different situated events were connected via practices through time and space. Emerging ideas were taken to different constellations to be further developed while expanding practice memory. Even though innovative activities emerged at different events and triggered new suggestions at other events, they were still interconnected and contributed jointly to the reorganizing of bundled practices. At the workshop held on October 26, 2015, the project leader made a summary of the previous event:

> A lot of good things came out of the workshop held by design, patternmaking, and sourcing. The overarching issue to solve is time. Everything from the time to do new things, the time to run new projects, the time to sufficiently take care of each garment, and the time to choose and work in depth with suppliers. That was a major issue, which I think this group needs to remind itself about too, i.e., when there is not enough time. The holistic view, to make sure we see the larger picture, was also brought up as a very important issue. It is very easy to get stuck on certain tracks and lose the whole. The number of styles and colours provided in each collection was also discussed. Is it possible to keep colours from one collection to another and is it possible to combine materials in men’s and women’s wear to reduce waste? How many suppliers do we want to work with? That was also an overarching discussion. Even though the sustainability project was the basis for the workshop, the discussions ended up including the whole organization. Knowledge sharing was also brought up. How can we share internally within this group, but also with other companies, employees, suppliers, and customers? How can we involve our customers in our journey?

- Head of CR, Fashion-Y (2015-10-26)

Innovative suggestions that emerged during the creative brainstorming workshop were further elaborated on in this situated events within Fashion-Y. Importantly, a major difference between these events was precisely the aspect of time. The innovative suggestions that emerged during the creative brainstorming-
ing meeting were not considered within a particular timeframe, but as innovative ideas that could materialize at any time in the future. When elaborating on the ideas within Fashion-Y, the scarce resource, time, seemed to be the major obstacle to align the work within the three practices of Designing, Producing and Selling and their surrounding supplier and consumer practices. Due to this, consumer demands and requirements on suppliers were brought up in this situated event.

Fashion-Y had very high quality demands for the materials they used in terms of pilling, colours and other finishing of fabrics. These demands were time consuming but also less sustainable. To reach certain requirements for a fabric, a variety of chemicals were needed. Thus, a discussion ensued about how to communicate this to the customers, and how to make customers care for their garments in a different way to make their garments last longer without the additional chemicals. For instance, would consumers accept that a garment pills, knowing that it contains fewer chemicals? Again, a way to align consumer practices was requested, sharing the knowledge gained from the supplier practices. The conventional use of chemicals in textiles provided routinized behaviours in consumer practices of what to expect and how to care for garments. However, if chemicals were reduced, there had to be a change in how to wear and care for garments. Otherwise, consumers would probably consider that the garments were made of poorer quality since they would look more worn out after washing and use. Hence, practice memory created during the sustainable product development was not aligned with consumer practices. The changes in skills, materials, and engagements reorganized all three practices in a way that dissolved the previous alignment with these consumer practices. Therefore, an innovative way to create a new alignment, similar to how the new alignment was created with supplier practices, was sought. Ways to better align the three practices of Designing, Producing and Selling were also searched for, so as to have the time for reflection and knowledge sharing regarding these issues from one collection to another.

An innovative idea that emerged during the creative brainstorming meeting was to make clothes last longer by providing mending and adjustments in style. It was also suggested to create a customer community in which customers could share stories about their garments and provide each other with ideas on how to update previous styles. As these suggestions were brought up again, new ideas emerged in an improvised way on how these innovative activities could be connected. Hence, service and product innovations were proposed in order to align consumer practices to the project. Restyling earlier garments had already been put forward, to highlight how some of the classic styles of the brand could also be updated to today’s fashion. It was also mentioned that
a customer community could relate to second-hand shopping, both within consumer practices and by setting up this between Fashion-Y and their customers at retail locations.

One practitioner in the finance department had worked on an Excel model to calculate a new price for the upcoming wool garments which included a ten year warranty. Hence, the engagements element of sharing information with customers gained from new skills triggered a novel tool to calculate the cost of this initiated service innovation. Even though everyone liked the idea, how it differed from the customer care Fashion-Y already provided was raised. The brand was already generous, through activities in retail practices, helping customers who had their clothes damaged in one way or another so what was actually innovative in this additional feature of the garment? Hence, the knowledge sharing among the practices of creating fashion and distributing fashion was not aligned. This issue then brought up a discussion on how to define a warranty on fashion garments, why ten years, and if there was a risk that customers would care less if they knew the garment could be handed in and mended. That lack of care would be counter to the initial service innovation intended to make customers care more for their garments. As these questions arose, improvised answers were given, such as asking customers to give feedback when handing in a torn garment, to make the extra effort into a learning process too, to increase the understanding of how and to what extent customers care for their garments and thereby increase knowledge about the kind of information that needs to be communicated to customers. This is illustrated from observation recorded of the workshop on October 26, 2015:

Retail store manager: Then it will be a learning process for us too, what do customers actually think? What do we have to improve? They might not come back because they don’t dare to, but if we particularly ask for it they might have something to say that we want to know
Product developer: With these garments, we can have a dialogue. If they return them for a service, we could get something in return, then we could receive answers to these questions. Then it is not only about us losing money, but actually receiving something in return. Then we reach a dialogue and it doesn’t require that much from them (customers) to tell us: No, but after half a year it felt like this...
Retail store manager: But they would feel very important and involved in our...
Product developer: So that is why we make it ten years, because we’re conducting a survey, which will last for ten years and, and this is our choice. That would give so much more than...
Head of Sourcing, Woven: Exactly.

This shows how the ten year perspective was justified in an improvised way, an issue that was questioned because of the customer care already provided by retail. In relation to this, it was also elaborated on how to communicate the
feedback back to the customers and to dare to be transparent with things that went wrong, turning it into a learning activity. As the practice memory expanded, these issues could be solved in an improvised way in situated events such as this one. Even though the service innovation of ten years of warranty was a novel idea, the engagements, skills, and materials of the situated practices provided frames for how to communicate the innovation. Even though some issues remained unresolved after this particular workshop, the practice memory created among Designing, Producing and Selling created new frames to continue the project in both planned and improvised ways. As practice memory expanded, new innovative solutions could emerge to alter or create routinized activities for sustainable fashion.

Due to the issue of customers’ care of garments, a new interaction emerged between Selling and Producing. These two practices were usually not very interconnected during mundane work. Selling had already started a project about educating customers in caring for their garments, which included care tools provided in retail stores. The elements skills and materials were changing to provide good advice and equipment for their customers. However, it turned out during this situated event that this knowledge was already available within the Producing practice, i.e., how to perform these activities, but there were no events which allowed for this knowledge to be shared within the organization. Instead of spending time reorganizing new skills, Selling and Producing found an opportunity to share these skills to improve the materials intended for their customers and to appeal to their engagement elements of caring for their garments and also of sustainability itself. Hence, the situated event brought up a way to align the two practices through skills and materials, thus sharing the work of the innovative activities.

The interaction between the three practices Designing, Producing and Selling in this situated event ended up in a decision to continue with the ten years’ warranty project, but now with stronger arguments. However, there were still some questions on how to align consumer practices to sustainable fashion. While it was suggested to also align supplier practices with consumer practices, through the situated practices of Designing, Producing and Selling, how to organize this was not decided. The supplier practices were gradually aligning with Designing, Producing and Selling within Fashion-Y, but they had to find a way to convey this knowledge to the consumers. Innovative ideas emerged, such as creating a community, which also related to the emerging idea about a digital wardrobe providing a second-hand shop and enhance customer interactions.

Hence, several activities, which required the reorganizing of several practices and knowledge sharing among these practices was the result of all these workshops. The project that had made a modest start as product development now
included and affected the three practices Designing, Producing and Selling together with a number of supplier practices and progressively with consumer practices too. The supplier practices and the situated practices Designing, Producing and Selling were aligned through intercorporeal interactions and the gradual integration of different practices. Through the experiential knowledge created within the first project of Tencel garments, the second project of wool garments emerged. Throughout the reorganizing of practices, new practice memory was co-created, which provided new routinized ways of planning and improvising with the aim of further aligning practices in innovative ways. Hence the product innovation of creating sustainable fashion became interrelated with service, process, style, management and organization, and further product innovations.

7.11 Conclusion

In both Fashion-X and Fashion-Y, it is evident that what has been described in the previous literature as different innovation types do interrelate with one another. This finding contradicts the argument that such innovation types as, e.g., product and process or technology and non-technology innovations should be considered separately, as suggested by researchers including, e.g., Ansari et al. (2014), Becheikh et al. (2006), Garcia and Calantone (2002). In the present study, some innovations were planned for and frames were created for innovative improvisation, and improvised activities were performed to solve a problem or act on an opportunity in an innovative way. Planned and/or improvised innovations changed the interrelationships among elements and practices, which, in turn, influenced practitioners to respond to these changes in innovative ways, providing further changes in elements, practices, and innovations. This explains how innovation types are intertwined and affect each other in how they evolve in daily work. For instance, the planned management and organizational innovation in Fashion-X interrelated with stylistic innovations due to the process innovation of a new assortment structure. Change in materials, due to restrictions on the fabrics available, change in engagements, due to increasing the commercial influences on designs, and change in skills, due to the analysis of statistics, provided by the change in the element of materials through a new ERP software are all illustrations of this interrelation among innovations. The stylistic innovations together with the process innovation of coordinating a work schedule interrelated with service innovations such as a denim guide and the process innovation of adding workshops on key looks in the line releases affected several practices, and practitioners innovated as a means to respond to these changes, which then paved the way for further iterations of innovative activities. The analysis detailed in this chapter and the examples summarized above hence support the argument that several innovative activities are interrelated with and affect one another deliberately.
and non-deliberately (e.g. Chia & Holt, 2006; Damanpour & Aravind, 2012; Roberts & Amit, 2003), through practices.

The interrelationship among innovation types also explains how the development of innovations overlaps. What has been recognized as the implementation phase of one innovation may simultaneously be the creation phase of a connected innovation, which makes these activities mutually dependent on each other. Hence, this study also contradicts the view on innovation as depending on either creativity and improvisation or planning and routines in different stages of an innovation process. Previous scholars have argued that the ideation of innovation depends on creativity and exploration whereas the implementation of innovation depends on different activities based on routinized and planned work (Baregheh et al., 2009). However, his study shows that implementing an innovation requires novel ways of performing and interrelating practices, which supports the argument that creativity and improvising on routines are important for the implementing and diffusion of innovations too. For example, in Fashion-Y, the product innovation required implementation of process innovations for their supplier practices. This implementation required routinized planning, creativity and improvising through intercorporeal interactions. Practice memory co-created from the situated practices of Fashion-Y and their supplier practices provided routinized frames from which both planning and improvising emerged to manage the innovative activities of producing sustainable fashion. Another example in Fashion-Y was the implementation of the ten years warranty on the wool garments. Arguments for this emerged in an improvised way among practitioners from different practices during a situated workshop. Hence, creativity and improvisation were necessary together with planning to implement the service innovation of a ten year warranty in the retail practices. Similarly, the creative ideation phase needed to be accompanied by routinized planning. The creative workshops for idea generation, provided in Fashion-Y, always had a planned agenda with a purpose, based on the co-created practice memory within the situated practices. This enabled situated creative settings.

Through common practice memory, created by and creating well-developed routines, innovation also was spurred on from negotiating and combining shared knowledge in different, novel ways. Even though to innovate it was important to have a common plan, openness, improvisation, and deviation from initial plans provided opportunities for innovative activities that interrelated with the initial plan. In other words, to respond to unforeseen events, this improvisation and revision of previous plans were needed to still manage what was initially sought. This was evident in both Fashion-X and Fashion-Y with regard to their alignment or misalignment with supplier practices. Problem solving was habituated in the creation of fashion, hence, improvising and innovating was also routinized in this industry context. From a practice-based
approach, this study suggests that the tensions between ideation and implementation, and improvising and planning, belong to the practices and that these are not really conflicts but situations that trigger new innovations. Planning and improvising on routines are hence evident in both ideation and implementation, which blurs the sequences of different characteristics and activities when innovating.

The present study, within the fashion context, shows that innovations depend on the alignment among practices. Whenever there is misalignment, planned or improvised solutions are sought to realign the practices. The empirical evidence from the present study shows that the alignment or misalignment between practices often depends on activities related to time, quantities, collaboration, and communication. The seasonal creation of collections creates industry-specific routines that depend on the interrelation of the three practices Designing, Producing and Selling, and supplier and consumer practices, which spans across organizational borders. These constellations are usually aligned when deadlines are kept, and a certain quantity of fabrics, accessories, and garments are ordered. However, both Fashion-X and Fashion-Y have provided examples of misalignment, which caused obstacles to stylistic innovations, process innovations, and service innovations. Smaller quantities of orders come with a higher price, which made it hard for these brands to compete with the general production speed and pricing for clothes. This shows how the alignments and misalignments include several practices. If there is misalignment with supplier practices, this also has an effect on aligning with consumer practices. Thus, effective collaborations and communication across practices is a key to managing everyday routines and the innovative activities linked to these routines.

The importance of collaboration and communication also supports the argument that innovation does not merely depend on one single individual (Tanggaard, 2012). Analysing innovation from a practice perspective, activities are governed by practices, and individual performances depend on the organizing of practices. In all three practices, Designing, Producing and Selling, there was a turnover of practitioners. However, the practices were still performed according to the way they were organized, but with an individual touch. This phenomenon contributes to the explanation of how and why practices change and innovative activities emerge. Further, by overlapping the elements of practices, the alignment among practices shows that innovation is context dependent. Innovation also depends on the shared knowledge, contributing to practice memory, of practitioners performing these practices.

Tables five and six summarize some of the interrelated innovations in Fashion-X and Fashion-Y. All these examples of innovations show that both
smaller adjustments to existing activities as well as larger changes can be explained in similar ways, i.e., as different outcomes of the relationship between planning and improvising on routines. The examples also show how the innovations are intertwined as they emerge and develop. As the elements change, the reorganization of practices triggers innovative responses, which, in turn, create practice memory, further changes in the elements, and innovative responses. The themes that were derived in the analysis of the two cases do overlap to some extent. In both cases, the importance of practice memory, aligning with surrounding practices, experience, co-creation, and imitation are highlighted. However, each case also has its situated particularities to explain how innovation may come about in a fashion setting.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Fashion-X: Innovations as the refinement of practices</th>
<th>Examples</th>
<th>Planning</th>
<th>Improvising</th>
<th>Routines</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Innovation as the integration of the old and the new</td>
<td>• Assortment structure: Product/stylistic innovation, management innovation, process innovation</td>
<td>• Statistics, number of styles, concepts, collaborations</td>
<td>• Adding and reducing colours and styles during the production due to problem solving and gut feelings</td>
<td>• Combining creative tacit knowledge with statistics on previous sales</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aim: Combine the planned and the improvised</td>
<td>• Workshops on key looks to focus sales: process innovation, stylistic innovation</td>
<td>• After the first workshop, key looks were planned in advance for each line release</td>
<td>• At first improvised in response to a request</td>
<td>• Becoming routinized on all line releases</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Innovation as creating and sharing practice memory</td>
<td>• Enhancing structure, presentation, and styles of collection: Product/stylistic innovation, process innovation, service innovation</td>
<td>• Situated events to share knowledge and enable improvisation and innovation</td>
<td>• Adding, reducing, and changing styles and structure to enhance the collection</td>
<td>• Small adjustments to the routinized way of creating a collection</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| Aim: Plan for improvisation and adjustments to routines | • A denim guide  
• Changed sizes in denim  
• Focus sales / avoid cancelled orders  
• Share PR | • Decisions were made to resolve issues | • Through shared knowledge | • Creation of new work routines |
| Innovation as imitation | • New ERP software: process innovation, organizational innovation | • Adjustments were made for industry agreed on activities | • Negotiating own interests, interpretations and knowledge with regard to use and output | • Refinement of routines and contributions to ERP content |
| Aim: Refine routines created elsewhere | • Reusing styles: stylistic innovation | • Based on previous success, changes to original can be planned | • How to interpret success? Changes to original can be improvised | • Practice memory enhancement as collections build on one another |
| Innovation as aligning with surrounding practices | • Coordinating a schedule for each collection: process innovation | • Smaller and larger deadlines throughout the work of a collection | • Smaller adjustments to improve routines, instant problem solving | • New routines to manage time, industry-specific routines |
| Aim: Plan for unforeseen events and have the time for problem solving | • Allowing the time to work on special issues: denim line, core garments | • Making the choices about garments | • Problem solving | • New routines to focus on product groups |

Table 5: Examples of interrelated innovations in Fashion-X and how they relate to planning, improvising, and routines
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Fashion-Y: Innovation as the perfection of everyday practices</th>
<th>Examples</th>
<th>Planning</th>
<th>Improvising</th>
<th>Routines</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Innovation as intercorporeal interactions</td>
<td>• New ways to interact with suppliers</td>
<td>• Meetings with main suppliers</td>
<td>• Creation of frames for improvisation</td>
<td>Co-creating practice memory to create routines</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aim: to meet and discuss new solutions to make conventional production more sustainable</td>
<td>• Reducing textile waste (not always successfully): product innovation, process innovation</td>
<td>• Asking about possible options</td>
<td>• Different ways of placing patterns, changing the design or width of fabric, creating something else out of waste</td>
<td>• New ways to communicate ideas and develop the practice memory</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Reducing surrounding waste</td>
<td>• Asking about possible options</td>
<td>• Asking questions about some materials</td>
<td>• Reduction of packing materials</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Innovating through the integration of different practices</td>
<td>• Finding a new name for sustainability project: process innovation</td>
<td>• A situated event to share the practice memory</td>
<td>• Elaborating on purpose, values</td>
<td>• A common way to expand communication</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aim: to align all practices from supplier to consumer</td>
<td>• Vouchers for returning used garments: service innovation</td>
<td>• Generating options for how to engage customers in recycling</td>
<td>• Ideas on how to manage this practically</td>
<td>• Exchange of used garments for vouchers in retail stores</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Innovation through experiential knowledge</td>
<td>• New product development</td>
<td>• Making another round of sustainable fashion, based on experience from the first product development</td>
<td>• Information from created practice memory from previous products</td>
<td>• Continued follow-up meetings on how to divide and collaborate on activities and knowledge</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aim: to use the knowledge gained to continue innovations</td>
<td>• New grey sustainable neck labels</td>
<td>• Planning to resolve issues in the previous project</td>
<td>• Newcomers imitating and interpreting practice knowledge</td>
<td>• Using the new labels</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Care products</td>
<td>• Making consumers care for their garments</td>
<td>• Information based on practice memory</td>
<td>• Care products and education in retail stores</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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Table 6: Examples of interrelated innovations in Fashion-Y and how they relate to planning, improvising, and routines

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Innovation as expanding practice memory</th>
<th>Sustainable way</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th>Gathering and furthering work on emerged ideas</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Educating consumers on sustainability e.g. through gamification, customer communities</td>
<td>• Workshop on how to innovate for sustainability</td>
<td>• Shared background knowledge: different experiences inter-related to ‘brainstorm’</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Create routinized ways for both improvising and planning</td>
<td>• Ten year warranty on the garment: service innovation</td>
<td>• Education for increasing customer care of garments</td>
<td>• Previously emerging customer education and care information</td>
<td>• Inclusion in the new wool garments</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
8 Discussion: Revisiting the framework of innovation as planned and improvised routines

This study set out to investigate innovation in a creative context, the fashion industry, to understand the interrelationships among innovations and the way planning and improvising on performed routines contribute to innovative activities in daily work. Building on previous research into innovation, three points of concern were noted, which guided the present study. First, it was recognized that there has been until now a fairly limited view of the relationships among different aspects of innovation and how combinations of innovations affect one another. In addition, it was also noticed that there has been a lack of empirical studies on how and why innovations interrelate in everyday work. Second, separating innovation types and their processes emphasizes models which explain innovations one by one and mapping them in different stages. This approach commonly assumes reflexive and purposive actions by different individuals to realize a desired outcome. This assumption leaves out of the account the mundane, sometimes improvised, activities which also account for innovation. It also ignores how innovating activities are intertwined and processes overlap. Third, the creative fashion setting contributes to innovation studies by adding a different context in which work activities may be organized in quite diverse ways from e.g. high-tech industries. The fashion industry also provides a research site in which stability and change interrelate due to the cyclical production of fashion collections.

Although research on innovations in non-technological settings has attracted some increased research interest, the focus has mainly been on one type of innovation at one time, providing less attention to the interlinking among innovation types (Damanpour, 2014). However, new ideas, organizational designs, products, and business processes are under production everywhere, which suggests that innovations result from ongoing crossbreeding (Gergen, 2015). For this reason, a relational, practice-based approach was adopted in the present study to analyze innovations as part of everyday work practices and to illuminate the relationships among innovations through planned events and improvisations. In this chapter, the findings of the present study and the framework tentatively suggested in Chapter Three are revisited to generate a
further developed framework that explains the interconnections among innovation types, outlining the ways in which planning and improvising on performed routines contribute to innovation.

8.1 The elements of practices: How and why they change

The framework suggested in Chapter Three assumes that in order to understand the background knowledge that enables routinized, planned and improvised activities, the elements of a practice play a large role, organizing sayings and doings. In agreement with, e.g., Nicolini and Monteiro (2017), the current study proposes that practices do not depend on any hidden forces or mechanisms. It is the practices and their elements that sustain or change over time. Understanding practices as constituted of elements lends support to previous practice theory researchers (e.g., Reckwitz, 2002; Schatzki, 1996; 2012; Shove et al., 2012; Warde, 2005). The present study identified the elements of skills, materials, and engagements to explain the organizing and reorganizing of activities performed in the fashion context under study. These elements were found in all three practices of Designing, Producing and Selling. What follows is a discussion of the empirical findings in terms of these elements, which illustrates their impact on innovation.

The specific skills required in the present research setting for the routinized way of producing fashion included knowing how to create, produce, and distribute a fashion collection. It was also found that the specific skills of artisans were important to both sustained organizing of the practices as well as the novel reorganizing of them. It was suggested in the framework developed in Chapter Three that skills might have to change due to an innovation, develop in an innovative way, or generate innovations. In the three practices, in both case in this study, skills have changed for all these reasons. For example, the new ERP software introduced in Fashion-X required a change in skills in how to make use of this new management tool. In Fashion-Y the new knowledge about all the processes required in the production of garments, gained from the sustainable life cycle analysis, advanced skills for this purpose in an innovative way. The skills gained in both these examples further generated innovations, such as how to develop the assortment structure in Fashion-X and how to scrutinize and assess the creation of fashion in a sustainable way in Fashion-Y.

These ways in which skills have changed also explains the interrelationship among innovations since new skills may address new ways of working, developing products and services and searching for new methods of performing
already existing tasks. Skills may also be deeply rooted in practices, which might hinder the occurrence of innovative activities. In both cases in the present study, these skills were often related to time such that knowing how much time it takes to perform a certain activity helps to make a decision not to proceed in an innovative way.

There are different opinions as to whether materiality merely mediates human activity or is constitutive of practices (Gherardi, 2017). The framework in Chapter Three assumed materials to be constitutive of practices. Thus it was suggested that materials not only organize practices, together with skills and engagements but also contribute to linking practices together. The findings of the present study strengthen these arguments. In the fashion setting, materials organized and reorganized activities within practices, enabling innovations and manifesting as innovative outcomes. This point is essential in explaining innovations as interrelated. Understanding materials as something outside of practices would make it harder to explain how, e.g., a product innovation interrelates with the reorganizing within and across practices and other innovations. In addition, materials such as communication tools and garment instructions mediate activities within and across practices (together with skills and engagements), which also explains how innovations are interrelated among diverse practices. In the fashion industry, materials such as technology, fabrics, and garments are constantly present and organize everyday activities. In the follow-up meetings and workshops performed by practitioners in this study, practitioners met around these materials and they created novel items using the materials.

According to Loschek (2009), drawings or models can be viewed as inventions, whereas the finished fashionable garment can be seen as the innovation. However, the transformation of materials, from garment sketches to a garment ready for sale, also explains the interrelationship among innovations since this process links stylistic innovations with production and process innovations and everyday problem solving during the creation of a fashion collection. Materials are hence relevant to innovation since any new tool, an absent object, or a change in technology may trigger improvisation, contribute to planning, sustain or alter routines and, thus, generate innovations. It is also important to recognize that certain tools and technologies may sustain the organizing of practice in a way that restricts innovation. Due to cost, unavailability, and marketing issues, the choice of materials that go into fashion production is limited (Atik & Firat, 2013). In both Fashion-X and Fashion-Y, restrictions of options were usually connected to the requirement of a minimum order of certain materials such as fabrics and accessories for the garments and the consequent cost. For this reason, a substantial proportion of everyday problem solving in this setting is organized by materials.
In the framework as presented in Chapter Three, it was suggested that ends, emotions, or moods guide practitioners to perform a practice. Engagements organize and reorganize practices since they both hinder and encourage actions depending on what seems to be the right thing to do in a situated event performing a certain practice. The dynamics of engagements are related to strong beliefs which guide actions together with changed or alternative views of these engagements. In the fashion context, aesthetics and design activities are indeed organized by engagements, such as a desire to create new designs. Engagements are important to create novel products and to work in innovative ways. In Fashion-Y, the engagements towards sustainability were essential to any development of a sustainable product. The new work routines of Fashion-X were also driven by engagements related to establishing a balance between artisanship and business. This also explains how a change in engagements interlink innovations since this connects several activities aimed at a certain end. However, as both cases in the present study show, engagements may also hinder innovation in this setting. This is because engagements related to a brand specific expression or gut feelings may be related to habituated behaviours within a certain expression or to an emotional resistance towards change. Different kinds of engagements such as those primarily oriented towards economic or artistic values may also create conflicts that could hinder or encourage innovations in fashion.

This study lends support to previous research suggesting that practices change due to changes in their elements. According to Shove et al. (2012), Schatzki (2001) and Reckwitz (2002), practices change when new elements are introduced or combined in new ways in practices or in their surrounding practices. Such changes in elements could either happen due to the alignment with a new practice or if an overlapping element of a related practice changed. In Chapter Three’s framework it was suggested that understanding practices as interlinked provides a way to study and analyze innovations not merely as stand-alone types and stages in a particular process but as interrelated performances, which is implicit in the organizing and reorganizing of practices. Changes in each element contribute to the relationships among innovations. But, a change in one element also affects the other elements of a practice. It is also evident from the findings in the present study that some of the elements have more of an overlapping character, whereas other elements are practice specific. For instance, the ERP software introduced in Fashion-X contributed to a change in materials in all three situated practices. This element further contributed to the alignment among practices, since it constituted part of a new way of organizing all practices. In this way, it also had an intermediary role among innovations. However, the change in the element materials changed the more practice specific skills and engagements in each situated practice such as how and why Designing created their styles or how and why Producing engaged with different suppliers.
To some extent, each garment in a fashion collection is an example of a stylistic innovation since there is a change in aesthetics compared to the previous collections (Caulkins et al.; 2007; Tran, 2010). Every collection has its own main theme, sources of inspiration, colours, and shapes. There are also functional innovations included in fashion product innovations such as new fabrics and improved fittings, to make the garments more attractive, not only in an aesthetic, fashionable way but also in a user-friendly way. According to Capetta et al. (2006), stylistic innovation contributes to the technological aspect of product innovation, adding an aesthetic and intangible feature to the process of product development. The findings of the present study support this argument; the functional and the aesthetic aspects of product innovation are related and constantly present in creating a fashion collection. For instance, the product development of core garments in Fashion-X included functional innovation in terms of the purpose of the garments and materials used, but the stylistic expression, for the garments to be recognized within the brand, was emphasized too. In Fashion-Y, the sustainability aspect can be related to the functional part of product innovation, but it was also emphasized that the sustainable fashion produced would be a stylistic innovation in line with the expression of the brand.

Apart from understanding and interlinking stylistic and functional innovations, this study further contributes by interrelating other types of innovation to understand fashion product development. Previous research on innovation within the fashion industry mainly focused on product development without relating it to how and why ways of managing and organizing are innovative too. While it has been suggested that the creation of fashion involves a number of activities and individuals (Christopher et al., 2004; Hauge, 2012; Saviolo & Testa, 2002), research has not provided a holistic view of how these activities actually relate to various innovation types in daily work. The findings of the present study show how process, organizational, and service innovations were interrelated in the creation of a sustainable garment in Fashion-Y and how the management and organizational innovation of Fashion-X was also linked to process, product, and service innovations due to the reorganizing of practices. This calls into question earlier approaches which focuses on innovation types, without acknowledging their interrelationship.

Much of the previous literature suggests that innovation should be compartmentalized since different types of innovations have different processes and determinants (Becheikh et al, 2016; Garcia & Calantone, 2002). For instance, it is suggested that non-technological innovations such as management and organizational innovations are initiated, diffused and assessed in different ways compared to technological innovations such as product or service innovations (Ansari et al., 2014; Birkinshaw et al., 2008; Damanpour & Aravind,
However, the framework developed in the present study proposes that through the reorganizing of practices, routinized work is altered, and consequent innovative suggestions and solutions are in themselves a means to change. Hence, by understanding how the elements of skills, materials, and engagements are linked within the three main fashion practices of Designing, Producing and Selling, and affect one another, a certain innovation does not need to be understood through a certain process, but as dependent on interrelated practice activities conducted through planning and improvising. Practices are a linked together through situated events such as meetings in which materials (including flowcharts, the ERP software, and garments), engagements (that drive an expression or the urge to communicate), and skills (accumulated and developed) organize performed activities. At all these intersections, innovations also affect one another. Changes in elements reorganize the practices and this reorganizing modifies and adds to practice memory, which sets the frames for planning and improvising. From this perspective, separating product innovation, process innovation, management innovation or stylistic innovation are less important since they affect one another within the organizing and reorganizing of practices.

Implementing one innovation, e.g., a new way of working, may require new skills, new materials or the altered use of materials, and thus change or create new engagements for work routines. These engagements might, in turn, instigate the need for new materials, which requires new skills to work with them, and so on. Expertise may develop around one of the organizing elements: specific skills, materials or engagements. This expertise may, in turn, have an effect on innovation since the related activities may change the organizing of practices. The dynamics of elements invite innovative responses, which again changes the organizing of practices. From this point of view, the distinction between innovation as a process and an outcome also becomes blurred. Instead, what can be referred to as an innovation outcome (e.g., a certain product) can be viewed as part of the process development of other innovations and vice versa. For instance, in Fashion-X, the implementation of the ERP software can be understood as a management innovation, including new organizational structures (Alasoni, 2009; Birkenshaw et al., 2008; Hammel, 2006). However, from a practice-based approach, this software is also seen as a material element, contributing to changes in practices, which further contribute to, e.g., stylistic innovations. In the same way, the distinction commonly made between radical and incremental innovations is masked in a practice-based approach too. Conway and Steward (2009) hold the opinion that radical innovations can be understood as a series of incremental innovations, which is substantiated by this study’s findings as well. From a practice-based approach, this is explained by the interrelatedness of innovations through the reorganizing of practices. In this way, the distinction between the incremental and the radical is less relevant. In the present study, a chain of incremental
innovation is made through ongoing problem solving in mundane work and improvised solutions based on previous experience.

Apart from recognizing that practices change due to their elements and that they are interlinked, this study also furthers the understanding of why elements change by providing two different examples. In both organizations, the reorganizing of the practices of Designing, Producing and Selling emerged over time, but the changes in elements occurred in different ways. In Fashion-X the links within and among each situated practice had to be strengthened to align with surrounding practices in order that the company survived, whereas, in Fashion-Y, the links had to dissolve to promote new alignments with surrounding practices to develop sustainable garments.

In Fashion-X, the links between the elements had to be strengthened to create new practice memory and working routines aligned with the routinized activities provided by the fashion industry to adjust to the timeframes of production and manage increased sales. Activities required to create a fashion collection were already performed, but they were not clearly organized by the situated practices of Designing, Producing and Selling. When the links between the elements of each practice were strengthened, the interrelationships among the three practices at the centre of the study were gradually aligned too as activities were redistributed among the practices. The change in materials, and above all the introduction of a new ERP software provided novel routinized ways of working in all three practices. The choice of materials, such as fabrics was also restricted to increase revenue. The engagements element changed too. The desire to create fashionable clothes already organized the practices, but means to reach a broader audience, and develop clearer structures and concepts also emerged in this reorganizing of practices. Skills were also altered due to the large turnover of practitioners, carrying different experiences and knowledge from previous work sites. These skills, together with engagements and materials, were negotiated through situated events within each practice but also among the three practices.

The dynamics of the three elements in this example provided further background knowledge for Fashion-X. In other words, this co-created practice memory. Strengthening the links within and among the practices and developing practice memory provided frames and common understanding among the practitioners to define innovative plans ahead of time. This was accompanied by improvised innovations to advance routinized work, not only within the practices Designing, Producing and Selling, but with the surrounding supplier and consumer practices too.

In Fashion-Y, changes in elements of the practices emerged since the links among the elements had to dissolve. The routinized work of creating a fashion
collection proceeded as planned within the organization and they had established collaborations with supplier and buyer practices. However, in order to generate new work routines for a sustainable product innovation, the routinized work of producing fashion was questioned, negotiated and altered, which triggered the elements of skills, materials, and engagements to change. The engagements towards producing fashion altered, which related to changes in the elements skills and materials. While these changes in elements emerged from collaborations and knowledge sharing with the surrounding practices of suppliers and consumers, the changes in Designing, Producing and Selling also promoted a change in these surrounding practices. The initial collaboration with suppliers, to manage the product development, emerged from the element materials, i.e., the project was centred on how and why to choose fabrics and accessories to increase sustainability. These materials reorganized the work routines and continuously strengthened collaborations through sharing and developing skills and engagements. This caused a change in all elements through which novelty in the related practices emerged. This reorganization of practices also modified and added to practice memory, through which innovative activities could emerge both in planned and improvised ways.

Both examples show how the surrounding context, or the seamless integration of practices (Shove et al., 2012) had an effect on the three practices in the centre of the study. Even though the reorganizing of the practices emerged in different ways, initial planning was required to innovate to align with surrounding practices. However, throughout the reorganizing of the practices, planning and improvising on routines were intertwined, interrelating both innovation types and the way innovations unfolded. These two examples answers Hui (2017), who argued that a vocabulary to explain how practices change needs to be developed. The findings of the present study suggest that practices change since their elements change, and they do so since the links between the elements either need to strengthen or dissolve, depending on the situated practices and their surrounding context, to align with surrounding practices.

8.2 Change among practices: Alignments and misalignments

In order to understand how innovations come about in relation to other innovations within and across practices, the interrelatedness among practices is an important aspect too. According to Saviolo and Testa (2002), a fashion organization’s competitive success depends, to a large extent, on collaboration throughout the production pipeline. It is acknowledged that such cooperation
among fashion brands, their suppliers, and consumers together create innovative solutions in the making of fashion (Hauge, 2012; Tran et al., 2011). A practice-based approach contributes to an explanation how these combined efforts enable innovation or not. The framework laid out in Chapter Three posits that practices are performed across organizational borders. In doing so, it provides a way to study how the combinations of the internal and external activities of an organization contribute to both establishing and altering organizational work routines. It has been acknowledged in previous research too that innovations may involve a number of organizations and span over different levels such as the individual, team, organization and industry (Anderson et al., 2014). This is particularly emphasized through a process of innovation in which an innovation may be developed within one organization and further diffused and implemented in other organizations (Anderson et al., 2010). The present study acknowledges that innovations span different organizational borders and levels, but adds to this reasoning by elucidating how innovations are created, implemented, and diffused within and across practices. Adopting the practice as the unit of analysis reduces these different levels since elements of several practices may overlap. Such overlapping interrelates performed activities in different locations through imitation, improvisation, and planning.

The importance of alignment among practices was exemplified through the three practices at the centre of the study, Designing, Producing and Selling. In Fashion-Y, the Selling practice was not aligned with Designing and Producing at the start of the innovative sustainable project. This initial absence negatively affected the project since their contribution had been expected. However, as the Selling practice eventually aligned with the other practices and co-created practice memory of sustainable production, consumer practices were also related and affected and affected the emergence and development of innovations. In Fashion-X, work activities had to be redistributed among the practices, which required far more interconnectedness between all three practices to share the knowledge that was initially mainly organized by Designing. In this way, each practice was reorganized in accordance with the other practices creating fashion collections, both within Fashion-X and in surrounding constellations. Because the three practices of Designing, Producing and Selling were also interrelated to supplier and consumer practices, situated events took place in which innovative responses were required. However, the findings of the present study further highlights that the mundane collaborations across organizations contribute to innovations, not only for products but also to service, process and organizational innovations. The example of Fashion-X illustrates such collaboration with distributors and wholesalers, which also mediated consumer practices in addition to Fashion-X’s own retail practices by the focus on increasing sales. In Fashion-X, the alignment among the situated practices of Designing, Producing and Selling included distributor initiated process innovations such as workshops on key
looks in situated events such as line releases, service innovations such as the
denim guide, and service and process innovations such as new sales tools.

Innovations also emerged through the reorganizing of practices in their search
for new alignments. In Fashion-Y, the emphasis was on collaboration with
supplier practices due to the sustainable fashion product development, which
eventually also led to some integration with consumer practices. Both organi-
zations invited their co-working organizations to take part in their planned
innovations, letting them know about the opportunities, visions, and threats.
These collaborating organizations were also important in developing further
innovations, both planned and improvised. Hence, the alignment of practices
within the fashion industry is highly important to create and develop innova-
tive activities. Not only did the studied organizations try to affect their sur-
rounding supplier and consumer practices, they were also interested in collab-
oration to gain direct and indirect experience from these practices to enhance
practice memory. These closer collaborations caused new participants, such
as distributors or sustainability consultants, also performing other practices to
contribute to innovative activities within Designing, Producing and Selling.
Their experiences of participating in similar practices within other fashion
brands also show the relationship between imitation and innovation among
practices. Even though practices are situated, they also span across organiza-
tional boundaries to other sites through embodied interactions or technology
intermediating practitioners at different locations. Hence, the present study
supports and illustrates the argument by Nicolini and Monteiro (2017) that
practices are joined together when they are performed at the same time or by
being bound to one another in different ways, both harmonious and conflict-
ing. These findings also strengthen the argument that innovations are collec-
tive performances, depending on the combination of the surrounding context
and situated events (Heath et al., 2000; Warfield-Rawls, 2008).

However, the misalignments that sometimes occurred with supplier practices
could hinder stylistic innovation, which would then also negatively affect the
alignment with the distributors, due to cancellations of styles. The intercon-
connectedness among practices also explains why practices competing for the
same resources, such as time, space and practitioners, may be less aligned or
may hinder innovation. One practice may be dependent on activities per-
formed within another. However, these situations may also hold a seed to in-
novative activities since they have to be compromised and resolved in, for the
moment, the best possible way. The fashion business is a large, diverse and
global sector containing both traditional manufacturing and creative sectors
(Aspers & Skov, 2006). The routinized seasonal production of fashion (Jack-
son, 2007), depending on the alignment of several industry practices, provided
several examples of how practitioners and practices integrated in both con-
fllicting and harmonious ways. For this reason, the particular setting in this
study, the fashion industry, contributes to the understanding of innovation by providing examples of situated events when tensions arose between the orientations of commerce and artisanship or routines and creativity, which had to be resolved in innovative ways. Tensions and inconsistencies were created within and among practices from misalignments between elements, practitioners, and practices. However, the resolution of these tensions often triggers the expansion of practices and novel ways of performing a practice or new alignments between practices (Nicolini & Monteiro, 2017). When tensions were negotiated, such as working through how to keep the expression of artisanship while managing margins and sales, practice memory was also co-created.

Adding to the explanation of the relationships among practices as suggested by Blue and Spurling (2017) and Nicolini (2017), this study finds the elements organizing the practices contribute to the understanding of successful or less successful alignments. Two main obstacles to innovation within the fashion industry are related to time and the number of produced garments. Both organizations struggled with deadlines and minimum quantities. Large fashion companies produce fashion through economies of scale (Hines & Bruce, 2007), which have altered some of the routinized behaviours in supplier practices within the industry. This situation makes it difficult for smaller, mid-segment fashion brands to keep up with the expected sufficiently large orders. This permeates everything from buttons and labels to ready-made garments and has an effect on collaboration with both suppliers and buyers, which was exemplified in both Fashion-X and Fashion-Y. Hence, these industry routines caused situations in which practices across organizations were not aligned, which hindered collaborative innovations. However, striving towards alignment caused situations that required innovative responses to manage collaboration, communication, time and quantities. Although industry routines have to be imitated, to some extent, some are harder to adjust to, which causes obstacles to innovations. Fast fashion not only affects the number of orders. Mid-segment fashion brands such as Fashion-X and Fashion-Y also struggle with their competition since it keeps the general prices on garments low (Sundberg, 2006). Hence, within consumer practices, there is an understanding about the cost of fashion, which to a large extent is coloured by the standards set by fast fashion producers. Even though mid-segment fashion brands are not competing merely on price, the number of orders and margins had an effect on the organizing of Designing, Producing and Selling in the fashion brands in this study. These examples illustrate how the situated practices are also connected and affected by the surrounding context constituted by various situated practices. This also adds to explaining the complexity and multilevel character of innovations as suggested by Anderson et al. (2014).
The ability to capture situated events with a practice-based approach has informed and influenced the analysis of the micro-dynamics of routines and institutional contexts in previous research (Feldman & Orlikowski, 2011; Parmigiani & Howard-Grenville, 2011). However, a pure practice-based approach interrelates sayings and doings based on the practices performed without referring to external explanations such as logic and institutions. While, e.g., Lounsbury and Crumley (2007) and Labatut et al. (2012) suggest that new practices are created or changed to explain innovation, they also suggest such practices are dependent on institutions and belief systems. These studies, although lending partial support to practice theory, hence do not consider that the larger context can be studied through practices alone. Understanding practices as part of something larger, such as an institution, does not use the full explanatory power of a practice-based approach, understanding practices as a seamless integration of their interrelations and alignment, or misalignment.

Building on a practice-based approach in, e.g., routine studies, it has been claimed that stability and change can relate to the same process (e.g., Feldman & Orlikowski, 2011). These studies usually focus on the micro routines in a certain organization. However the fashion industry provides a research site in which routines are performed across several organizations, and these are interrelated through the alignment among several practices. For this reason, the fashion context, in the view of a practice-based approach, also explains how routines performed in situated events are interrelated to a larger context, and in this way innovations are connected together. The examples provided from the present study hence strengthen the argument suggested by Nicolini and Monteiro (2017) that there are no hidden forces or mechanisms explaining change in practice, but it is the practices and the links between them that create the context for the elements of skills, materials, and engagements. This shapes the way practitioners act when performing these practices. When practices connect and influence one another, different qualities within these elements may influence and contribute to innovation, but it is the practices and their interconnections that define these qualities.

The organizing elements skills, materials, and engagements create background knowledge that guides practitioners to perform practices. This background knowledge develops as practices align, misalign or change. To explain the background knowledge required to both plan and improvise, the framework suggested in Chapter Three lends support to the concept of organizational memory (Moorman & Miner, 1998; Walsh & Ungson, 1991), which includes the frames of reference, routines, and structures that contribute to the knowledge within an organization and its collectively held beliefs, behaviors and artefacts. The findings of the present study developed this concept to be understood as ‘practice memory’. Since it is acknowledged that practices may span across organizational borders, it is suggested here that this memory does not belong to one organization, as suggested by the concept of organizational
memory. This is also a way to explain how industry specific knowledge spans across organizational borders through practices. Hence, practice memory, in this setting, creates the routines and structures that contribute to the knowledge within and across practices and their organizing skills, materials, and engagements. The concept of practice memory hence aids to relate situated practices with their larger context and, therefore it helps to explain how innovations are interrelated within and across practices in situated events and with industry specific knowledge. It is argued by Obstfeld (2012) that the way new activities actually get started in organizations is not fully explained merely by the routines themselves. Practice memory adds to the explanation of how new activities and routines are connected. As practice memory expands, it also creates routines and background knowledge for improvisation.

The studies conducted by Cillo and Verona (2008) and Capetta et al. (2006) both compare stylistic innovation strategies in relation to the size and experience of the fashion brand. They suggest that the designer-led search for innovation, which applies best to the two fashion brands in this study, starts from references to past collections in terms of materials, decorations and ideas. However, these studies do not explain how experience, knowledge, and references are used, not only in the actual designs, but throughout the whole creation, production, and distribution of a collection, and how the stylistic innovations relate to other innovations also relying on this experience, knowledge, and references. Practice memory aids to connect the tacitly creative brand specific expressions including routinized ways of performing surrounding activities, while expanding and informing that memory. Hence, practice memory also provides a foundation for other innovation types such as organizational, service, or process innovations, interrelated to the creative expression.

Practice memory was continuously created in both Fashion-X and Fashion-Y even though the purposes for this were different, to some extent. The refinement in practices for the management and organizational innovation in Fashion-X emerged due to the need for creating a common practice memory influenced by fashion industry specific ways of performing practices. In Fashion-Y, the practice memory was also created in relation to surrounding fashion creating practices, in which conventional performances were questioned. This gradually created practice memory in Fashion-Y often set the frames for workshops and follow-up meetings. In these situated events, a frame based on background knowledge was planned in advance to provide an opportunity to improvise and solve specific issues or learn among practices. The knowledge accumulated during these situated events provided further background knowledge for improvising and planning. These emerging ideas were further improvised on and interrelated to other innovative activities connected to sustainable product development and expanded practice memory.
The concept of practice memory implies that such a co-created memory belongs to a practice or bundles of practices, which may span across organizational borders. In the fashion industry, the industry routines, based on seasonal production and consumption contribute to the practice memory. As well, the practice memory is also expanded or consolidated by practices outside the fashion industry. This is evident in collaborations created between Fashion-X and surrounding organizations sharing the same engagements to promote one another. Similarly, in Fashion-Y this is shown in their collaborating with organizations on how to communicate about sustainability. Hence, practice memory creates routinized behaviour, a common understanding of how to perform activities within and across practices. The organizing of practices is also in motion. Elements change which require innovative responses, based on the practice memory. This is hence a mutual relationship: as practices change, new practice memory is created. The created practice memory further contributes to new routines, which provides the experience to both improvise and plan innovatively.

8.3 Practices as shared performances: Responding innovatively to change

Practices are collectively performed activities. Even though the purpose of performing a practice is sameness, a practice is at the same time reproduced since people together adapt, improvise and imitate on every novel occasion (Nicolini, 2013; Warde, 2005). In both Fashion-X and Fashion-Y, problem solving was an ongoing activity in everyday work. While some situations were new and required an immediate response, most situated events were guided by practitioners’ previous experience of similar situations. This provides a way to understand innovation as ongoing activities, not created by an individual mind, but through the collective actions organized by practices. Both Fashion-X and Fashion-Y experienced a turnover of practitioners due to changes in positions and work tasks. Experienced practitioners were accompanied by or replaced with newcomers over time. Even so, the practice-based approach made it possible to follow activities and how they evolved regardless of whether certain individuals continued to perform certain practices or not. Instead, when studying innovations, the dynamics and turnover of practitioners were part of the explanation for how and why innovative activities were either hindered or took place.

Even though practices are collectively performed activities, it is also recognized that each person holds a unique way of carrying out practices, which
addresses some of the critique towards a practice-based approach for neglecting individual performances. Practices change due to changes in elements and practitioners respond to that change. The framework developed in Chapter Three rests on Reckwitz’s (2002) understanding of every individual as a unique crossing point of practices and bodily-mental routines, which provides every practitioner with a unique set of experiences. This was evident in the present study in Fashion-X since almost all practitioners had the experience of performing the practices from previous situations in other fashion brands. In this way, they brought learned skills, materials and engagements when refining the situated practices in their new position in Fashion-X. The relationships they built with their distributors was also a good example, since the distributors were carrying out similar practices but in other practice constellations with other fashion brands. In Fashion-Y, practitioners gathered in situated events related to the development of the sustainable product. However, they also performed other practices within the organization for creating fashion collections, and engaged in practices for sustainability outside the organization. Fashion-Y was also engaged in other research projects in which production of sustainable textile were in the centre of attention, they joined workshops related to the subject, and presented and shared their own experiences outside their own organization. In this way, they were part of nexuses of practices that expanded practice memory for the development of their own sustainable product development too, and, they became unique crossing points, which influenced change in all three situated practices Designing, Producing and Selling. The experience each practitioner gain from performing different practices are important to how they imitate and improvise in relation to other practitioners.

Even though innovation is related to something new and imitation is about performing sameness, the two concepts are also interlinked, since practices are enacted and re-enacted on every novel occasion. Learning a practice is to a large extent about imitating more experienced practitioners. As explained in Chapter Three’s framework, experienced practitioners may impart their knowledge to newcomers. However, the findings have illustrated that new practitioners might also try to do things differently, which makes this an active negotiation of interests, interpretations, and knowledge (Alkemeyer & Buschmann, 2017), which can, in itself, be innovative. This was evident in the situated events and the follow-up meetings. The shared practice memory created a common ground to guide improvisation, planning, and decision-making. This background knowledge could also create a kind of inertia that made work proceed without much novelty due to collectively agreed ways of working. In both cases, these situated events became more formalized over time as the groups progressed to become more coherent and routinized activities were settled. But even in their more routinized forms, decisions were the outcome of both improvisations relevant to the meeting subject, and planning, which
progressed work in a related planned and unplanned innovative way. This also explains how the tacitly performed knowledge becomes more explicit as practice memory expands and are shared among practitioners. Through imitation and improvisation, practice memory is learned and questioned while routines are created. Innovation and imitation hence relates to the negotiation between previous routines and novel ways of working.

Both planned innovation projects, in this study, faced some resistance in the beginning when the reasons were clearly understood. This was especially apparent when negotiating about the ever-scarce resource of time, which was both a reason to innovate, but also an obstacle to developing innovative activities. Change in practice is time consuming and some of the more experienced practitioners, who were comfortable with their habituated way of proceeding work routines, within the given time frames, saw the changes as interfering with their own routinized ways of working. However, some of the more experienced practitioners also welcomed the changes, since they saw how it would be beneficial in the longer term. As new practitioners entered the practice constellations, they could question how things were performed and bring new experience to these situations. One such example was the development of grey neck labels in Fashion-Y, a product innovation that emerged due to a new practitioner questioning the habituated way of using white neck labels.

The framework suggested in chapter three lends support to Dreyfus and Dreyfus (2005) to explain how skills are acquired, and by that how a practitioner learns to perform a practice and eventually reach expertise. However, the findings of the present study suggest that the reorganization of practices and the development of practice memory also made the practitioners, regardless of their previous experience, appear as both proficient performers and experts, according to the skill acquisition model of Dreyfus and Dreyfus (2005). In order to respond to the changes in the practices, the practitioners had to use reflexive calculated plans to adjust to their surrounding suppliers’ and consumers’ practices. They understood what had to be done, and created plans accordingly. In Fashion-X, the planned for innovations of a schedule and the structure of the collections required planning to create practice memory, to adjust to the surrounding practices of the fashion industry. During situated events such as the tollgate meetings when practitioners of all practices interacted, they shared their expertise and intuition based on previous experiences. Even though they had to adjust to the routinized cyclical production of fashion, they were able to improvise routinely due to co-created practice memory. These improvised refinements included changes in designs, services to support sales of the collection and developing collaborations with suppliers and buyers. New routines emerged, or were prevented, mainly due to the scarce resources for which all practices competed for, time, quantities and practitioners. The reorganizing of practices in Fashion-Y for sustainability created a
similar situation in which practitioners can be viewed as both proficient performers and experts. While they had the expertise of producing fashion in a way that was well aligned with surrounding practices, changes in the creation and production of garments had to be executed, which required learning new ways of performing and collaborating within and across practices. This can be related to the change in the element engagements, which was important in all practices involved, to progress the sustainable product development. Fashion-Y initiated collaborations, which enabled improvised innovations, but they were also new to the reorganizing of practices that was needed to produce and communicate sustainable products. Thus the plan-based initiatives dependent on rules and regulations were linked with the intuitive way of creating fashion. These two examples further add to the skill acquisition model of Dreyfus and Dreyfus (2005), also accounting for the effect of the surrounding context. These new integrations with surrounding practices contributed to the situation in which reflexive learning and intuition based improvisation could co-exist and jointly contribute to practice memory. This supports the argument by e.g., Fløysand and Jacobsen (2010) and Heath et al., (2000) to account for the surrounding context and to Kamoche and Cunha (2001) that innovation is not only about reflexive planning nor improvisation, but a combination of the two.

Dreyfus and Dreyfus (2005) suggested that the experts do not follow any rules, but just do what normally works. Even though the expert may reflect on a certain situation, this is done through intuition rather than calculative rationality. However, in the present study, it appeared that calculation and gut feeling were intertwined. The collectively created practice memory provided a way to plan and improvise routinely and also to improvise when applying routines. This was exemplified in Fashion-X with the creation of the new assortment structure. Calculated decisions based on previous statistics provided by the ERP software were intertwined with the intuitive gut feeling of creativity. In Fashion-Y, new skills about chemicals in textiles provided calculated rules about which fabrics and accessories to use, but creative intuition still guided what to create out of these materials. Chapter Three’s framework also lends support to Glaveanu’s (2012) contention that expertise is an important condition for a higher level of creativity since an expert does not have to pay as much attention to the rules and norms as the novice, instead, refining routines in an innovative way. In both Fashion-X and Fashion-Y, routines were refined in innovative ways, but the refinement depended on the combination of previous experience and a novice’s way of performing the re-organized practices in novel ways. Hence, the situated practices Designing, Producing and Selling were performed by the experienced practitioners, but due to the on-going changes in elements of the refined practices, the practitioners could not only rely on their expert intuitive judgement, but combined their experienced intuitive ability with the calculative and rule based methods at hand.
In the situated events when responding to change in practices, the present framework suggests that improvisation aids in explaining innovation, since improvisation emphasizes the *ongoingness* and situated novelty in mundane work performed by individuals. However, improvisation does not contradict planning, it is rather considered complimentary performances to planned activities (Kamoche & Cunha, 2001). This argument is further strengthened by empirical evidence which illustrates the connection of planning, improvising, and practice memory. Instead of viewing an innovation as a process starting with certain activities performed by a certain type of individual, and then continuing with different types of activities performed by other individuals with other characteristics, this study shows that planning and improvising are interrelated through all the innovation activities performed by practitioners as they carry out interlinked practices. Pre-mapped stages, separating innovation types and their processes, tend to describe innovations based on desired outcomes (Damanpour & Aravind, 2012), in which the generation of innovation emerges from loose organizing and creativity whereas the implementing of innovation depends on structured organizing (Mirvis, 1998). However, it is also suggested that these models do not consider the way innovative activities emerge in an unplanned and improvised way (Chia & Holt, 2006). This study adds to the understanding of innovation, as suggested by Anderson et al. (2014), by interrelating planned activities with improvisation and integrate idea generation and implementation. For instance, implementing an innovation requires both planning and improvising just like the ideation of an innovation depends on both planning and improvising. And further, the implementation of one innovation can simultaneously generate new innovations, as the present study provides several examples of.

Even though innovation can be seen as a means towards a change, the present findings contradict a linear, rational view of it, supporting an iterative view in which everyday intended and unintended activities are carried out in a multi-level, complex and spontaneous way, as suggested by, e.g., Fløysand and Jacobsen (2010). In the present study, it was evident that creativity and improvisation were as equally important as planning as innovations emerged and developed. This is demonstrated by the implementation of the new work routines among the situated practices of Fashion-Y and their supplier practices. Through planned intercorporeal interactions, adjustments to routines were also improvised to manage the alignment sought for. Planning was also performed at workshops held in Fashion-Y aimed at collectively improvising to find innovative suggestions to current problems or opportunities. These workshops had a planned agenda, which guided the practitioners’ improvisational activities at these situated events. The findings of the present study hence show that both planning and improvising are supported and guided by the practice memory, while also creating and expanding it.
8.4 An improvisational, practice-oriented approach to innovation

According to Aspers and Godart (2013), fashion can be influenced, but not planned or imposed. Hence, they define fashion as ‘an unplanned process of recurrent change against a backdrop of order in the public realm’ (p. 185). It is yet this unplanned process, in which change and innovations are ongoing, that must be produced, packaged and sold to successfully manage fashion business. Creating fashion is dependent on industry specific routines, but the present study also concludes that these routines are continuously contested, which illustrates that creativity and innovation are performed routinized in this context. Hence, each practice performed is dependent on the alignment with other practices due to common ways of performing activities, but at the same time, this alignment requires adjustments accomplished by innovative responses in situated events.

Planned innovation is based on intended changes ahead of time as a means to change in the surrounding context (Ansari et al., 2010). Examples of planned innovations are intended novel work processes, implementing a new software, or new product development. However, as the findings of the present study shows, intended plans of innovations create opportunities or obstacles that require practitioners to improvise. Opportunities or obstacles are due to change in the organizing of practices and/or the integration of practices and practitioners in time and space. Due to these changes and improvisation based on practice memory, innovative activities are hindered or emerge. Emergent innovations may trigger new planned for innovations, or develop or change ongoing innovations in an unplanned way. For instance, new product development can trigger an application or routine different from what was intended at the start. In this case, the product might be altered, or new work routines might emerge. An additional use of a product, that was not anticipated, may arise due to experience and improvisation, or an intended new work routine involving suppliers or buyers might have to be implemented in a different way than intended due to the collaborative relationship and alignment among practices.

Based on the findings of the present study, planning, improvisation, and routines relate in different ways and by that interrelate innovations and the way they progress in practices. The findings of the present study extend the practice-based framework developed in Chapter Three by suggesting three different ways in which planning, improvising, and routines interrelate to explain innovation in a fashion producing setting from an improvisational, practice-based approach: (1) Planned innovation and improvisation (2) Planned situated events and improvisation (3) Mundane work routines and improvisation. Common for all situations is that innovation as planning and improvising on routines are collective actions that depend on the elements skills, materials
and engagements organizing activities of all practices involved and the integration among practices and practitioners. This study had a focus on three practices Designing, Producing and Selling, and their interrelatedness, but it was also evident that the alignment among practices surrounding these three practices contributed to change in elements and by that the relation between innovating activities contributed to both the process and the outcome of innovations. This practice-based framework also shows that an innovation cannot be traced to one single trigger or mechanism, but depends on several activities organized by practices which are collectively performed. The findings highlight situated events in which change in elements, and alignments or misalignments among practices can be traced, and further how practitioners respond to these situated events in innovative ways, guided by, but also contributing to practice memory. Table five and six in Chapter Seven provide an overview of some of the innovations performed in Fashion-X and Fashion-Y. The tables illustrate how innovations interrelated, but also how planning, improvising, and routines related to these innovations. The explanations of how innovations interrelated in Fashion-X and Fashion-Y overlap to some extent. For instance, the importance of practice memory, alignment among practices and interactions among practitioners, through imitation and improvisation, are exemplified in both cases. However, each situated event is unique, providing examples and explanations of how innovations interrelate in mundane work, performing practices.

In Fashion-X innovations were expected and planned due to the refinement of practices, in which the links between the elements had to be strengthened. The interrelation among the innovations is further highlighted through the integration of the old and the new, in which calculation and creative tacit knowledge were both planned and improvised. Through the creating and sharing of practice memory routines were created to further both planning and improvising. The relationship between innovation and imitation explains how planning was based on industry routines, but also how routines were refined in an improvised way. These industry routines were also important to manage routines within the situated Designing, Producing and Selling as they were aligning with surrounding practices.

In Fashion-Y, innovations were also expected and planned due to the perfection of everyday practices, in which the links between the elements had to dissolve. The interrelationship among innovations was exemplified and explained through intercorporeal interactions, in which practitioners met to co-create practice memory to enable both planning and improvising. The importance of the integration of different practices also relates to practice memory and how it was shared to enable both planning and improvising. As practitioners plan and improvise on routines, they create experiential
knowledge, which is based on, but also expand practice memory within situated events relating to one another.

These interrelationships between planning and improvising explain how innovative activities and routines mutually depend on one another through the performance of practices. They also explain how the routinized work in situated events and industry specific routines interrelate in mundane work to explain how innovations are intertwined. Below, these interrelationships are explained one by one only for clarity. Hence, they should not be considered as separate processes, but connected through the organizing and reorganizing of practices in everyday work.

8.4.1 Planned innovations and improvisation

When the surrounding context changes, if adjustments have to be made to adapt to the surrounding context, or if situated events require a change in the surrounding context, the links within and among practices either have to strengthen or dissolve to (re-)align with surrounding practices. The change required in the elements of practices trigger planned innovations as a response to that change. Hence, planned innovations require an understanding of the situated practices, but also the surrounding practices performed in other sites. Planning involves creating practice memory in accordance with the routinized behaviours that need to be adjusted or adjusted according to. Planning is also tacitly informed by previous experience related to this practice memory. In both Fashion-X and Fashion-Y, innovative responses were planned to alter routinized behaviour. However, the planned activities also allowed for improvised activities based on both individual experiences, but above all on collective knowledge sharing as the plans were performed along the reorganizing of practices. Since planned innovations depended on changes in all three elements in all three practices, the innovative activities can be explained as incremental. By viewing the planning of innovation as incremental, it is also possible to understand how different innovative activities interrelate and affect these innovations over time. This adds to the findings of Walker (2007), suggesting that innovations cannot be understood as stand-alone when incremental, also emphasizing the surrounding environment and imitation. The framework of the present study suggests that to fully understand the reorganization of a planned innovation, it cannot be viewed in isolation, but the activities that support the innovative work must be viewed as innovative too, together with other innovations and their activities. The elements organizing activities within practices account for the open, emergent novel responses to new constantly changing circumstances. Hence, innovation, even though it is planned for, cannot be explained only by an ideation, an implementation, and diffusion phase (Mirvis, 1998), but these phases are intertwined with associate innovations and their activities too, in which creativity and structured organizing are
mutually dependent. These interrelated innovations can also be planned in a similar way or unfold as described below.

Routinized behaviour may also hinder any planning or improvisation towards innovation. On several occasions the context specific routines were so permeated that certain performances cannot be altered. Well established alignments among practices create a frame certain activities, such as the cyclical production and scale production. However, these situations create innovative activities too. Situated practices have to find solutions to adjust to these situations, to find a way to align with their surrounding practices. The links between the elements of the situated practices might have to strengthen or dissolve in these situations. They create opportunities for new collaborations, hence new alignments among practices and practitioners.

8.4.2 Planned situated events and improvisation

Another example of the interrelationship between planning, improvisation, routines, and innovations is when situated events are planned for to encourage improvising on existing routines and ongoing innovative activities. Examples of these situated events are workshops and follow-up meetings. Planned frames are created based on practice memory, but with a view to encourage improvised activities to create and develop innovations in collaboration. Practice memory is shared among practices, but interpreted in different ways by different practitioners and by that practice memory also expands, connecting situated events, both tacitly and more explicitly. In these situations, innovations emerge as a result of collective learning based on the experience of different practitioners performing different practices. Improvisation is commonly understood in relation to fortuity, and the unexpected solutions to events usually appearing within a narrow time frame (Kamoche & Cunha, 2001) or as acting without the benefit of elaborate prior planning (Cunha et al., 1999). However, this way of combining planning and improvising suggests that improvisation can also be structured, or intended based on planning in accordance with practice memory. It is not possible to anticipate what the outcome of improvisation in these situations will be, but the planned situated events provide background knowledge and guidelines for practitioners to act on. These situated events interrelate innovations, but the events also interrelate creative exploration with more structured exploitation. For example, initiated innovations may be part of practice memory and novel ideas based on these innovations may in turn have implications for the intended innovation, and for further innovations interrelated to these particular innovations and other ongoing innovations due to re-organizations and/or alignments with other practices. Since innovations interrelate, the routines required to implement one innovation may be dependent on a creative development of another innovation. Hence, the procedure of a certain innovation is not linear through time as many
of the sequential innovation models suggest (Mumford, 2000), but depends on several situated events interrelated through time and space. The development of an innovation may be hindered at one point, but due to the development of another innovation, initiated in a situated event such as a workshop, the reorganizing of practices and alignment among practices, including shared practice memory, may have a positive effect on both innovations. Further improvisation and accumulated knowledge might be based on the improvised routines. The interrelationship between planning and improvisation depends on the practices involved, knowledge sharing through overlapping elements and the ability to act on the new collectively generated knowledge.

8.4.3 Mundane work routines and improvisation

The findings of the present study show that even though activities are planned, these plans may be altered, mainly due to misalignment among practices or practices aligning in unexpected ways. In these situations, improvisations are required to revise previous planning. Improvising depends on practice memory provided by the practices involved, and this practice memory is created through continuously negotiation, communication and collaboration among practitioners. In situations when there are no routines or when routines need to alter, planning and improvisation relate to create innovative activities too. Background knowledge to form common frames is provided by previous experience and imitation of other practices or practitioners, which also contributes to expanded practice memory.

Improvisation in these situated events can be described as a special case of innovation, which occurs due to the specific circumstance, non-planned. This is similar to how Glaveanu (2012) explains how improvisation, in time, become innovation. The examples from the present study show that this situated improvisation is not only part of the initiating phase of innovation but in the implementing and diffusion phase of innovation too. However, both plans and improvisation may also hinder innovation, when they do not correspond to the organizing of practices or the alignment among practices. Innovation in this view is a renewal of activities performed in situated practices, such as development and use of new working methods, products or services, or routines. In this definition, renewal is created through planning and improvisation in everyday work, which is considered to be the intertwined driving forces of innovation. The above explained interrelations between planned and improvised routines to innovate also relate back to the practices in which these activities are performed. Changes in elements cause practitioners to act in planned and improvised ways. The ways practitioners act towards these changes depend on the interrelation among practices and the interrelation links back to the organizing of practices.
8.5 In sum

Chapter Three’s framework was grounded in a practice-based approach proposing that planning and improvising on routines in fashion depends on the organizing of practices, practitioners’ ability to respond, imitate, learn, plan and improvise, and the integration among practices through space and time. The results of the present study provide examples of how and why elements change, how and why practices reorganize, how and why practices align or misalign, and how and why practitioners respond to these changes in innovative ways through a combination of planning and improvising. Further, the concept of practice memory was developed to explain how co-created background knowledge is generated to carry out practices, plan and improvise on routines. As these actions are performed, situated events are intertwined with industry specific routines, spanning across organizational borders through interconnected practices. This also explains how innovations and their processes not only interrelate with one another but how this interrelationship depends on practitioners, through time and space, collectively contributing to innovations. Practices change and practitioners respond innovatively, which, in turn, affects practice memory and the alignment of practices, thus reorganizing of practices. Innovation is a means to change, combining or altering activities and things at hand. This framework suggests that routines, plans, improvisation, and innovation cannot be ordered in a continuum, as separate entities, but are embedded together with one another. Accordingly, plans, improvisation, and innovation do not break with routines, they are grounded in forms of routinized actions organized and performed in situated practices.
9 Conclusion

The aim of this study has been to propose a framework to explain the interrelations among innovation types, and in what ways planning and improvising, in relation with each other, contribute to innovation. A theoretical foundation based on a practice-based approach was developed in Chapter Three. In Chapter Eight, this was further developed into a framework informed by the findings of the present study to explain how and why innovations emerge and develop through a practice-based approach.

The developed framework has theoretical implications for explaining innovation in a fashion context, which will be discussed in this chapter. These also contribute to a practice-based approach for understanding innovation. In the present study, three practices were at the centre of attention: Designing, Producing and Selling. They were all organized and linked to one another by their organizing elements skills, materials, and engagements and through their practitioners and other surrounding practices. Together these practices organize routine activities and planned and improvised innovations within the creation of a fashion collection. Understanding the creation of a fashion collection in terms of three different, yet interdependent practices made it possible to study some activities in isolation and also to see how such activities interrelated with and influenced one another. It provided an opportunity to study each situated practice and the relationships among practices, which creates a larger context. Viewing the making of the collection as a set of practices further made it possible to challenge the opinion that the finished collection is the primary outcome of performing work as, e.g., both innovative processes and products emerged. Through practice interactions, new solutions and ideas were continuously elaborated on, refined, and routinized.

The results, based on empirical evidence from a fashion setting and this practice-based approach, rest on two assumptions that distinguish this study’s findings from traditional models of innovation. Firstly, innovations are not compartmentalized into types, but interrelate with and affect one another through practices. Hence, in order to understand product innovation, related management, stylistic and/or service innovations should also be considered. Secondly, the way innovations unfold is explained through an iterative ongoing reorganizing of practices rather than as sequences of ideation, implementation, and commercialization that can be anticipated ahead of time. That is to say, an
innovative process cannot be determined from one point in time to another, but can rather be explained as the organizing and reorganizing of practices. Such organizing and reorganizing of practices are not linear but it does involve interrelated activities through space and time. The background knowledge, or practice memory that guides planning and improvising, is created within each situated practice, but is also created through the alignment of practices, hence the whole context in which practices are performed. Collaboration among practitioners also contribute to practice memory by sharing previous experiences, acting in situ, and creating plans or trying out improvised activities together. Changes in the elements skills, engagements, and materials happen due to situated events and as these elements are changing, they shape the reorganizing of practices. This reorganizing also expands practice memory, which, in turn, provides the ability for further planning and improvising on routines, i.e. for innovation.

9.1 Fashion: where innovation types merge

The fashion context has specific characteristics. This particular industry was chosen because of its relevance for theory, as an additional example complementing the commonly studied technologically based innovations (Damanpour & Arvind, 2012), and due to the call to understand innovation in such a creative context (Tran, 2010). Previous research within the fashion industry has contributed to an understanding of the aesthetic aspect of product innovation, which is also termed stylistic innovation. (Capetta et al., 2006; Caulkins et al.; 2007; Tran, 2010). The present study contributes to these studies by providing explanations about how stylistic innovations are also related to other innovations, which furthers the understanding of how and why innovation happens in this particular setting in mundane work. Hence, the present study also responds to the request by, e.g., Damanpour (2014), Roberts and Amit (2003), and Walker (2007) to further explore the relationships among different innovation types.

The findings of the present study have provided many examples of how stylistic innovations are intertwined with management, organizational, process, product and service innovations. To fully understand how and why, e.g., a stylistic or a management innovation is introduced and implemented in a fashion setting, this research points to the importance of appreciating the interconnectedness of product, service and process innovations. For example, implementing a product innovation may depend on the initiating and implementing of a management innovation or the other way around. In Fashion-X, the initial management and organizational innovation was linked with the process innovation of creating a new assortment structure for fashion collections and a schedule, adjusted to industry routines, to work within. This
new structure and schedule affected stylistic innovation since the practice memory created both restrictions and novel ways of working as the elements of skills, materials, and engagement changed. This reasoning supports the argument of Lam (2009), that management innovation could be essential for creativity, learning and change and that it serves as a precondition for other types of innovations such as technological or stylistic ones. It also contributes to an alternative understanding of the unfolding of innovation. Instead of perceiving innovation as a set of processes comprising different sequential stages with certain associated characteristics in each, the present study of fashion creation illustrates how both planning and improvising are part of the emergence and development of innovations and that these arise through their interconnections to other innovations.

The combination of routine cyclical production with a creative context, which is so typical a feature of fashion, implies an ongoing tension between stability and change which is mediated by routine everyday work. It is also an industry which includes tensions and paradoxes, such as the contrast between commercialization and artisanship, routines and new ways of producing, long lead times and rapid changes in styles, and new technology and established production techniques, to name a few. The evidence shows that these tensions are not opposite forces, but mutual constitutive in everyday practices. They all influence mundane problem solving, which, in turn, causes changes in practices, and innovations as a means to deal with that change. In this way, tensions create both routines and innovations since they contribute to the reorganizing of practices.

It is also evident that the creation, production, and diffusion of fashion do not depend on single individuals and activities but on the relationship among all actors and their performances, which collectively contribute to fashion and innovation. Hence, these findings contradict an individual view on innovation, but support, e.g., Heath et al., (2000), Tanggaard (2012), and Warfield-Rawls (2008), who agree that the situated context, in which individuals work together, explains how innovations emerge and develop. The present study contributes with empirical examples of actual practices of creating fashionable clothes, the working routines involved, and the innovative work these routines allow due to, or despite, its tensions. The fashion setting further contributes to an understanding of how these situated events are related in a larger context. The long production and distribution chains of fashion illustrate the interrelatedness of innovations across organizations, since alignments among the practices of a fashion collection span several organizations. Because I have taken the approach that to understanding the making of fashion one must examine the practices which constitute it, the findings of the present study suggest there is no system, logic or other mechanism that explain innovation in this context.
It is the practices, the practitioners and their interrelationships that produce fashion and its surrounding context.

It is evident, from a practice-based approach, that there is no real beginning or end in the creation of fashion collections. Activities are related back and forth through new ways of working, experience, and solutions to instant opportunities or problems, which are both planned and improvised. This also contributes to the understanding of why it is hard to separate and isolate innovation types and their processes from one another in this context. Collaboration is key, and viewing activities performed as part of practices provides a way to understand how these activities interrelate.

9.2 An improvisational, practice-oriented approach to innovation

A practice-based approach has been used in some earlier studies to explain change and innovation. This study lends support to several of those contributions. For instance, Shove et al. (2012) use elements of practices to explain change, Nicolini (2017) highlights the importance of the larger context and Yakhlef and Essén (2013) emphasize the skilled body responding innovatively to work routines. The framework developed in the present study integrates all these aspects, thus managing to explain how and why these aspects interact in mundane innovative work activities within this fashion setting. Hence, this study does not contradict previous practice-based studies on innovation but succeeds in drawing from their diverse findings and therefore contributes to further explanations on innovation, adopting the practice as the unit of analysis.

With such an approach it is possible to contribute to theory by delineating the three overarching aspects of the practice which bring about innovation: the change in elements, the alignment among practices, and the way practitioners respond in innovative ways. It is the combination of these three aspects that together form this improvisational, practice-based approach to innovation. Innovation is a means to change, combining or altering activities and things at hand. Previous process models of innovations commonly assume desired outcomes, in which the generation of innovative concepts emerges from loose organizing and creativity whereas the implementing of innovation depends on structured organizing. This study’s proposal that innovation should be understood as emerging and developing through both planning and improvising answers the critique of sequential innovation models, which is the dominant paradigm in the innovation literature (Anderson et al., 2014; Leone, 2010). By converging the ideation and implementation phases (Moorman & Miner,
1998), innovations are understood as intertwined throughout their emergence and development. This implies that creativity, exploration, and structured organizing complement one another, and interrelate what has been understood as the process and the outcome of innovations. It is through this reorganizing of practices that the sequential view of innovating is questioned. Instead, the present framework contributes to an understanding of the innovation process as interrelated with other innovation processes, which is also how innovation types interrelate.

The relationships among the elements of skills, materials, and engagements, and the way their links strengthen or dissolve provides an understanding of how activities are organized or reorganized in different ways. The findings of the present study offer two different ways of explaining why such elements change. This depends on whether the links between them have to be further strengthened or dissolved. This may have implications for practice-based studies. The reason for strengthening or dissolving the links among these elements depends on how they overlap and connect to the surrounding context, i.e., how and why practices align or misalign. This reasoning also implies that activities are not performed in isolation. They are organized by situated practices which form constellations with other practices through their overlapping elements. However, some elements tend to be practice specific, while other elements tend to interlink with the elements of other practices more readily. For instance, certain materials used for specific activities, organized within a certain practice do not have these overarching characteristics, while materials such as communication technology or ERP software span several practices, thereby contributing to explaining how and why practices align. Practice specific skills and engagements might contribute to certain tensions among practices, but the shared engagements and skills, such as striving towards increased sales or skills to communicate knowledge within one practice to other practices, contribute to the alignment among practices. Identifying practices and their elements, and how and why elements change and overlap, contributes to understanding how innovations relate to one another, both in situated events and in the larger context. While it is acknowledged that practices develop and change over time, it is argued by Hui (2017) that a vocabulary for explaining how practices vary is underdeveloped. The strengthening or the dissolving of links among the elements of practices explains the reorganizing of practices and contributes to such a vocabulary, as does the identification of practice specific elements and elements common to several practices.

Since practices are situated, most studies on change and innovation which adopt a practice-based perspective concentrate on a specific situated context. This is why practice theory has faced criticism of neglecting the larger picture
Practices within the fashion industry are situated, but this setting provides a site in which supplier, producer, and consumption practices interrelate, either through intercorporeal interactions or through mediating technology, continuously in everyday work. Hence, even though the study was conducted with three situated practices at its centre, the interrelationship and importance of alignment with surrounding practices were also evident, which thus included a larger context in explaining innovation. To that extent, the study answers some of the criticism that practice theory only takes into account the micro aspects of certain phenomena.

The above reasoning also explains how innovating is interlinked across what has commonly been understood as different levels, such as the individual, organizational and industrial levels. While it is recognized in previous research that practices are connected to one another, it is also argued that there is no complete explanation of how they do so (Blue & Spurlig, 2017). The findings of the present study show how the three practices involved in creating fashion collections are interconnected through the overlapping elements of skills, materials, and engagements, which organized their activities. It is also evident that the three practices are highly dependent on routinized behaviour within the fashion industry, based on cyclical production. Although there are no direct overlapping activities between the supplier and buyer practices, the activities performed in these two have been shown to influence one another, mediated through the three practices of Designing, Producing and Selling. The present study also provides examples of how the situated practices Designing, Producing, and Selling connected to practices outside the fashion industry and created situations in which surrounding practices had to form constellations.

The way practitioners plan and/or improvise as a response to changes in practices is informed by practice memory. This concept lends support to the concept of the organizational memory (Moorman & Miner, 1998; Walsh & Ungson, 1991), which includes the frames of reference, routines, and structures that contribute to the knowledge within an organization and its collectively held beliefs, behaviours, and artefacts. However, the findings of the present study indicate that the memory belongs to a practice or a bundle of practices. Practice memory contributes to explaining how industry specific knowledge spans across organizational borders through practices. Practice memory also explains how improvisation and planning relate to one another, by tacitly informing practitioners’ performances. In this way, the practice memory contributes to explaining how the three highlighted aspects of a practice-based approach are interrelated: the change in elements, the alignment among practices, and the way practitioners respond in innovative ways.
Planning, improvising, routines and innovation mutually depend on each other and this study has identified three combinations within them: (1) Planned innovation and improvisation (2) Planned situated events and improvisation (3) Mundane work routines and improvisation. However, these interrelationships should not be understood as three different processes. Rather, they contribute to a practice-based approach to show how innovations emerge and develop. The three different, yet interconnected combinations explain how innovations interrelate as practices reorganize and practice memory is co-created. The ways in which practitioners plan and improvise also answers to the critique of a practice-based approach neglecting the individuals that perform the activities organized by practices.

9.3 Practical implications

Understanding innovations as part of situated practices, yet interrelated with surrounding practices may have some practical implications. Although innovations may emerge in smaller group constellations, this study highlights the importance to consider the larger context. The present study suggests that the practice memory is drawn on in planning and improvising. Hence knowledge sharing, through which the practice memory can be developed, is significant. For this reason, organizations should consider facilitating environments by developing the practice memory collaboratively, which further enables planning and improvising among individuals. Even though workshops and other situated events may be time consuming, it is evident from the present study that when people with different experiences come together, they influence one another to generate innovative activities and contribute to an expanded practice memory. Such collaborations challenge inertia and open up the way to unexpected problem solving and opportunities in everyday work. In this way, this study has highlighted how to plan for improvisation, and, by that, innovation.

As indicated earlier, the evidence gained in this research also suggests acknowledging innovations as interrelated in the sense that it is not useful to only plan for separate innovation types. Innovation is not only found in clothes, but in management, organizing, and service development. In these situations, it is also important to understand how initial ideas might emerge and travel depending on the practices involved, their internal dynamics, the practitioners performing and the alignment of surrounding practices and practitioners. Hence, this study does not recommend a focus on planning about one innovation type but emphasizes the way innovations of one “type” may seamlessly contribute to further innovations of another.
Creative industries, such as the fashion industry, both supply and demand innovative solutions from other sectors (Müller, Rammer, & Trüby, 2009), which is why a study of innovation in the fashion industry also could contribute to other sectors understanding their special characteristics. Most fashion companies collaborate with external partners throughout the creation, production, and distribution of a fashion collection (Hauge, 2012; Tran et al., 2011). Understanding fashion production as dependent on the alignment of practices may have implications for other industries too, dependent on long lead times and complex, global production chains. The fashion context provides a good example of different activities all contributing, in collaboration, to a phenomenon, which can be transferred to other phenomena and contexts. Viewing larger contexts as constituted of practices provides an understanding of how and why different phenomena, such as innovation, may be progressed or inhibited.

9.4 Limitations and suggestions for further research

This study set out to study innovation based on a practice-based approach in a fashion setting. While its theoretical contributions to understanding innovations as interrelated through the combination of planning and improvising have been highlighted, some limitations need to be mentioned as well as some scope for further research.

The two companies at the centre of this study were facing upcoming, planned for changes, and were anticipating innovative activities. To that extent, these two cases illustrate what hindered and what enabled innovation in situations where change was highly sought. Alternatively, it would be interesting to study innovation in a fashion setting in which planned change was not particularly sought, to potentially shed more light on the ever changing nature of this creative setting.

This study investigated companies within the mid-segment of fashion brands, producing four collections each year. While the situated practices differed to some extent, they also shared many similarities. To add to the knowledge about Designing, Producing and Selling, these practices could be studied in luxury brands and the fast fashion industry or in larger or smaller sized fashion brands. Such studies would probably find some similarities to the present study, but also reveal other relationships among practitioners, practices, and elements within those practices. The fashion industry comprises several practices that were not within the scope of the present study and thus only briefly mentioned. For instance, fashion magazines, PR agencies, and fashion bloggers contribute to what we understand as fashion, which is highly important
to those creating potential fashion. These surrounding practices do not contribute to the physical production of garments, but to the idea of fashion. While this study has highlighted the importance of surrounding supplier and consumer practices, studies focusing on these other practices would probably enhance an understanding of the alignments of such external practices with internal ones, thus contributing to the investigation of innovation and other phenomena.

It has been suggested by Capetta, Cillo, and Ponti (2006) that other sectors depending on an aesthetic and symbolic dimension for product development, may contribute to stylistic innovation studies in contexts similar to the fashion setting. However, a practice-based approach also suggests that stylistic innovations interrelate with other types of innovations through the alignment of practices involved in product development. For this reason, it is proposed not only that stylistic innovations could be further studied in other contexts than a fashion context, but also that the interrelation among stylistic and other innovations should be further investigated in other industries too. Creative settings such as the fashion context, have certain characteristics which influence the way innovations emerge, develop, and interlink. Because of this, the present framework could be further developed, informed by findings from other industries. For instance, stable and less creative contexts may provide other explanations to how elements change, practices reorganize, practitioners respond to changes and practices are aligned. This could also inform how practice memory is co-created and developed, perhaps pointing to other relationships among planning, improvising, routines, and innovations.

Further, this framework may be useful to study phenomena other than innovation. Innovation is explained as a means to change, but other phenomena such as power, dependency, resilience, entrepreneurship, and uncertainty may also be explained as means to change. These phenomena have all been studied through various approaches. However, a practice-based approach may advance these understandings by studying the links among practices, their elements and the practitioners performing these practices. These findings may, in turn, inform a practice-based approach. In sum, the present study has contributed to previous knowledge about innovation, the fashion industry, and a practice-based approach. However, these results also open up the way for many intriguing inquiries.
Svensk sammanfattning


Den här studien antar ett practice-perspektiv för att förstå relationen mellan planering, improvisation, rutiner och innovationer. En empirisk studie av två svenska modeföretag visar hur planerade innovationer är sammanlänkade med andra både planerade och improviserade innovationer. Studien visar att den bakgrundskunskap som skapas genom samarbete och innovation bidrar till nya rutiner för hur både planering och improvisation vidare leder till innovation. Studien visar även på samband mellan det som sker på individuellt, organisations, och industrinivå för att förklara uppkomst och utvecklande av innovationer.
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