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Time Matters: Temporally Enacted Frame-Works in Narrative Accounts of Mediation

Erling O. Jorgensen

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TIME MATTERS:
TEMPORALLY ENACTED FRAME-WORKS IN
NARRATIVE ACCOUNTS OF MEDIATION

by

Erling O. Jorgensen
Master of Divinity, Luther Seminary, 1988
Bachelor of Arts, Oberlin College, 1981

A Dissertation
Submitted to the Graduate Faculty
of the
University of North Dakota
in partial fulfillment of the requirements
for the degree of
Doctor of Philosophy

Grand Forks, North Dakota
December
2002
This dissertation, submitted by Erling O. Jorgensen in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy from the University of North Dakota, has been read by the Faculty Advisory Committee under whom the work has been done and is hereby approved.

P. Swadey
(Chairperson)

James R. Antes

Janet Kelly Moen

This dissertation meets the standards for appearance, conforms to the style and format requirements of the Graduate School of the University of North Dakota, and is hereby approved.

Joseph D. Benoit
Dean of the Graduate School
Date
December 13, 2002
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Title Time Matters: Temporally Enacted Frame-Works in Narrative Accounts of Mediation

Department Counseling

Degree Doctor of Philosophy

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Date December 1, 2002
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To Karen and Kamini.

"Time matters."
ABSTRACT

Bateson’s (1979) method of double description is utilized to examine narrative accounts of participants’ mediation experiences, as a way to investigate significant change events. Comparing what changes to what remains more stable suggests that temporal differences are an indicator of contextualization, providing a framework for how meaning is made meaningful. Case studies of two of these structured interview transcripts are intensively analyzed, with triangulating measures of different logical type. Specifically, these include narrative analysis of key story points, temporal analysis of the frequency and distribution of in vivo codes to yield repetitive themes, and a modified lag analysis of codes in joint proximity to yield reliable thematic clusters. Results are integrated by means of grounded theory procedures of open and axial coding, arriving at semi-saturated categories dealing with temporal enactment of meaning-making.

A lexicon of temporal devices for the social construction of common frames of reference between speaker and listener is developed. These are partitioned into three types of temporal progression (i.e., sequence, episodic structure, and co-occurrence) and three types of temporal duration (i.e., repetition, framing, and selection / deselection). Defining conditions and exemplars of each are provided, along with further permutations, including transposition, chained incidents, rival narratives, adjacency, inclusio, asymmetrical bracketing, and chiasm. These provide varied narrative solutions to address the limited attentional focus of a listener.

An initial hypothesis—that longer duration meanings contextualize shorter—is given provisional support, in that it appears useful to construct and compare relative
durations, with longer duration lying deeper in a hierarchy of logical types. A second hypothesis— that an increase in duration means an increase in perceived significance—is not sustained, in that deselection (and thereby decreasing a meaning’s duration) can nonetheless be a significant vehicle for therapeutic change.

The study amounts to building a set of tautological linkages that “time matters,” and mapping descriptive territories such as narrative accounts onto it, with resulting increments in explanatory understanding. It is shown how participants shaped their accounts via temporality, by selecting themes, contextualizing, repeating, grouping, ordering, and weaving into stories. The tautology is reflexively applied to itself, and avenues for future theoretical sampling are suggested.
CHAPTER I
INTRODUCTION
Prolegomena

In a compelling application of fractal geometry, Gleick (1987) demonstrated how the coastlines of countries, viewed from space, can be portrayed as a small number of recurrent patterns, no matter the scale of the magnification. As the focus zooms in on smaller and smaller sections of coastline, it becomes virtually impossible to tell how broad is the current field of view. Is this a bay, a harbor, or a rocky irregular inlet that is smaller yet? And does it matter what label is applied, when a similar range of recurrent chaotic principles is generating each segment of shoreline? The camera zooms in, but the patterns remain the same.

This manuscript utilizes a similar technique to present its findings and make its case. At times the field of vision is broad, encompassing the structure of the manuscript or the contours of the study as a whole. At other times, an individual transcript or an integrated segment of an interview takes center stage. The overall direction is toward increasing magnification of the points under consideration, although at times an argument is expanded and placed in a broader context. At each scale, however, the same recurrent questions are used to explore what is happening and to portray the implications.

Five “Whats”

These questions are displayed in Figure 1 (originally generated for Antes, Hudson, Jorgensen, & Moen, 1999, p. 294, and presented in adapted form there). They are addressed in the order of a clockwise spiral toward the center, and numbered here for ease of reference, not because the order is essential. The Roman enumeration format in
the discussion is intended to deemphasize the serial element, and to enhance the parallels with Cronen’s (2000) schema for naturalistic inquiry, to be presented later in this chapter. The questions are as follows: I. What are we doing here? II. What is this about? III. What is important to self? IV. What is important to other? V. What do we do? I believe these questions can usefully frame any enterprise, whether analyzing mediation accounts, describing one’s theoretical background, or indeed writing a dissertation. The fabric of what follows in this manuscript is woven from the threads of that intuition.

In writing this manuscript, I envision the reader as part of the warp and woof of this process, since any account must be not only coherent but also persuasive. Robinson and Hawpe (1986) noted that “stories fail for two reasons: because they are incomplete . . . or because they are unconvincing. . . . The major test of a story is its acceptance by others” (p. 121). The “story” being told in this manuscript must be plausible and engage the reader, or it will fail in one of its purposes. Consequently, I include periodic reminders of the need for joint collaboration between writer and reader, in constructing an acceptable account of this research process. While the account is mine, its acceptability is up to the reader. With that as background, I turn now to examine in more detail that recursive texture of questions, which crops up again and again throughout this manuscript. Because these questions originated as a template for mediators to utilize with clients, they are framed in first-person-plural language, and that format is retained in the expansion that follows.

I. What are we doing here?

This is the contextual frame for beginning. What process shall we be using? What episode is this? What relationships of power are currently at the table, which determine how we shall proceed? What boundaries are in place? Which data should we agree to look at?
II. What is this about?

This is the substantive content. What is at stake here? How did we arrive at this point? Where exactly is “this point”? What antecedents frame the current situation? What claims are being made? As we listen to the data, what do they say?

III. What is important to self?

This is the reflexivity question. It affirms that content is always embodied. It matters to someone. Voice is important, and each person comes with his or her own voice. And content that is not already embodied will find its own embodiment. It will find pre-activated sites in the listener and cast itself in those voices. Thus, content, to be effective in its portrayal, must be anchored somewhere. Who is speaking? Whose content is this? Why does it matter to them?

IV. What is important to other?

This is the multiplicity question. It asks, to whom else does it matter? What competing perspectives are there? What are the other alternatives, and whose alternatives are they? What other voices shall we include in the conversation?

V. What do we do?

Somewhere in every discussion is the question of pragmatics. So what? What difference does this make? Having gotten here, where is here? What kind of closure can we invoke? Do we have something now that we did not have before? What does that allow us to do, and what does that forestall? How shall we next proceed?

These are the questions that are implicitly addressed—in better and worse ways—with any undertaking. Specifically, they are the questions of process, content, point of view, interaction, and pragmatics, respectively. And these are the questions that frame this study recursively, at each level of description.
A Transformative Model

These questions emerged out of a training project with which I assisted in 1997. In the Spring of that year, trainers at the Conflict Resolution Center of the University of North Dakota found themselves at a crossroads. For many years they had conducted mediation training as an interest-based (Fisher & Ury, 1981) process of uncovering disputants' underlying interests. The goal was to help the parties move toward better solutions to their conflicts than the often one-sided positions with which they came to the table. These trainers had utilized a seven-stage model of mediation (adapted from Moore, 1986), that itemized tasks to be accomplished at each stage of the process.

The difficulty came as we began to internalize a new approach to understanding conflict resolution, called Transformative Mediation, proposed in a recent book by Baruch Bush and Joe Folger (1994). We found that our old, linear, stage model did not capture very well the "responsive posture" (p. 193) of following the parties, advocated by Bush and Folger. We sought a process that would do justice to parties' implicit search for "empowerment and recognition" (p. 84), the buzzwords of this new approach to mediation.

Our dilemma as trainers centered on an upcoming training event, a weeklong seminar in basic mediation techniques, scheduled for the coming Summer. Should we continue with our old model of training, and graft on a few of these promising new concepts from transformative mediation? Or should we revamp our whole training approach, building a new model from the ground up? We chose the latter.

What emerged was a nonlinear way to conceptualize mediation practice, which we at the time called the "emergent-focus model" (Antes, et al., 1999, p. 294), but which I like to call the five "Whats." Mediation was conceived as essentially addressing five basic questions, articulated in Figure 1. By arranging the questions in interlocking circles, we sought to convey that the parties might take up each question in whatever order and
however many times they wished. These questions or “facets” (p. 293) were put forward
to usefully frame the key change dynamics of empowered decision-making and willing
perspective-taking, which were thought to underlie mediation as a transformative process.
In borrowing these facets to help shape this manuscript, I am expanding upon their initial
frame of reference.

Preliminary Questions

Standing on Turtles

So in beginning this joint journey, how shall we begin? From the standpoint of the
project as a whole, what shall we agree to look at? (i.e., a variant of the first of the five
“What’s”). There is an anecdote attributed to the anthropologist, Clifford Geertz (Sarbin &
Kitsuse, as cited in Potter, 1995). An informant—(perhaps from the Indian subcontinent?)—
described the cosmology of his culture for a researcher:

The world rests on the back of an elephant, which in turn stands on the back of a
turtle. When the informant was asked what the turtle stands on, the answer was
"Ah, Sahib, after that, it is turtles all the way down." (p. 753)

In this study, I examine “turtles” and assign meaning to what I think I find. Of
necessity, it is constructions of constructions of constructions, all the way down. The
danger, of course, is that within a given construction (i.e., on top of a given turtle),
everything moves together, so it would be easy to think that one has at last found
bedrock. Throughout this study, standards of good qualitative research practice (e.g.,
Lather, 1991; Morse, 1994; Stiles, 1993) are employed to help ensure that the description
of any given turtle is sufficiently grounded.

There is another danger, not that of premature closure, but the opposite need for
eventual closure. Potentially there is no end to the number of ways something could be
interpreted or reconstructed. In practical terms, however, as Penman (1988) noted, "the
'organized settings' we are led into by our past actions and implicated meanings act as
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constraints on the range of interpretations . . . [and] provide temporary closure" (p. 400).

In the present study, there are three types of organized settings providing local, contingent, and temporary closure: (a) the original communication setting described by the participants, (b) the research-gathering setting, giving form and shape to the textual material, and (c) the analytical and presentational setting of the researcher, casting the data into new shapes and configurations.

Penman (1988) drew a telling conclusion:

While there may be potential for an infinite range of meanings, in practice this is limited by the closure we impose. The issue, then, becomes one not of determining (or even believing in) the stability of meaning but of studying the points of, and procedures for, closure. (p. 400)

Such procedures for closure are examined again and again in this study, whenever the fifth of the five "What" questions is raised. This is the question, what do we do, or as I frame it above, having gotten here, where is here? In other words, what temporary closure can be invoked in order to usefully move on?

It should be emphasized that, according to Penman (1988), closure on the range of meanings is imposed, albeit in a temporary, ever-renewed fashion. This need not cause undue skepticism over the findings of this study, since it is an inevitable part of every communicative event. Every speaker and listener, at innumerable points, must decide what meaning to assign to a given communication, and then move on. Only the positivist tradition has that "preoccupation with epistemology," as Pearce (1994, p. 35) called it, of how can one know. Epistemology is the positivist's claim for being the final turtle.

By contrast, "pride of place in the social constructionist paradigm" (Pearce, 1994, p. 38) goes to ontology, the study of what exists. And this paradigm holds promise for including much more of the stack of turtles. The particular concern of the social constructionist paradigm, at each new point, is what now exists as a result of the
communicative act itself. So, too, in this joint collaboration of writer and reader, I try to note what new understandings may have come into being about how the turtle just moved, in and through the manuscript itself.

To speak of turtles in this way is admittedly to deal with cosmologies, and that is a pretty broad canvas. While it may be technically true and strikingly profound that everything is related to everything, such a statement is not of much practical help. Here is a place where the flexible ordering of the five “What” questions responds to the needs of the moment in this chapter. The fifth question—*what do we do?*—becomes an alternate route to get to the second question—*what is this about?* Given that we cannot discuss everything, how do we proceed, that is, what initial closure should we invoke? In other words, how did I as writer get here, and how does that shape what this is really about?

**Vehicles for Meaning-Making**

From the very outset of my tenure as a graduate student, I have been fascinated with communication itself. And I specifically chose a counseling psychology program so as to acquire the tools for therapeutic communication, that is, communication that could make some clinical difference for someone. This extensive dissertation project, with its many loops and detours, is part of that pursuit. So, what is at stake here is a search for an effective window into communications that are therapeutic. It began as a study of significant change events within a particular semi-therapeutic setting (i.e., mediation sessions), and has evolved into a study of vehicles for meaning-making by the participants involved. To return to Pearce’s (1994) philosophical locating of communicative acts, the main concerns of this study are ontological ones: (a) how was meaning constituted by the original participant in a mediation session, (b) how was it reconstituted (if at all) during a subsequent interview session, and (c) how is it being reconstituted by the researcher. This is in contrast to a primary focus on the epistemological exercise of how can the findings be verified and known.
In some respects, all aspects of this study funnel through the last of these concerns, the voice of the researcher/writer. As Gale (1993) noted, "From a constructivist paradigmatic position, qualitative research is inextricably bound in the relationship between the researcher and the data" (p. 79). In keeping with sound qualitative practice, my own reflexive engagement with the material is deconstructed as I move through the text. There is no way to evade or ignore the third of the five "What" questions—what is important to self?—in writing a manuscript. Content is always embodied; it matters to someone.

One of the forms of embodiment of this project—of necessity and without apology—is in the particularity of my own interests. On a grand scale, one guiding interest as stated above is the nature of therapeutic communication. On a parallel track to that is an interest in how meaning is constructed. I bring a particular sensitivity to the layering of meaning by use of various levels of context (Jorgensen, 1996, 2000a, 2000b, 2000c). I also bring an eclectic interest and openness to multiple perspectives, and to that extent this manuscript is an integrative enterprise drawing in a range of disciplines. As a further foreshadowing of what is to come, I bring a longstanding respect and appreciation for narrative approaches in psychology and clinical work, and I hope to demonstrate the utility of such an approach in casting the materials of this research project.

There are of course other voices at the table, beyond my own and beyond those of the research participants. Such is the injunction of the fourth of the five "What" questions—what is important to other? This manuscript is in partial fulfillment of requirements for a doctoral degree in counseling psychology, and thus there is an expectation that both science and practice permeate this study. This amounts to an expectation that the shorelines portrayed in this manuscript have been built from the interface of scientific rigor and clinical sensitivity. My doctoral adviser in particular is steeped in the tradition of qualitative investigation, as a methodology best suited to
clinical inquiry, and she has imbued in me a love for and commitment to the richness and rigor of qualitative scholarship.

It has been necessary, throughout this research process, to adjudicate among available methodologies. As shown below, this study has combined the strengths of qualitative approaches, such as narrative analysis and grounded theory generation, with supplemental use of quantitative approaches, such as frequency distributions and lag sequential analysis. Research literatures describing these various techniques have been mined, to find a suitable combination fitted to the needs of this study. There are also approaches that have been deselected, either as poorly suited to the materials at hand or as beyond the reach of what can be attained in one study. Campbell (1990) utilized the term “evolutionary epistemology” to emphasize how existing knowledge preselects the search space for new knowledge ventures (see also Heylighen, 1995). In a variety of ways, the knowledge bases surrounding this study have acted as vicarious selectors. That is to say, whether they have directly interacted with the data of this study, or simply constrained the choices of what would be examined, they have served to eliminate certain variants of what could be constructed, thus affecting the shape of what remains. Having said that, however, the final selections as to what to study, how to examine it, and what to make of it, have been mine. They are presented here, and await the next rounds of selection, as each reader decides for him or herself whether the constructions of this study are well suited or not to the subsequent projects each reader brings.

Preliminary Conclusions

An initial survey of the recursive series of five “What” questions is now in order. The first question is, what are we doing here? I am attempting to examine research materials in context, which is to say, with full weight given to the contextual “turtles” underlying those materials and how those turtles may be moving, for participant and researcher alike. The second question is, what is this about? The substantive content of
this enterprise is a search for effective tools that might make some clinical difference, in
helping communication to be more therapeutic for people. The third question is, what is
important to self? The starting viewpoint for this study is an examination of participants’
own meaning-making, in their own voices, especially as embodied in narrative form.
That is coupled with an ongoing interest for me about the various layers of context that
make meaning meaningful. Starting hypotheses to help shape the ensuing pursuit
emerged out of the literature review, and are presented at the end of Chapter II. The
fourth question is, what is important to other? Particular care is given in this project to
scientific rigor and clinical sensitivity, as embodied in generative questions about the
nature of contextualization, as well as in standards of sound qualitative and quantitative
scholarship. In addressing the fifth of the five “What” questions--what do we do?--I turn
to a description of practical inquiry discussed by Cronen (2000).

Cronen (2000) proposed a form of naturalistic inquiry as an extension of
Pragmatist philosophy, which offers certain parallels to the recurrent series of five
“What” questions structuring each layer of this manuscript. He delineated five actions of
inquirers that allow them to investigate, and which could be paraphrased respectively
with the verbs, demarcating, partitioning, stabilizing, formalizing, and generalizing.
These operations allow inquirers to act into the situation and have their ideas judged by
the consequences, that is to say, their “usefulness for going on” (p. 7). The sequence of
these actions in Cronen’s account is somewhat more linear than I intend the five “What”
questions to be, yet there is a certain family resemblance between the two portrayals,
which gives some “warranted assertability” (p. 4) to each procedure.

Cronen’s (2000) descriptions of the actions of naturalistic inquiry are as follows,
with enumeration and clarifying phrases added here to heighten the parallels to the five
recursive questions of this study. I. Determining the “situation-in-view” (p. 7); that is to
say, what related elements should provisionally be included in the process under
II. Identifying features of the situation-in-view and forming “percepts,” (p. 8); that is to say, what are the units of perception and what do they say? This is often an iterative process, and is informed by the theory the researcher brings to the inquiry. III. Selecting an “object” of inquiry (p. 9) out of the percepts; that is to say, how can the emerging perceptions be anchored as something that matters and is worth looking at? The basic procedure is to hold the emerging meaning of one’s perceptions relatively stable, fixating one’s gaze, so that the object can be reliably seen. IV. Making a “determinate object” (p. 9); that is to say, how does one formalize the object of inquiry in some comprehensible manner, so as to make it matter to someone else? V. Building “practical theory” (p. 14); that is to say, what is now possible by virtue of the inquiry and where does one go next? This fifth step, according to Cronen, is akin to building a body of case law, which preserves particularity even as it provides generalizability. That is to say, when it comes to case law any particular case can generate a precedent. Practical inquiry yields principles derived from specific cases, which can be “applied to others with the full understanding that every case is in some ways unique” (p. 20). The overall goal of such inquiry is not simply to describe or support hypotheses, but “to improve the situation in view” (p. 10).

As a preview of later chapters, an outline of the results of this study is presented here in terms of Cronen’s (2000) schema for naturalistic inquiry. I. The situation-in-view that was demarcated for this study is meaning-making in narrative accounts of mediation. II. The percepts that were partitioned and examined in those narrative accounts are episodes, themes, clusters, and frames. III. The object of inquiry that was stabilized and selected out of those percepts is relative duration, as an indication of the effective sphere of influence of an idea. IV. The determinate objects that were formalized out of the notion of relative duration are various temporal devices for constructing common frames of reference. V. The practical theory that began to be generated and generalized from this
inquiry is a system for enacting accounts via *temporal progression* and *temporal duration*, which provide frameworks for the construction of meaning. The goal for improvement is that such a schema might allow clinicians to help people clarify the progression and duration of their frames of reference, so that they can be meaningfully communicated to others.
CHAPTER II
LITERATURE REVIEW

Social Constructionism

Having situated the manuscript as a whole in relation to the five “What” questions, it is time to adjust the field of vision and situate the specifics of this project, within the broad domain of the philosophy of science, and with respect to a particular setting for therapeutic communication. The first of the five “Whats”--what are we doing here?--raises the question, what contextual constraints exist to shape the contours of this specific research? Which data should be considered, to investigate meaning-making amidst the extensive realm of therapeutic change? The field of mediation provides one set of cross-sections, to delimit and make manageable the general domain of therapeutic communication.

Paradigmatic Concerns

Despite its short history, the field of mediation confronts some of the same issues over "paradigm" as have psychology and other disciplines. What is the proper paradigm to shape mediation's emerging theory and practice? What is the best set of turtles to build on? Is it the positivist tradition, stemming from the Enlightenment's search for "truth" (i.e., the supposed bottommost turtle), where (a) interests can be uncovered and known by a neutral third party, (b) problems can be separated from the people who embody them, and (c) objective criteria are available for assessing fairness and mutual gain (see Fisher & Ury, 1981)? Or is the more fitting paradigm that of social constructionism (Gergen, 1985), where (a) strict neutrality is an illusion, (b) events only have meaning by virtue of their context, and (c) each new communicative act has the power to reconstitute the nature of the dispute? Cobb (1991) discussed the struggle between these two
paradigms in mediation, noting "the inability of the positivist Newtonian discourse to account for the constructivist Einsteinian practice" (p. 90).

During the 1980's, several influential works appeared on the use of negotiation and specifically third party mediators to help resolve interpersonal disputes (Fisher & Ury, 1981; Folberg & Taylor, 1984; Moore, 1986). The assumptive world of such works is beginning to be overtaken, however, by the implications of a new understanding of communication (Penman, 1988). Pearce (1994) described this social constructionist perspective this way: "The work communication does is to make things, not talk about them. Conversations are the ontological 'stuff' of the human world, not just a place where this stuff is shaped" (p. 39). While this may seem like semantic and philosophical quibbling, the ramifications of such a position are great.

In her Kuhnian reading of the emerging state of affairs in mediation, Cobb (1991) drew a compelling distinction:

The discourse of neutrality, born from objectivism, is fundamentally a *Newtonian* concept--reflective of a universe in which it is possible to stand outside (narrative) time and (social) space, separate and autonomous from interpretative frames, relational patterns, and communicative processes. . . . [By contrast,] this notion of communication as a constitutive process is at the very heart of the Einsteinian universe, in which the social/material *space* is relative to the speakers who bring it forth, and *time* is circular rather than linear--the future loops back into the past; stories told in the present about the past shape the future, which then, reflexively, alters descriptions of the past. (pp. 89, 91, emphasis in original)

In such an 'Einsteinian' universe, it makes all the difference in the world where one stands. Far from unleashing bedlam on the quest for knowledge, such relativity of perspectives, with its reflexive circularity, is the wellspring that sustains and ever-renews this new constructionist paradigm.
So then, *what are we doing here?* I am investigating meaning-making by mapping some of the contours of a particular communicational domain, that of mediation. Moreover—and without apology—I am joining in the social (re)creation of that narrative world. Such co-collaboration with the participants in this research raises several substantive implications for the shape of the present study.

Here I am moving forward among the five “Whats,” to the question, *what is this about,* or what is at stake here? In examining mediation accounts, I am dealing with communication as a central and constitutive process, in which subjectivity and position are inescapable features of every description, and where there is construction of meaning at every turn. These points can be framed as a set of three foundational concerns: (a) What counts? (b) For whom does it count? (c) What does it count as? In terms of the substance of this study, it means investigating mediation by means of the constructions of the participants themselves, as enacted in their communications, and especially the narrative configuration of those constructions. In terms of qualitative methodology, an additional source of data also gets deconstructed, that of the researcher’s ongoing reflexivity as it emerges in dialogue with the participants' data.

These paradigmatic concerns—i.e., what counts, for whom, and as what?—call to mind Bateson’s (1972) classic formulation of information as "a difference that makes a difference" (p. 459). Several conclusions follow from this elementary point. First of all, there may be differences that make no difference; but if that is the case, why study them? This suggests that all studies are essentially studies of change events. Some change has occurred, and the point of the study is to determine what difference that makes. Presumably, this understanding of difference would include the situation where some change is expected, but no change occurs. Either way, a difference happens which potentially can make some difference. So what counts from the standpoint of this project are specifically change events occurring by virtue of mediation sessions. The indicators
of those change events are the differences embodied in communication and accounts of those sessions.

Secondly, there are certainly differences that matter to the researcher, but not to the client or research participant. Those are legitimately included as a focus for study and a necessary part of the process, by means of disclosure of the researcher's "progressive subjectivity" (Guba & Lincoln, as cited in Stiles, 1993, p. 603). What initially counts to me, as researcher, is the content of what counts to the parties, as participants and self-constituting agents in the therapeutic setting of mediation sessions. However, there are additional trajectories that I bring to the process, such as a focus on the details of how the parties are constituting their communications. What is merely an instrumental concern for a party, in the midst of conveying a plausible account, becomes a formative concern for the researcher, in generalizing findings to a broader setting.

The third point is a truism attributed by Bateson (1979) to Korzybski, namely, "the map is not the territory" (p. 110, emphasis omitted). Bateson (1972) said of such a process of representation:

At every step, as a difference is transformed and propagated along its pathway, the embodiment of the difference before the step is a "territory" of which the embodiment after the step is a "map." The map-territory relation obtains at every step. (p. 461, n.3)

This is to say that there is always (re)construction, always transformation of the differences into new differences, which results in "maps of maps of maps, ad infinitum" of the territory (p. 460-461).

So then, the outcome of this study counts as my map, of the party's reformulated map, of her or his initial communicative map, of the mediation session's reciprocally configured map, of an interactional dispute with another party, (who is busy constructing,
all along the way, his or her own 'maps of maps' of the territory.) It really is turtles and reconstructions, all the way down.

Systemic Critiques

Deconstructionism

As I have explored how to construct my map, the richness of each territory has become evident, including the turtles I am presupposing in how I frame the investigation. To ask about "change events," significant or otherwise, belies an assumption that change is paramount from both the scientific and clinical standpoints. There are at least two substantive bodies of critique that suggest that assumption should not be left unexamined. One is the philosophic project of Derrida known as deconstructionism. Pivotal in his challenge to prevailing Western conceptions was his critique of binary oppositions, as logical and linguistic categories:

The Western logic of identity is a logic of either/or. By contrast, Derrida's logic of the supplement (or difference [sic], rather than of identity) is a logic of both/and. . . In the Derridian logic of the supplement, what something is is thoroughly inhabited by what that something also is not. Thus, entities are both what they are and also what they are not. (Sampson, 1989, p. 15-16)

This is a reminder that the very concept of change is a relational notion, measured with respect to something else. Something changes only with reference to something that is not changing, at least not in the same way or at the same time. Therefore, to ask about change is also, inevitably and simultaneously, to ask about stability. The converse is likewise true. One can only speak of something remaining stable with reference to something that is changing. Stability and change both implicate and inhere in one another, by definition.
Cybernetics

The other critique arises out of the cybernetic tradition, but which has historical antecedents in a key formulation of William James. James (1890/1950) noted that "with intelligent agents, altering the conditions changes the activity displayed, but not the end reached" (Vol. I, p. 8). Two classes of phenomena are noted in this passage: means and ends, or it could be said, those that vary, and those that remain stable. As environmental conditions change, behavior will change accordingly to achieve the same results, and this emergence of stable results despite changing behavior is an anomalous phenomenon requiring explanation. Most of the psychology of adaptation in the twentieth century focused on explaining the changing behavior, but largely ignored the more puzzling phenomenon of the stability of results.

An analogy can be drawn to Prigogine’s "dissipative structures" (Capra, 1996, p. 169), in his studies of complexity that contributed to the rise of chaos theory. A vortex, for example, involves a great deal of change in terms of the energy flowing through the system and the micro-interactions of the water or air that comprise it. But there is also this remarkable and quasi-stable structure of the vortex itself. It is not enough to investigate water molecules chasing each other down the funnel. The emergence of the funnel itself, as a stable and predictable phenomenon, must also be investigated. In the same way, it is analytically incomplete and misleading to simply chase each instance of behavioral change with a lineal chain of prior causality.

The cyberneticists and the systems theorists who came after them have elaborated this point most tellingly. Bateson (1979), for example, articulated what is at stake: "When we say that the system exhibits 'steady state' (i.e., that in spite of variation, it retains a median value), we are talking about the circuit as a whole, not about the variations within it" (p. 108). To confuse the two is to make what Bateson called an "error of logical typing" (p. 127). In other words, stability and change may exist in a predictable fashion,
namely, the relation between a system and its subsystems, or that between the whole and its parts. Tolman and his students caught some of the means-ends dynamic between variation and stability, in their reconceptualization of the notion of response: "Muscular or glandular activities . . . may vary from trial to trial and yet the total 'performance' remains the same. Thus, for example, 'going towards a light' is a performance in my sense of the term" (Tolman, as cited in Cziko, 1995, p. 105, emphasis in original).

To offer a brief digression, the proper way to analyze such holonic (Koestler, as cited in Pentony, 1981, p. 173)—i.e., part-whole—systems is not that of lineal causation, but rather by means of circular causality. Maxwell (cited in Bateson, 1979), in the mid-1800's, was the first to derive the mathematical equations appropriate to a closed loop of causation, in his analysis of the negative feedback process of a governor on a steam engine. The key insight was to include time in the equations. Cyberneticists, working a century later, subsequently refined such notions. In a closed loop, the parts may be lineal but the whole is circular in their respective forms of causation. Essentially this means there are no discrete sequential events in a circuit, but only simultaneous processes that are happening all the time all the way around the loop (Powers, 1992). Everything on the loop becomes a contributing cause to itself, and the way to properly quantify the analysis is by means of iterations and integrating functions. Previous results affect how much further adjustment is needed, and an integrating function keeps track—not in a separate way but an accumulative way—of those previous contributions.

To build upon this literature for the present study suggests that time may be an integral part of any study of contextualization. Including time in the analysis would offer at least two fundamental opportunities for comparison, which perhaps could be pictured as horizontal and vertical comparisons, respectively. A horizontal comparison would be where an event happened relative to the flow of time. In such a case, time is indexed as a lineal point of reference. A vertical comparison would be one between longer and shorter
events, whether they overlapped in the time frame of their presentation or not. In this case, time is indexed as a hierarchical point of reference. This suggests that “where in time” and “for how long” could almost be used as coordinates for locating events relative to one another. Such a mapping may have implications for discerning how significant an event is for a given party.

Context and Logical Types

The upshot of the deconstructionist and cybernetic critiques is that the supposed fundamental distinction between change and stability may simply be two different vantage points within the same system of parts and wholes. It is a distinction of two different logical types, which require each other definitionally, just as means imply ends and vice versa. Moreover, the distinction between these logical types is a hierarchical one, between contextualized and contextualizing levels.

Rawlins (1987) suggested "the hierarchy of Logical Types is an elusive concept to operationalize because of the reflexivity, relativity, and interactivity of messages" (p. 60). However, the process is aided by noting constraints of causality and temporality. Causality here, as in all circuits, works in a circular fashion. Each higher level contextualizes (and in that sense causes) the action of the next lower level. But there is also a spread of causality occurring from the bottom up, as each lower level needs to be implemented before the next higher level can achieve its goals.

Temporal Framing

The corollary of this analysis is that such systems and subsystems must of necessity operate on (at least slightly) different time scales, since a system cannot call for results faster than they can be produced without slipping over into oscillating or runaway patterns of activity. That is to say, the higher, contextualizing level must operate on a slower time scale of provisional stability relative to an implementing, contextualized level below it. Newell (1990) noted, “In summary, as one goes up the scale, everything
slows down. Molecules behave more slowly than atoms; macromolecules in turn behave more slowly than molecules; cells behave more slowly than macromolecules—and so on” (p. 120). In his discussion of time scales for human action, Newell described the situation this way:

Neurons have a characteristic operation time of about a ms (≈1 ms) [sic, indicating “very roughly 1 millisecond, times or divided by 3”], and neural circuits of about 10 ms (≈10 ms). Above the biological band, there is the cognitive band. Here the levels are unfamiliar—I’ve called them the deliberate act, cognitive operation, and unit task, each of which takes about ten times (≈10) as long as the act at the level beneath. . . . Above the cognitive band lies the rational band, which is of the order of minutes to hours. (pp. 122-123, emphasis in original)

A gradation of systems is thus built up, since wholes can readily become parts of larger wholes, as long as the distinction is maintained that there will still be a difference of logical types occurring at that new interface. One way to view each interface is as a distinction between what is remaining stable (at least temporarily so) and what is varying. Another way of saying this is that the higher level sets the context for the lower, while the lower supplies the means of implementation for the higher. At each step up in terms of contextualizing levels, there is a longer time scale for stability and implementation. In other words, between every adjacent set of levels, this stability-variability dynamic emerges anew.

Simon (1993) called attention to the temporal framing of relative contextual levels. He examined issues of hierarchy, but questioned versions of hierarchy based on power or status. Rather, the layers of a system can be positioned "'according to their time constants (that is, the typical durations of a level's episodes in relation to others). The longer a level's time constant, the higher the level is placed in the hierarchy' " (Fivaz-
Depeursinge, cited in Simon, 1993, p. 149). These distinctions have been examined in interpersonal encounters.

**Interpersonal Evidence for Temporal Contexts**

Fivaz-Depeursinge (1991), quoted in the above passage, specifically investigated the time scales of interpersonal episodes. She looked at episodes between parents and infants, particularly play dialogue, as a prototype of the development of communication. Her findings suggested that episodes can be contextualized according to their durations, allowing multiple channels to be utilized simultaneously to communicate different messages. For instance:

The *episodes* of reciprocal gaze (that is, both partners being visually oriented toward each other) have been demonstrated to form a frame in which briefer episodes (expressive displays) are nested. These gaze episodes are themselves embedded within longer episodes organized by the body configurations. (p. 103, emphasis in original)

In other words, Fivaz-Depeursinge (1991) observed and quantified a communication game familiar to many parents of young children. Within fairly long episodes, where the infant is held standing on the parent's lap, occur shorter episodes where their eyes are locked together. And within those gazing episodes, even shorter episodes occur, with the infant smiling, cooing, or bouncing up and down on the parent's knee. Stable body configurations frame the less stable gaze episodes, which frame even less enduring affective displays. It is possible that important developmental messages are thereby being conveyed and practiced, by these simultaneous channels. Mastery of body position may be encouraged by the standing episodes. Identity formation may be underway with the gaze episodes. And expression of emotion may be modeled by the expressive episodes. It is not hard to imagine even more enduring relational messages being conveyed by the longer term stability of the parent-child relationship itself.
These are important potential vehicles for meaning-making. And they are predicated on the notion of frames of meaning with different durations. That is to say, such meaning-making is built upon the backs of turtles moving with different time constants. The deeper one goes into the hierarchy of turtles, the slower the turtle is moving, and (presumably) the more enduring is its meaning.

Interim Summary

Adjusting the focus to encompass once again the five “What” questions of this chapter, I now survey which part of the coastline is presently in view. The previous overview, in Chapter I, identified therapeutic communication as an ontological arena where participants create new meaning for themselves. This chapter continues that journey, and examines literature that gives shape to the bays and inlets of that coastline.

What we are doing here (i.e., the first of the five “Whats” for this chapter) is exploring a limited section of the coast, specifically, mediation under a social constructionist paradigm. Social constructionism, I claim, is more than the action of the waves, shaping a few rocks and beach fronts. A better analogy would be the forces of continental drift, which actually determine where the coastline will lie. Subjectivity and position are important components, under this paradigm, of what gets constructed. This is a different set of turtles than the “Newtonian” (Cobb, 1991, p. 89) discourse of the positivist / objectivist paradigm.

The second of the five “What” questions takes its cue from this new paradigm. If social constructionism truly is a basic shaping force, then what is at stake here (a variant of the second of the five “Whats”) is the reality and, indeed, inevitability of co-construction. This boils down to the tripartite concerns of what counts, to whom, and as what? The territory that makes a difference to the speaker must be mapped onto differences of significant import to the listener, or co-construction will not occur. Of necessity, then, this is a study of change events, for speaker and listener alike. However,
change can only be investigated with reference to features that are remaining relatively stable. This introduces the notion of different logical types. That is to say, there is a distinction between features that are contextualized and features that are contextualizing. From an analytical standpoint, this amounts to searching for temporal differences, as the signature for how to differentiate the more stable from the more fluctuating.

Thus, the most significant change event to examine as a researcher would be any difference in relative durations, among different parts of the materials at hand. This contextualization of episodes according to temporal duration has important implications for hypotheses about the narrative reconstructions examined in this study. It suggests, as already noted, that temporality could be a key way to investigate perceived significance. More specifically, it suggests that duration can be used as a prime indicator of where an event fits in a hierarchy of contexts. Narrative meanings of longer duration would be placed deeper in the hierarchy (or higher, if the metaphor is inverted, as in Fivaz-Depeursinge, 1991). These matters are dealt with in more detail at the end of this chapter.

**Therapeutic Change**

In their compilation and edited volume of psychological methods of intervention, Kanfer and Goldstein (1991) indicated that the purpose of such methods was as follows:

- to help people change for the better, so that they can fully develop their potentials and capitalize on the opportunities available to them in their social environment,
- or change their attitudes to accept what is beyond their power to change. (p. 1).

I believe such a purpose would not be limited to psychological interventions, but could properly include interventions from the field of mediation as well. To the extent that interpersonal conflicts impede people's development and capacity to benefit from opportunities in their social environment, mediation might be able to assist them, in keeping with Kanfer and Goldstein's description. Moreover, many of the tools needed for such change efforts—whether they are exercised in mediation or psychotherapy settings—
are drawn from the domain of communication. I thus view mediation, psychotherapy, and communication as companion literatures having many bridge components, which perhaps could be united under a notion of "therapeutic change." I offer this provisional definition of that concept: therapeutic change refers to changes that lead to improved ability for a person to interact in adaptive and fulfilling ways with one's social environment. The following subsections attempt to tap the conceptual richness of these three domains, which may have applicability to an examination of therapeutic change.

Mediation

Moving to the third of the five "What" questions—essentially the issue, *whose content is this and why does it matter?*—brings into view the practical niche for this particular study. There is a growing corpus of research into mediation processes (e.g., Carnevale & Pruitt, 1992; Kressel, Pruitt, & Associates, 1989). However, the majority of studies deal with one of two perspectives. Certain studies explore some aspect of mediator behavior (e.g., Carnevale, Lim, & McLaughlin, 1989; Donohue, 1989; Kimsey, Fuller, Bell, & McKinney, 1994; Kolb & Associates, 1994; Kressel, et al. 1994). Other studies investigate some measure of effectiveness or outcome of mediation (e.g., Emery & Wyer, 1987; Kelly & Gigy, 1989; Roehl & Cook, 1989). Much less work has focused on the dynamic processes of the parties themselves, from their own viewpoints, whether during the mediation setting or afterwards. Studies that have looked at disputants' behaviors have often used a priori classification systems (e.g., Slaikeu, Pearson, & Thoennes, 1988), rather than using client-articulated significance as their unit of analysis. These are important shortcomings in terms of reconstructing potential change dynamics in mediation.

Structural Approaches

There have been some attempts to identify therapeutic dimensions of the change processes for mediation clients. For instance, Garcia (1991) utilized a conversation
analysis approach to claim that mediation diminishes conflict between the parties by altering the turn-taking system of conventional conversation. Tools available to mediators for this purpose, in her view, included pre-allocating speaking time, selecting next speaker via questions, and policing deviations from agreed on rules. Such procedures led to the deescalating responses of delayed denials by parties, selective responding to accusations from the other, and non-adjacent exchanges with a resulting decrease in pressure for dispreferred replies.

Schwebel, Gately, Renner, and Milburn (1994) identified four different models that are used in divorce mediation, each utilizing a different key ingredient for promoting change. The four models are:

- the legal model, the labor management model, the therapeutic model, and the communication and information model. Respectively, the four models assume that parties can reach agreements if mediators (1) use structure in the form of rules to promote cooperation, (2) foster self-interested bargaining between equals, (3) help parties manage emotional issues blocking effective problem solving, and (4) improve communication between the spouses and provide information and guidance during sessions. (p. 214)

Other researchers examined alternate features of mediation settings which decrease arguments and thereby lead to increased potential for therapeutic change (e.g., Greatbatch & Dingwall, 1997; Deutsch, 1994).

**Transformative Mediation**

One branch of mediation that has been especially active in looking at change dynamics is the approach known as transformative mediation (or mediation from a transformative framework), pioneered by Bush and Folger (1994; see also Della Noce, 1997; Dukes, Chasin, Piscolish, & Bush, 1997; Harvey, Charbonneau, Della Noce, Lang, & Pope, 1997). Bush and Folger (1994) suggested two classes of change. One was called
empowerment, defined as an increase in clarity and decision-making capability for a client. The other was termed recognition, defined as an increase in perspective-taking and openness to the other party's point of view. They claimed that these two dynamics readily played off one another, such that greater empowerment often led to greater openness towards the other party, and willingness to understand another's perspective could open up unforeseen clarity as to what a dispute was all about.

There has been a tendency, however, for the literature on transformative mediation to be primarily anecdotal, passing on the clinical wisdom of experienced mediation practitioners (e.g., Pope, 1996). Other presentations in this vein often assumed the impact on the client, and proceeded with training implications for mediators (Deck & Rockhill, 1997; Folger & Bush, 1996; Millen, 1997). There is a need in the literature on mediation for a detailed task analysis—identifying not just the what, but the how—of change dynamics in mediation from the parties' perspectives.

Efforts have been made to address this gap in the literature, at the Conflict Resolution Center at the University of North Dakota. A research group in which I participated met for over a year and a half to understand in greater detail the above-mentioned approach called transformative mediation. Research and publication efforts included designing a new training model and manual (Conflict Resolution Center, 1997; Jorgensen & Moen, 1997), critiquing linear stage models of mediation (Antes, Hudson, Jorgensen, & Moen, 1999), analyzing opportunities for empowerment and recognition in simulated mediation sessions (Moen, Hudson, Antes, Jorgensen, & Hendrikson, 2000), articulating mediator responses to such opportunities (Jorgensen, Moen, Antes, Hudson, & Hendrikson, 2000), and using rules-based analysis to investigate relational change in mediation (Jorgensen, 2000c).

The present effort of this manuscript shifts the attention from mediator actions, whether actual or desired, to the attempts of participants to make sense of what happened
for them in mediation, a concerted effort to preserve participants' own voices in the research enterprise. As such, the focal point has shifted from an initial concern with detailing the tasks of change, to a broader emphasis on how participants construct meaning out of their mediation experiences, as preserved in narrative accounts.

**Psychotherapy**

The fourth of the five "Whats"—*what is important to other?*—is a multiplicity question of what other perspectives and interests surround the study of mediation. Mediation research does not stand alone, but has close cousins in research into psychotherapy and various domains of communication. By contrast with the mediation literature, however, there is quite an extensive research literature on change dynamics operative in psychotherapy. Indeed, the field of mediation can be thought of as lagging some ten to fifteen years behind that of psychotherapy, in its investigation of the most crucial change processes for clients.

A flurry of edited volumes appeared in the mid-1980's, dealing with the processes involved in psychotherapeutic change (Greenberg & Pinsof, 1986; Packer & Addison, 1989; Rice & Greenberg, 1984; Russell, 1987). These reported both recent and long-standing research programs into psychotherapy process (e.g., Angus & Rennie, 1989; Elliott, 1984, 1985, 1986; Elliott & James, 1989; Elliott, James, Reimschuessel, Cislo, & Sack, 1985; Rice & Saperia, 1984; Stiles, 1986). Several useful methodological heuristics emerge from these studies for investigating mediation processes, such as a discovery-oriented approach with intensive analysis of single case studies, a task analysis of significant change events, or using video-aided self-report in a procedure known as Interpersonal Process Recall.

In the early 1990's, in addition to the work on psychotherapy process, a growing literature emerged on solution-focused (e.g., Cade & O’Hanlon, 1993; Walter & Peller, 1992) and narrative (e.g., White & Epston, 1990) changes, which could occur through
psychotherapy and other therapeutic settings. This literature had conceptual and paradigmatic roots in social constructionism. For instance, Russell and van den Broek (1992) advocated the differentiation of rival narratives in therapy settings, which are "(a) more coherent, more accurate and/or more widely applicable, . . . and (b) able to subsume the subordinate narrative in a fashion that permits it to be illuminated and integrated within the superordinate narrative" (p. 348). In keeping with Vygotsky's notion of a zone of proximal development (Miller, 1993, p. 379), "the rival narrative representations should neither exceed too dramatically, nor stay complacently within, the bounds of the client's current narrative schema" (Russell & van den Broek, 1992, p. 348).

In a similar vein, Sluzki (1992) noted that new stories "must evolve from and yet contain elements of the old, 'familiar' stories" (p. 220), and he listed numerous dimensions along with examples for transformative shifts in clients' narratives. Of special note was a transformation of the storyteller "from passive (victim) to active (agent) . . . [as] a powerful way of expanding the story" (p. 226). This emphasis on agency was akin to the technique of externalization, proposed by White and Epston (1990).

Omer and Strenger (1992) noted that "cure in psychoanalysis is not due to the uncovering of the past, but to the replacement of an inchoate life narrative by a congruent one" (p. 255). They articulated a variety of metanarratives, which various schools of therapy used as heuristic templates in constructing more satisfying narratives. Both Rappaport (1993) and Humphreys (1993) expanded on this insight to include the metanarratives of self-help groups such as Alcoholics Anonymous, and their socialization of new members into a dominant new self-narrative.

Communication

Conversational Analysis

The field of communication has generated an array of fruitful theories and approaches, with a range of possible applications to mediation processes. Heritage (1995)
made a case for conversational analysis, stating, "the practices of ordinary conversation appear to have a 'bedrock' or default status" (p.394). He contrasted this with other communicational settings: "Communicative conduct in more specialized social institutions embodies task- or role oriented specializations and particularizations that generally involve a narrowing of the range of conduct that is generically found in ordinary conversation" (p. 395). This realization that many institutional settings have a more formal system for turn-taking has been applied to mediation by Garcia (1991), in her claim that mediators reduced conflict by promoting non-adjacent exchanges between parties, with comments routed through the mediator.

Jackson and Jacobs (1980) utilized a similar perspective in stating "conversational argument is a particular realization of general conversational principles" (p. 251). They noted the preference for agreement of most adjacency pairs, such as invitation - acceptance, assessment - agreement, summons - answer, or boast - appreciation. They also noted, paradoxically, that people make arguments (in the sense of making their case) to avoid having arguments (in the sense of having a dispute). They claimed that argument, in the former sense, "functions to overcome objections . . . [as] a special instance of the repair organizations" of ordinary conversation (p. 253). The aim is to modulate disagreeable parts of the speaker's statement, as well as dispreferred responses from the listener. This is especially true in monologic settings, where "speakers have anticipated specific objections and built their turns to avoid them" (p. 262). They accomplish this in particular via presequences—that is, prefacing qualifiers—and expanded turns.

This raises the question of who is included as audience, when an interview is given in a research setting. As Schlenker and Weigold (1992) noted, "Audiences--whether present or absent--can cue or prime identity-relevant information and a set of prescriptive standards for evaluating oneself" (p. 156). In a normal dialogue, "the speaker
leaves unmentioned the taken-for-granted aspects of an assertion or proposal and leaves unsupported those aspects which get immediate assent" (Jackson & Jacobs, 1980, p. 262). However, in a research interview, the intent may be to acquit oneself adequately against potential objections, whether from the researcher or those projected from the other disputant. Thus, in the present context, one would expect any argument of a research participant to contain more than what is "minimally sufficient to gain agreement" (p. 262) from the researcher. In this way, the interviews of this study were more similar to accounts or explanations, than to arguments, per se.

In an early examination of accounts, Scott and Lyman (1968) defined accounts as statements made "to explain unanticipated or untoward behavior" (p. 46), distinguishing them from explanations, which were "statements about events where untoward action is not an issue" (p. 47). They noted two types of account: justifications, where "one accepts responsibility for the act in question, but denies the pejorative quality associated with it," and excuses, where "one admits the act in question is bad, wrong, or inappropriate but denies full responsibility" (p. 47).

Expanding on this typology, Schlenker and Weigold (1992) suggested there are four types of accounts, that is, four ways to minimize negative repercussions when the identities people construct for themselves are impeded by violations of personal or social prescriptions:

In order to reduce the potential repercussions, the actor can (a) proclaim innocence, claiming the event did not take place or the actor was in no way involved; (b) use an excuse that attempts to minimize personal linkage; (c) use a justification that tries to minimize the harm or show that, all things considered, the conduct was really advantageous, not harmful; or (d) offer an apology. (p. 159)
Language Games

The various possibilities highlighted in the previous citation all suggest that giving accounts is a form of moral positioning. Harre' (1989) investigated the language games utilized in ascriptions made about oneself, claiming that the first-person pronoun, I, "is used to perform a moral act, an act of commitment to the content of the utterance in the appropriate moral universe . . . [as] part of the grammar of performative utterances" (p. 26). Giving an account of oneself has less to do with the why of causal explanation, and more to do with "the 'why' of authorization. Responses to that 'why' show how what I intend to do is right. It has the inexorability of moral necessity, not the inevitability of causal necessity" (p. 30, emphasis in original). This suggests that the accounts presented in the research interviews for this study have as a key feature questions of who is right, or at least who owes what to whom.

Penman (1991) investigated the moral stories that got told in legal settings, including the moral orders embodied in the very forms of discourse deemed acceptable there. She suggested that there were often two language games, each with their own constitutive and regulative rules, going on in courtroom settings. She noted that there was an official, very formalized "fact game" being played, whose purpose was "obtaining factual information in the most efficient manner" (p. 27). This was the dominant language game sanctioned by the legal system, and in that sense it set the context for any other agendas that may have been going on. But Penman contended that there was another, unofficial, but very serious "face game" (p. 34) also being played, in which the credibility of witnesses (their face, to use Goffman's term) was alternately attacked and defended.

The implication of Penman's (1991) notions for mediation settings, and accounts of what may have gone on there for participants, is that a similar pair of language games may also be involved. On the one hand would be a resolution game (i.e., what was the issue?), putting forth a problem-solving story. On the other hand would be a
responsibility game (i.e., whose issue is it?), setting forth an attribution story. I believe most models of mediation would give preferential weight to the resolution game (see Schwebel, et al., 1994), although approaches such as transformative mediation (see Bush & Folger, 1994) would presumably be equally interested in the lack of empowerment and recognition displayed by many attribution stories. Depending on satisfaction or not with the outcome, participants providing later (uncontested) accounts of their mediation sessions might even be expected to favor the responsibility game and make that their dominant form of discourse.

This duality of language games was noted by Jacobs, Jackson, Stearns, and Hall (1991) in their examination of ostensive digressions occurring in divorce mediation sessions. In violation of Gricean maxims of relevancy, orderliness, and only what is needed (p. 57), they found that "the chaining out of digressions, the piling on of superfluous elaboration appears to have another point: avoiding blame oneself and/or blaming the other party" (p. 53). Many instances "began ostensibly as development of a problem calling for solution and emerged into a complaint calling for censure" (p. 56). Such actions were often at odds with the officially sanctioned language game of mediation. They concluded that "disputants employ piggybacking in an attempt to reconcile the demands of both the official framework of mediation and their preoccupation with the moral implications of their divorce" (p. 59), which often entailed an attempt to "restore a ritual equilibrium by means of moral censure" (p. 58). Buttny and Cohen (1991) explored similar dual concerns operating in marital therapy settings.

Narrative

An area of study that has received extensive attention is that of narrative constructions. Ewick and Silbey (1995) stated that narrative is built out of "selective appropriation of past events . . . temporally ordered . . . often in the context of an opposition or struggle" (p. 200). Polkinghorne (1988) offered this definition: "Narrative
ordering makes individual events comprehensible by identifying the whole to which they contribute. The ordering process operates by linking diverse happenings along a temporal dimension and by identifying the effect one event has on another" (p. 18).

Both Penman (1988) and Gergen and Gergen (1988) emphasized the temporal embeddedness of human action within narrative, including various time frames for various sub-plots. As can be seen with all these attempts at definition, temporality is crucial to this form of knowing. In a sense, narrative is a special case of the role assigned to language by the seminal work of Wittgenstein (1958). As stated by Penman (1988), language "directly acts to create our world. It is via language, with all of its constraints, that we bring about the world as we know it" (p. 393).

This notion of narrative as creating a world was well captured by Young (1982), in her examination of frames and boundaries in narrative communication. She noted, "The frame imputes an ontological status to events . . . The instructions they bear on how to see that other realm of events implies a realm from which to see the events" (p. 280). In the process, she delineated a "Taleworld" in which events happen, framed by a "Storyrealm" from which events derive their meaning, all enclosed in a "Realm of Conversation" having its own social constraints (p. 282). The temporal relations of these realms are quite distinctive. Essentially the Taleworld unfolds forward, although flashbacks are certainly possible as a way to propel the tale along. But the Storyrealm is clearly constructed backwards, "to include whatever is necessary to account for it, thus arriving at the beginning" of the story (p. 282). As Ricoeur (cited in Young, 1982) stated, "the story's conclusion is the pole of attraction of the entire development" (p. 313). The Realm of Conversation in its turn, while enacted sequentially, is nonlineal in the sense of having numerous reflexive loops.

Gergen and Gergen (1988) enumerated what they saw as essential features of well-formed narrative construction, including a valued end point, events relevant to the
goal state, ordering of events, causal linkages between events, and demarcation signs (pp. 20-22). These are similar to earlier lists of elementary units, by such theorists as Labov (cited in Coffey & Atkinson, 1996, p. 58). A more detailed catalogue is presented as story grammars, such as that of Mandler (1984). She noted that "a grammar is merely a rule system, describing materials in terms of a set of units and the ways in which the units are sequenced" (p. 19). It offered the particular advantage of being context-free, so that a wide variety of story content could be structured with the same set of rules.

Essentially, according to Mandler (1984), a story is comprised of a setting followed by one or more episodes. The setting presents the protagonist, along with details such as time and locale. Mandler presented the basic structure of story episodes as follows (p. 22). There is a beginning constituent, followed by a development, to which the protagonist reacts, typically by setting up a goal to do something; an attempt is made to reach the goal, followed by the outcome, concluding with some form of commentary. Mandler grouped these components hierarchically to allow elaboration of the basic pattern in terms of "rewrite rules" (p. 24). Variations of the pattern can occur with deletions of certain components, or delays resulting in episodes embedded in other episodes. It is worth noting that questions about "significant change" in mediation, pursued in this present study, are essentially inquiries about the plot of the story. In other words, did the mediation do anything to address or solve the plot "development"?

There is debate in the literature whether acontextual story grammars capture the essential feature of stories, which Wilensky (1983b) attributed to the presence of a "story point." He was vague in defining story points, saying that they bear some intrinsic interest to the listener and are a matter of content not form (p. 583). He added that "violated expectations . . . seem to play an important role in defining point structures" (p. 589). The closest he came to a definition was to say: "stories have to do with human dramatic situations . . . a sequence of goal-related events that contains some problem for
a character . . . [and] solution components that describe how a problem is resolved" (p. 585, emphasis in original). Abelson (1983) elaborated on this as follows: "For a communication to have a point, it must make a potential difference to people exposed to it. . . . Thus 'problem resolution' is a fertile source of points. . . . Failure of problem resolution is another rich source" (p. 592).

Britton (1983) invoked a proposal about extent of cognitive engagement, in concurring with Wilensky. He stated, "Stories call up an assumption ground in their audience, and when the story denies some part of that assumption ground, it becomes interesting; otherwise it is boring" (p. 596). The advantage in the theory of story points is its attention to the listener, as expressed by Wilensky (1983a): "the whole idea behind points is that 'storiness' is determined by what happens to the reader, not by something inherent in the structure of the text" (p. 616).

A slightly different approach to story points was taken by Young (1982), although she retained the emphasis on the reader or listener: "Events, it turns out, are not just tellable, but tellable on occasions. It is their relevance to this occasion that is the point of the telling. Point is what connects stories to occasions" (p. 301). Here is an appreciation of stories in the context of their telling, especially the context provided by the presence of one listener over another.

Conclusions and Hypotheses

Examination of the notion of therapeutic change—whether through the lens of mediation, psychotherapy, or communication studies—gradually leads to a common, emerging conclusion, as follows. The key shifts with regard to therapeutic change often appear to be the contextual ones, that is, shifts to different levels of logical type and deeper layers of contextualization. This was demonstrated in numerous instances among the literature cited.
For example, Garcia (1991) discussed altering the turn-taking system between mediation parties, as a way of reducing conflict. This would change the rules (i.e., a shift of logical type) from how they previously interacted, with a consequent change in their language game to something closer to collaborative problem-solving. Several of the models of divorce mediation discussed by Schwebel, et al. (1994) involved contextual shifts, for instance, in the relational context to allow bargaining among equals, or in the emotional context to remove blocking emotional content, or as we noted with Garcia in the system of rules to allow greater cooperation. The perspective-taking dynamic of transformative mediation (Bush & Folger, 1994) can be viewed as a shift of context and vantage point that would allow the other party's concerns, not simply one's own, to be heard and given due weight.

Among the psychotherapy literature, especially that dealing with narrative changes, Russell and van den Broek (1992) discussed the role of rival narratives, in particular the need to subsume the previous narrative and integrate it into a more coherent and satisfying narrative. This is a shift of logical type, from one class of events to the class that includes that previous class. Sluzki (1992) reiterated the same issue, adding a discussion of transformations in the storyteller, for instance from passive to active agent. This, too, is a contextual shift, consisting of changing the story by changing the storyteller, who exists at a higher (or deeper) logical type from the story itself.

In the communication literature, contextual shifts arose in various ways. In the discussion of accounts by Scott and Lyman (1968) and Schlenker and Weigold (1992), an account was essentially an attempted change in the perceived orientation of the person, relative to the issue in dispute, all of which would be a bid for a new relational context. Harre' (1989) examined the moral positioning of first-person language as a type of language game, in which “why” questions are answered in terms of authorization (i.e., a shift of logical type), not in terms of prior lineal causes. Penman (1991) proposed two
types of language games operative in legal settings, which in a mediation setting might be paraphrased as the resolution game and the responsibility game, respectively. The latter might involve an attribution story operative at a different logical level of context than the problem story of the former.

Literature dealing with narrative constructions was particularly evocative as to multiple layers of contextualization. Young (1982) distinguished among the Realm of Conversation, which framed the narrative devices of the Storyrealm, which in its turn framed the events of the Taleworld. Indeed, she noted what may be an additional layer of context with the occasion of the telling, including not just the conversationalist, but the listener and their mutual relationship. Britton (1983) likewise focused on the assumptive ground of the audience, as part of the context for stories that succeed in being interesting. In a similar manner, Wilensky (1983b) discussed the role of violated assumptions in shaping story points. This would involve at least two logical levels in relation to the story being told: (a) what is expected, and (b) the one doing the expecting.

In all these ways, contextualization seems to be an important component for understanding what I have called therapeutic change. And any discussion of context is automatically a discussion of at least two logical levels, namely, what provides the context, and what gets contextualized. The aspect that I wish to specifically focus upon, in this study, is the possibility of a temporal signature for these distinct logical levels. The research questions, in other words, are twofold: (a) can a measure of “duration” approximate a determination of perceived significance, and (b) what temporal relations exist among layers of context? These questions (particularly the first) can be crystallized in terms of provisional hypotheses, outlined below.

Compared to quantitative research, hypotheses serve a slightly different function in qualitative inquiry. In quantitative inquiry, hypotheses are like load-bearing walls, requiring independent, objective verification so that they can fully sustain the weight of
the theory. In qualitative inquiry, as Cronen (2000) noted, hypotheses are more like "temporary scaffolds supporting the next moves" (p. 10). In other words, they are provisional yet useful guides for action, which are there to support the researcher in knowing how to proceed. They are meant to provide useful access to what is being constructed. Once the theory is formulated, the hypotheses may be dispensed with, as no-longer-needed scaffolding. With this proviso in mind, the following hypotheses are presented, as a way to gain a close-up view and more precise focus for this study of change events in accounts of mediation sessions.

**Hypothesis 1**

One hypothesis is that narrative meanings of longer duration contextualize and thereby lend their meaning to constructions of shorter duration. A party may be operating with a stable system of meanings, having longer and shorter durations relative to each other. In that sense no change, per se, is necessarily being noted by the party. But for the researcher to scan those durations to *determine meanings of longer-duration* is a certain type of change event, one introduced by the researcher. Here, the "difference that makes a difference" (Bateson, 1972, p. 459) is knowing to look for and compare relative durations.

A parallel can be drawn with experiments in physics. Researchers there have found that there is no such thing as energy neutrality; the very act of observing a phenomenon is an energy-charged event, and thus an act which on some scale changes what is observed. So, too, with qualitative methodology from a social constructionist paradigm. Observations are themselves constructions, which do not leave their textual substrate unchanged. In other words, with this first hypothesis, it is a *researcher-determined* change event of selecting and scanning a meaning, relative to a meaning of different duration, to determine which is longer. The change, strictly speaking, is constructing duration as a relevant category, and using it to perceive a stability-variation
distinction in the narrative record. And this hypothesis says that there should be evidence in the narrative record that longer lends meaning to shorter.

**Hypothesis 2**

A second hypothesis is that the selection of a meaning of short duration and its change into a more persisting meaning correlates with an increase in its significance. With this second hypothesis, it is a party-determined change event that is most pertinent. Specifically, the proposed event is whenever the party selects a meaning and increases its duration. To examine such events would require an acceptable measure of duration, and Chapter III below presents one way to construct that measure. This hypothesis says that such increases should display evidence in the narrative record of an increase in perceived importance or significance to the party.

While such a positive correlation (i.e., increased duration means increased significance) may seem self-evident or even circular, I believe it is not, for several reasons. One can imagine, alternatively, that events might have significance by virtue of their intensity or emotional content. Those would be different ways of measuring significance, than the argument of this hypothesis that duration through time is a key indicator of perceived significance. Furthermore, the positive versus negative direction of the proposed correlation is not completely clear, as illustrated below.

For instance, a child with Attention Deficit / Hyperactivity Disorder often moves quickly from one activity of interest to the next. Here there would seem to be quite a number of very short-lived events of significance to the child, with interest more correlated with the brevity of duration of a given activity. Another example may be a person with Obsessive-Compulsive Disorder, where rituals and meanings of unclear significance persist for extended periods of time. In fact, a therapist might argue that the events of "real" significance are those given very short duration in the person's awareness, which lie behind the person's anxiety. While both of these are clinical
examples and thus outside a more normative spectrum of behavior, they do suggest that a reversal of the expected direction of correlation is possible.

To return to the tripartite concerns of what counts, to whom, and as what, the following distinctions are postulated. What counts in this study is temporal context in narrative constructions, displayed through its markers of duration. To the party, it likely counts via the episodic structuring of the narrative, and via increasing the duration of certain meanings. To the researcher, it counts via differentiating smaller parts from larger wholes, and via the relative durations of constructed meanings. Finally, these forms of temporal context count as the party's means of fashioning meaning, and as indicators to the researcher of perceived significance.

In turning finally to the fifth of the five “What” questions--*what do we do?*--I again recapitulate the argument of this chapter by means of all five questions, to articulate what difference all this makes so far for the present study. I. What shall we agree to look at? Answer: therapeutic communication within the field of mediation, from the standpoint of a social constructionist paradigm. II. What substantive claims are being made? Answer: communication as a process of constituting reality, with legitimate subjectivity of both speaker and listener to construct meanings out of the temporal context. Such co-construction utilizes the sequencing of events and episodes, and the relative durations of meanings to indicate degree of perceived significance. III. What is important to self and whose voice is portrayed? Answer: narratively constructed meaning-making by mediation participants--as distinct from actions by the mediators--and reflexive reconstructions of those narratives by participant and researcher alike. IV. What other voices are relevant? Answer: the accumulating research into psychotherapy and narrative dimensions of change, the insights of conversational and discourse analyses into moral positioning, and the fashioning and framing of events into stories to create and convey a temporal world. V. Where to next? Answer: describing how methodological
procedures suited to the present study were selected and crafted, including a mid-course shift from task analysis to narrative analysis, with supplemental use of temporal and lag analytic procedures.

As a foreshadowing of the next chapter, it should be noted that this final point about a mid-course shift, due to constraints on the availability of data, amounted to a shifting of the turtles, such that certain ontological avenues were thereby closed down and others opened up. It no longer became possible to check participants’ reconstructions against interactions during the original mediations, because those data were not available in the majority of cases. The new research avenue that was opened up as a consequence was the question of what do narrative (re)constructions create and accomplish in and of themselves. This was pursued through intensive case study analyses of a portion of the data, which were then synthesized into the first approximations of a grounded theory dealing with temporal enactment in those accounts.
CHAPTER III
METHOD
Research Design and Rationale

This chapter has its own series of five "What" questions. The first question—\textit{what are we doing here?}—is addressed in this section giving the rationale for the study's design. The methodological rationale is presented first, after which I provide an overview of how theory-driven decisions were made. That portion can be considered the story line of this study, in that it lays out my evolving sense of core categories, which gave shape both to the research and its presentation in this manuscript. These discussions are followed by sections that explain sampling and selection of cases (in particular, the rationale for a case-study presentation of two interviews), how the data were analyzed, and then how synthesization and integration took place in the service of grounded theory generation.

\textbf{Double Description}

The entire study has been an application of what Bateson called "double description" (Bateson, 1979, p. 212), a "manner of search" (p. 87) addressing the question, "What bonus or increment of knowing follows from \textit{combining} information from two or more sources?" (p. 67, emphasis in original). Most research methodologies employ multiple sources of information in attempting to gain greater understanding of the phenomena in question. The use of multiple methods is commonly called triangulation, while the joint or iterative examination of multiple blocks of data is sometimes called \textit{constant comparison}. Bateson's emphasis was to "specifically look in each case for the genesis of information of new logical type out of the juxtaposing of multiple descriptions" (p. 70). Table 1 compiles the numerous forms of double description, which
Table 1.
Forms of “Double Description” Utilized in the Methodological Design.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Source 1</th>
<th>Source 2</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
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<td>Quantitative Research Protocols</td>
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<td>Local Scale of Analysis</td>
<td>Macro Scale of Analysis&lt;sup&gt;a&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
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<tr>
<td>Narrative Analysis</td>
<td>Temporal &amp; Lag Analyses&lt;sup&gt;a&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
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<td>Privileged Position to Participant</td>
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<td>Analysis (“fragmenting”)</td>
<td>Synthesis (“integrating”)</td>
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<td><strong>Sampling Procedures</strong></td>
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<tr>
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<td>Interpersonal Process Recall</td>
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<td>Initial Interview&lt;sup&gt;**&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>Subsequent Interview(s)</td>
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<td>Materials in Context</td>
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<td>Frequency Data (“how often?”)</td>
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<td>Unconditional Probabilities</td>
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Table 1 (cont.)

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<th>Source 1</th>
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<td>Coding Procedures</td>
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<td>Tabular Displays</td>
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*aInformation source in column two consists of a different logical type from its counterpart in column one.

were utilized in the design and implementation of this study, with subheadings borrowed from that table for use in organizing the following discussion.

Overall Design

While operating from a social constructionist paradigm typical of qualitative research, I have attempted to utilize the strengths of both qualitative and quantitative protocols. In practical terms this has meant operating at both a local scale and a macro scale of analysis. The local scale was derived primarily from a detailed narrative analysis.
of the transcripts. The macro scale utilized derivative information about reliable themes and clusters, only available by tabulating information (from temporal and lag analyses, respectively) across an entire interview. This introduced a different logical level from what was available on the local scale, to provide triangulated views on the party’s meaning-making activities.

These two scales gave differential privilege to the participant and researcher, respectively—another form of double description. At the local scale, the participant’s voice had a privileged position, in that the story was being told in his or her own words. At the macro level of discourse, the researcher had a privileged position, by virtue of the methods and constructs chosen for embodying the data on this scale. To shift some of the balance back toward the participant, however, I restricted the analyses of themes and clusters to “in vivo codes” (Strauss, 1984, p. 29), consisting of verbatim phrases used by the participant. From the standpoint of the overall design of the study, there was another form of double description, that of complementing analysis with synthesis. Following the analytical procedures of narrative and temporal examination, which fragmented the data into sociological concepts and in vivo codes, it was important to then integrate the data by synthesizing it into formulations that held promise for a more generalizable theory.

Sampling Procedures

In terms of sampling procedures, there were various instances of double description. The Literature Review in the previous chapter has already presented some of the “experiential data” (Strauss, 1987, p. 29) that I brought to this inquiry. Strauss defined these as “data ‘in the head,’ drawn from the researcher’s personal, research, and literature-reading experiences” (p. 20). These were then combined with the research data actually collected for this study, specifically, the video-prompted and structured interviews.
The study also displayed a combination of what Strauss (1987) and his colleagues termed selective sampling and theoretical sampling.

Selective sampling refers to the calculated decision to sample a specific locale or type of interviewee according to a preconceived but reasonable initial set of dimensions (such as time, space, identity) which are worked out in advance for a study. (Glaser, cited in Strauss, 1987, p. 39)

There was a strong element of selective sampling in my early choices as to a data set, in terms of interest in mediation, availability of the Conflict Resolution Center, similarity to counseling settings, and so forth.

Nevertheless, this was also combined from the outset with forms of theoretical sampling, “whereby the analyst decides on analytic grounds what data to collect next and where to find them” (Glaser, cited in Strauss, 1987, p. 38, emphasis in original). In order to study significant change, I wanted a semi-therapeutic setting (i.e., mediation) where communication processes were overt, and I especially wanted the viewpoints of mediation participants themselves, rather than just the mediators, to attempt to fill gaps in the existing literature. This was consistent with Strauss’s (1987) injunction to “choose fields, topics, problems from previous theory on a theoretical sampling basis” (p. 276).

Theoretical sampling also came into play in determining which interviews to intensively analyze—for example, pursuing an apparent negative exemplar of “significant non-change.”

Data were collected via two forms of interview procedures: (a) Interpersonal Process Recall, prompted by a videotape recording of the participant’s mediation session, leading to open-ended reflections about what changes were most significant, and (b) Structured Interview, providing guided reflections by participants who had completed their course of mediation sessions, about various dimensions of potential change that may have taken place. While in the final write-up of results in this manuscript only transcripts
from two of the structured interviews are presented, the total data set does include a stereoscopic view, so to speak, of immediate and delayed reflections by mediation participants, which could be mined for further instances of theoretical sampling.

The two transcripts that were selected for presentation here do provide their own form of double description, by comparing an interview where the party seemed quite settled as to her story of mediation (i.e., Interview SI02), with an interview where the story seemed much more in flux (i.e., Interview SI01). In traditional quantitative methodologies, each case is examined through the lens of the same set of constructs. By contrast, in qualitative and grounded theory methodology (Glaser & Strauss, 1967), the process is more akin to an ascending spiral, as each case makes its own contribution to the emerging theory. In this form of double description, any subsequent case is allowed to elaborate and change the substantive results that have come before. When the changes are few, or are outgrowths of what was implicit in earlier approximations of the theory, then the study approaches its goal of saturation of the theory.

Narrative Materials

Detailed examination of the narrative materials of the study gave rise to several types of double description, particularly between distinct logical levels of discourse. Immersion in the data was a continual guiding principle, at every stage, in a constant attempt to view the materials in context, which often entailed taking note of multiple layers of context. Such groundedness then formed the basis for examining contextualization itself as a process. This entailed a shift to a different logical level, comparable to the increment of understanding described by Bateson (1979) when he included "the combined effect of 'calibration' and 'feedback'" (p. 212) in his ladder of logical types. This form of double description has long been familiar to both group and family therapists, who learn to listen not simply to the content of their clients’ situations, but also to the process by which the content is enacted (and hopefully changed).
In this study of narrative accounts of mediation sessions, such dual attention meant attending to both the narrative content and the process of narrating itself. Another way to characterize this is that, first, persisting meanings were uncovered, then, persistence itself was examined. Again, such distinctions operate at different logical levels, in that the latter provides the constitutive basis for the former. Moreover, each successive series of narrative episodes provided new material for investigating how persistence and context were being created, fashioned, and revised as necessary into the party’s ongoing story. Indeed, in just two interviews, over sixty narrative episodes were examined in detail, offering a rich data set to begin to approximate a theory of temporal enactment of meaning-making.

Statistical Procedures

Double description also showed up in some of the statistical procedures used in this study. As explained in more detail below, what I called temporal analysis consisted of identifying recurring themes on the one hand, and reliable clusters of themes on the other. Recurring themes were isolated on the basis of frequency data—essentially the question, how often did a given (in vivo) theme occur in the interview? By adding to that distribution data about where in the transcript those occurrences arose, it became possible to derive a determination of duration of themes relative to the entire interview. Statistically reliable clusters of themes were identified by a modification of lag analytic procedures, the essence of which was a comparison (i.e., a double description) between unconditional probabilities of occurrence and conditional probabilities of co-occurrence between two themes.

Coding Procedures

Coding procedures were derived from grounded theory methodology (e.g., Glaser & Strauss, 1967; Strauss, 1987), and entailed several systematic forms of double description.
The initial type of coding done during a research project is termed open coding. This is unrestricted coding of the data... by scrutinizing the fieldnote, interview, or other document very closely: line by line, or even word by word. (Strauss, 1987, p. 28, emphasis omitted)

This was later supplemented with "axial coding... [which] consists of intense analysis done around one category at a time" (p. 32). Specifically, this entailed utilizing a coding paradigm of looking for "conditions, interaction among the actors, strategies and tactics, consequences" (p. 27f.) for the categories in question. This was especially useful in the later stages of theory generation to make the emerging categories "conceptually dense" (p. 31).

Another form of double description in the coding procedures was to use both in vivo codes and sociological constructs in analyzing the data. The in vivo codes were "derived directly from the language... used by the actors" (Glaser, cited in Strauss, 1987, p. 33), with often a vividness of expression that served to illustrate the code in and of itself. Sociological constructs, by contrast, were more abstract categories "based on a combination of the researcher's scholarly knowledge and knowledge of the substantive field under study... [which] add scope by going beyond local meanings to broader social science concerns" (Glaser, cited in Strauss, 1987, p. 34).

The shift from in vivo codes to sociological constructs was procedurally marked by moving from the various analyses of the interviews, to their reconstitution and synthesis into grounded theory categories dealing with temporal enactment. Shifting to this level was important for the results to have any usefulness beyond the idiosyncratic content of the immediate participants. This was an attempt to move to the level Bateson (1979) referred to as "the pattern which connects" (p. 68). As Strauss (1987) stated, "We are interested, after all, not in the viewpoints of specific individuals but in the general patterns evinced by classes of individuals" (p. 268). In the process, categories were
systematically compared with one another, to determine which fit better as subcategories and which one seemed to be "proven over and over again" (Glaser, cited in Strauss, 1987, p. 35) as a core category capable of integrating the majority of the data.

**Presentation Procedures**

Finally, there were several forms of double description utilized in the presentation of materials in this manuscript. In keeping with conventions for qualitative reporting, thick description and extensive case exemplification were intertwined with the analytical and theoretical commentary, so that each might illuminate the other. A more central double description was between the data, viewed as the territory of this study, and the tautology about temporality that emerged, viewed as a map (see Bateson, 1979). A fuller discussion of these distinctions is given in Chapter V, below. In addition, the theory concerning temporal enactment that came out of this study has been laid out in complementary fashion, by means of tabular and propositional displays, as well as various "integrative diagrams" (Strauss, 1987, p. 22), to enhance understanding and "instrumental utility" (Gale, 1993, p. 83) for the reader.

**Overview of Theory-Driven Decisions**

This section begins to address the substantive question, *what is this about?* (i.e., the second of the five "Whats" for this chapter). Throughout the course of this study, there were various decisions that were driven by theoretical considerations, despite the migrating nature of that theory. The study seemed to evolve according to my provisional and evolving sense of its core category. Lather (1991) advocated "a systematized reflexivity which reveals how a priori theory has been changed by the logic of the data" (p. 67, emphasis omitted), and that is my intention with this section. It amounts to looking at the story line of the study and of the grounded theory that emerged from it. As an organizing device for telling that story, it uses the various provisional core categories.
Glaser (cited in Strauss, 1987) stated, "The analyst should consciously look for a core variable when coding data" (p. 35), and that process began for me even in early encounters with "experiential data" (p. 20) from the literature. For instance, some of the psychotherapy process studies spoke of "significant change events" (e.g., Elliott, 1984, 1985; Elliott, et al., 1985). Because I wanted a setting with more circumscribed communicational processes than is often the case in psychotherapy, I chose mediation sessions to investigate. Thus, throughout the data-gathering stage, the working title of this study has been "Significant Change Events in Mediation," with an implicit core category of change.

Because I wanted party-determined views of significant change, I chose to investigate which events made the most difference for participants in mediation, from their own points of view. Early on, however, I realized that it would be a social constructionist enterprise, operating on several levels at once. Of prime importance was the party's casting of his/her own experience. But this was occurring at multiple points in time, with reflexive influences on the party's understanding. There was the mediation as it was lived at the time, along with whatever attempts occurred subsequent to the mediation to interpret its outcome. Such understandings by the parties involved were tapped by the research interviews of this study. In so doing, another opportunity for construction and processing was thereby offered to each party, which could have changed what subsequently was remembered of the mediation. Then there were the various constructions of the researcher, both at the time of the interview itself (as a subordinate co-constructor), and especially during numerous analytical iterations in compiling and examining the transcripts. All of these were legitimately points for "change events" to happen, for party and researcher alike.

Originally, the intent was to lay out a detailed task analysis of change dynamics occurring within mediation sessions themselves. The hope was to have parties self-
identify which portions of the mediations were most significant to them, along with their understandings of why, and then for the researcher to compare these with discourse or speech act analyses of those specific segments of the mediation transcripts. Because of a difficulty getting enough participants who would consent to the videotaping such a plan would require, it was necessary to revise the protocol and incorporate an alternate data-gathering method. The result was two different interview methods, utilizing with some participants tape-assisted recall and with others a structured interview format, to derive what each party thought was most significant to her/him about the mediation process.

This amounted to a decided shift in the available research data, from enacted change to reported change. In both the instructions for the tape-assisted recall sessions (see Appendix, Table 12), and in preparing questions for the structured interviews (see Appendix, Table 11), I attempted to dimensionalize (Strauss, 1987, p. 21) the construct of change, by asking about conditions, interactions, consequences, and so forth. The structured interviews in particular generated rich narrative accounts, gathered after the entire mediation was over for that party, which were well suited to in-depth narrative analysis.

During my background preparation for this study, I became sensitized from readings in cybernetics and deconstructionism to the necessary unity of continuity and change, as reciprocal dimensions that inhere in each other. This allowed me to notice issues of “constancy” in early open coding of the data, and I began to think of an implicit (short-lived) core category of change and stability.

I especially noticed an anomalous finding that I coded as “significant non-change” in one of the interviews (i.e., SI01), and on theoretical sampling grounds, I decided to concentrate on an intensive analysis of that case. This amounted to a subtle shift from emphasizing change to emphasizing significance, which became the next (provisional) core category. I began to develop notions about how to measure
significance, as evidenced by narrative story lines, recurring themes, and reliable clusters of themes, realizing that a rigorous analysis of these components would require a good deal of narrative continuity in the transcripts. I consequently decided to focus most attention on the structured interviews, rather than the tape-assisted recall data, seeing as the latter were more disjointed from a narrative sense.

All interviews were audiotaped, and I prepared a detailed transcript of each, as an initial form of immersion in the data. An intensive case study of two of those transcripts is presented in this manuscript, with a detailed rationale and manner of selection provided below. Both were drawn from the structured interview protocol. The transcripts allowed those interviews to be reviewed over and over in slow motion, to draw out the implications of features of interest. This was an ongoing form of immersion, so critical to all qualitative research.

I believed it was important to preserve the voices of the participants for as long as possible, amidst the various analytical reformulations. I therefore elaborated on processes that any listener would have in seminal form, resulting in a mixture of qualitative and quantitative methods, adapted to the task at hand. For instance, listeners are quite used to hearing accounts in story form, and this aspect was expanded into a detailed narrative analysis of each transcript. In addition, listeners commonly orient themselves by means of distinctive repetitions, clusters of ideas, and contextual framing. In vivo codes, that is, phrases in the participants’ own words, formed the basis for these more quantitative analyses. These aspects were elaborated and quantified in several forms of temporal analysis, which were then applied to each transcript. The components of these various procedures are described below.

Strauss (1987) stated:

A general rule of thumb is, then, to look for in vivo categories, examining them not as themes, as is often done by qualitative researchers, but in terms of
dimensions--then to create hypotheses bearing on possibly relevant conditions and consequences, strategies and interactions. (p. 160)

I believe I found myself getting caught with the thematic nature of the in vivo codes, and needing to move beyond their local reference to that particular participant, to processes (i.e., sociological constructs) that were potentially more generalizable to other people as well. I thus began to focus on constructionist methods that were available to the party for meaning-making itself, which then became the next version of the core category.

I consequently developed a "generative question" (Strauss, 1987, p. 22) about the duration of a meaning as its effective sphere of influence, which led to hypotheses about context and the relative durations of different meanings. I realized that I could construct a working measure of duration, by combining cumulative frequencies with distribution data for the in vivo codes. To use this, however, I needed enough depth of analysis with an interview to discern something about temporal duration, (my next provisional version of a core category). I therefore decided to limit the study to the intensive analysis of a few select cases.

In pursuing this strategy, I realized through early integrative efforts that I could not relate everything to a notion of duration across time. It was necessary to fracture the emerging categories into a variety of concepts dealing with the broader notion of temporality. Axial coding of temporal categories and sub-categories helped to make the emerging theory more dense and, hopefully, more useful. This was tested by returning to another case from the data set (i.e., interview SI02), and conducting a similarly intensive analysis--utilizing narrative, temporal, and integrative procedures--on that transcript as well.

Theoretical sampling was involved with selecting this case, in keeping with Strauss's (1987) recommendation: "Once you have even the beginnings of a theory (after the first days of data collection and analysis), then you begin to leave selective sampling
and move directly to the theoretical sampling" (p. 274). With these two cases (i.e., SI01 and SI02) surface characteristics were similar—for instance, comparable age, gender, change in a long-term relationship (i.e., divorce), as well as problem-solving setting (i.e., mediation)—but there was distinct variability between these two cases in style and clarity of meaning-making efforts.

The hope was that such variability could serve to extend the emerging theory. The result was the theory began to be saturated, with similar categories fitting the new data. An important type of verification was the emergence of a subcategory that I called "permutations." This consisted of recombining existing features of the emergent theory, as well as predicting and then finding examples of those permutations, by reiterative and selective coding of the previous interview. On that basis, I decided to settle on temporality as an appropriate core category and proceeded to relate everything else to it by further selective and axial coding of subcategories. This provisional sense of saturation seemed to be enough to warrant presenting the findings in this manuscript, and (in Chapter V) suggesting areas for further work.

Sampling and Selection Procedures

The original proposal for this study entailed a combination of videotaped and audiotaped data, of mediation sessions and recall sessions respectively, to obtain triangulated perspectives on significant change events occurring in mediation. Thus, participants were sought among clients going through the intake process at a campus-based Conflict Resolution Center (CRC). Procedures and ethical safeguards were explained to potential subjects, with no restrictions placed on accessibility of services from the CRC should parties decline to participate in the research project. An important ethical constraint was that both parties to an upcoming mediation would need to consent in writing to the videotaping of their sessions, even if only one party was participating in
the research by continuing with the recall sessions. In addition, written consent for the videotaping was obtained from the co-mediators.

Only two research participants (both female in their forties and from the same set of mediation sessions) were obtained by this method, over a fifteen month period. CRC staff and I both believed that this was due to the potential invasiveness of the videotaping procedure, with its risk of breach of confidentiality. Another factor was the limited number of potential clients seeking services from the CRC during that time frame.

Accordingly, the research protocol was expanded to include a structured interview format, which would only be audiotaped, as an alternate data collection method. An additional site was utilized for recruiting participants, namely, a private mediation practice run by an attorney at law. Again, procedures and ethical safeguards were explained to potential participants, with five parties agreeing to participate in the research project by means of a structured interview about their experiences. This pool of participants included three males and two females, ranging in age from their early thirties to mid fifties, with three of the five in their early forties.

With all participants, informed consent was obtained in writing, with opportunity to withdraw from the project at any time, without penalty. No participants exercised their option to withdraw. The majority of participants had utilized mediation for family or divorce purposes. The entire research project was reviewed and approved by the Institutional Review Board of the University of North Dakota, and conducted in accordance with the ethical standards of the American Psychological Association (Canter, Bennett, Jones, & Nagy, 1994).

**Structured Interview**

Participants involved in the Structured Interview method of data collection had already completed their mediation sessions, ranging in number from three to eight sessions. All of them had been involved in divorce, child support, or child custody
mediation. They engaged in structured interviews, lasting from forty-five minutes to about an hour and a half in length. Table 11 in the Appendix presents the format and questions utilized in the structured interview, involving eleven substantive questions preceded by seven demographic questions. Specific follow-up questions and probes varied a little from interview to interview, based on features unique to that participant's situation.

These sessions were audiotaped and later transcribed word-for-word, altering or removing any identifying information about any of the persons mentioned or involved in the mediation. Usually such modifications were limited to a word or two, although in once instance, a short segment with numerous interwoven references from a previous custody battle with another ex-spouse was left out of the transcript. Nonverbal devices such as laughter, pauses, or truncated words were indicated on the transcripts, without engaging in the more elaborate transcription conventions characteristic of conversational analysis methodology (Heritage, 1995; Psathas, 1990).

Transcripts of the structured interview sessions ranged in length from 832 to 1418 lines. Narrative, temporal, and grounded theory analytical procedures--described below--were then applied to the transcripts. The two interviews described in this manuscript with an intensive case study approach were with female participants, utilizing this structured interview format, with transcripts of approximately 900 and 1200 lines, respectively.

Interpersonal Process Recall

For those involved in the Interpersonal Process Recall method of data collection, their mediation sessions were videotaped, utilizing discreet placement of the recording equipment to minimize its intrusiveness on the mediation process. After each session, that video was used a few days later at a subsequent recall session, with just one participant at a time present. Once the videotape was no longer needed for conducting a recall session, it was destroyed. During the recall session, the video was played for the party, and she
was asked by the recall consultant to stop the tape and describe anything that marked a point of significant change for her. Table 12 in the Appendix presents the exact wording of the recall instructions.

The party's comments and interaction with the interviewer were audiotaped and transcribed verbatim, altering or removing any information from the transcript that might identify any of the participants. While the transcripts included indications of pauses, laughter, and the approximate locations of back-channel responses (e.g., “Okay. Mmm-hmm”) by the interviewer or participant, other conventions of transcription for conversational analysis were not utilized, such as the length of pauses in tenths of a second, or transliteration of the speaker's inflection (Heritage, 1995).

Transcripts of the recall sessions ranged in length from 700 to 1050 lines. Because these interviews comprised a more disjointed series of comments, in reaction to points from all across a given mediation session, there was less narrative flow to these transcripts. Consequently, when the focus of the study changed from task analysis to an investigation of narrative context, these transcripts were deselected from the intensive case study approach used to generate initial grounded theory categories. They remain, however, a potential source for additional variation, as a type of theoretical sampling (Corbin & Strauss, 1990), if there is need to saturate the categories further in the future.

**Selection of Cases**

As indicated above by the theory-driven decisions made in this study, the eventual write-up presented here consisted of in-depth case studies of two of the structured interviews, designated as SI01 and SI02. Huberman and Miles (1994) described a case-oriented strategy in this manner: “A conceptual framework oversees the first case study, then successive cases are examined to see whether the new pattern matches the one found earlier” (p. 436). The theoretical sampling basis for selecting interviews SI01 and SI02 to
analyze in depth was outlined above. Yin (cited in Pandit, 1996) itemized the options available with theoretical sampling, as follows:

(a) choose a case to fill theoretical categories, to extend the emerging theory; and/or, (b) choose a case to replicate previous case(s) to test the emerging theory; or (c) choose a case that is a polar opposite to extend the emerging theory.

Selection of the particular cases presented in this manuscript shared features of all of these options.

Consistent with option (c), interview SI01 was chosen because it seemed to portray a negative exemplar, essentially a polar opposite when looking at significant change events, with its repeated emphasis on significant non-change. Interview SI02 was largely chosen according to option (b), to replicate and test the appropriateness of the emerging theory, although it, too, included aspects of option (c), by presenting quite a clear and settled story of how and why that mediation proceeded as it had, in contrast with interview SI01, which presented a rather disjunctive story that seemed still to be in flux for that participant.

While this may seem like a slim database for constructing grounded theory, I believe Strauss (1987) offered warrant for a case study approach, by stating, “Analysis can begin with very little data as long as the researcher takes the analysis as provisional—to be checked out” (p. 163). His specific remarks about a case-study or case-history strategy included the following:

Data may include, of course, brief or lengthy case-study and -history documents which can contribute to building your theory. . . . The author may briefly contrast two or more cases . . . consist[ing] mainly of highly selected descriptive detail put together as a more or less coherent whole, to illustrate one or more theoretical
points. . . . With case studies that constitute a book-length monograph, . . . the theoretical commentary generally is more elaborate. (p. 219)

This manuscript seems to fit within such guidelines; therefore, I believe generating and testing grounded theory on an intensive study of a very few cases is warranted.

Case study design for qualitative research is also supported by a variety of other authors. Pea and Russell (1987) noted, “The importance of detailed studies of individual cases in elaborating psychological theories is well attested . . . and microanalytic studies of behavior have provided insights into processes of mental functioning” (p. 316, emphasis in original). Precedents can be found in the groundbreaking work of Pittenger, Hockett, and Danehey (1960), with their detailed analysis of five minutes of an interview, as well as in Labov and Fanshel (1977), who derived Comprehensive Discourse Analysis from a fine-grained examination of fifteen minutes of a psychotherapy session.

Other examples of intensive analyses--including (a) a single therapy session, (b) brief segments of a session, or (c) episodes from several supervision sessions--are cited in Gale (1993). Conceptual arguments for single-case designs have been offered by Davidson and Costello (1969), Galassi and Gersh (1993), and Gale (1993), while Millen (1992) has noted that the case study is “well suited for social constructionist projects” (p. 93).

Greenberg (1986) made the case that “the intensive analysis of a few single cases of successful whole therapies, potent change episodes, and moments of change is probably the method of choice for those who want to tackle questions about specific mechanisms of change” (p. 728). While the focus of this study migrated from studying change events happening within mediation sessions, to studying meaning-making in later accounts of the mediation sessions, the social constructionist nature of this enterprise retained an emphasis on change in and through meaning-making itself. Thus, intensive
immersion and thick description have been techniques well suited to the needs of this study.

Greenberg (1986) spoke of “discerning patterns in their own context” (p. 729), because “intensive analysis allows for the identification of much more complex relationships and patterns of variables related to change” (p. 729). I believe the detailed nature of the grounded theory of temporal enactment in narrative accounts, which emerged (at least in its first approximations) from this study, will bear out the importance of having submitted a few transcripts to such intensive analysis and examination.

Analysis of the Data

Forms of Triangulation

Establishing triangulated views of the data was a way to address the third of the five “What” questions, what is important to self? That is to say, what meanings were important to the participants in the study, and how were these conveyed to the listener / researcher? Various forms of “structural collaboration . . . [including] prolonged engagement, triangulation, deviant exemplars, constant comparison method, thick description” (Gale, 1993, p. 83) were utilized to increase the study’s coherence and believability to the reader. The analytic steps followed in this study are summarized first, before continuing with a detailed description of each procedure.

Initially, open coding (Strauss, 1984) was conducted on data from the interviews. This generated a variety of abstract categories and content codes, which lost much of the flavor of the interviews themselves and ultimately proved unwieldy. Such a procedure moved too quickly away from de facto understandings that the participants themselves may have been using in constructing their accounts of mediation. As a result of this false start, a decision was made to move closer to the data, and immerse the analysis with the actual forms of expression of each party. Out of this came a system of transcript-specific
in vivo codes for each participant, along with a detailed study of the narrative flow of each interview.

Examination of key narrative episodes and in vivo coding of repetitive themes were procedures used to retain the voice of the participants for as long as possible into the analysis phase of the study. These were processed by means of narrative analysis and temporal analysis, as ways to condense the data into meaningful constructs. Along the way, a variety of methods of displaying and diagramming the data were utilized (and frequently discarded), to reconfigure the results and suggest new linkages. Exemplification and thick description were frequently employed, to lay out the evidence and demonstrate the groundedness of the emerging system of constructs.

The constructs for the grounded theory took their initial cue from the literature review, as far as what questions to ask of the data and what kind of nets should be cast. But the shape of the actual constructs emerged from a subsequent open coding procedure, which kept fracturing the data into different configurations of concepts, until the beginnings of a workable system emerged. The constructs were then sifted and regrouped into more robust categories, as branches of a possible core category dealing with temporality.

The key branches or categories of temporality were then subjected to axial coding, to specify their enactments and delineate their parameters. With each transcript, the emergent categories and constructs were challenged, to revise the concepts as needed and make the categories conceptually dense. Selective coding was also utilized with the second transcript presented in this manuscript, to reveal gaps, saturate categories where possible, and tighten linkages in the emergent theory.

Narrative Analysis of Episodic Accounts

As with other aspects of the analysis, the foundation of narrative analysis was immersion in the transcripts. It oscillated between a macro-focus on the interview as a
whole, and an intense micro-focus on individual incidents and episodes in an effort to relate them to the whole. It was especially valuable to attend to anything that aroused questions or perplexity, as a way to get deeper into the text as given. While far from a linear process, the following list enumerates the main elements involved in examining the narrative flow of an interview.

First, I partitioned the interview into storytelling episodes (or episode series), based on the contexts supplied by the interviewer's questions. Following "the shift of topic . . . at episode boundaries" (Pea & Russell, 1987, p. 321) within a given series of narrated incidents actually led to over sixty distinct episodes, between the two interviews eventually presented in detail here, with over three dozen of these episodes addressed in this manuscript. Then I identified the tone or story point of each storytelling episode, noting in particular how the episode ended and what led the interviewer to move on with the next question.

Next came a more detailed examination of the structure and cadence of each episode. This occurred by looking at the specifics of how the interviewer's question was addressed; that is to say, noting what was included in the answer, how the pieces were strung together, what illustrations or qualifiers were added, what was repeated, and what surprises or seeming disconnections occurred. It was often important to examine in more detail the micro-episodes or story incidents that were framed within the larger storytelling episode. The process described so far generated a variety of provisional notes and hypotheses, which were compared with other parts of the interview in an attempt to confirm or disconfirm a working sense of the narrative. This kind of constant comparison was integral to filling out the overall narrative impact of the interview.

Following this, it was important to select pivotal or prototypical episodes to which to attend, for inclusion in the manuscript. Quotations from the transcript and thick description of their significance were important aspects, so that the reader could judge
whether emerging conclusions had sufficient warrant. A story grammar—that is, a system of rules specifying how stories could be structured—such as that offered by Mandler (1984), was helpful in parsing the components of the more complicated episodes. While such a process often rearranged the pieces of the party's telling of the episode, it often gave greater narrative focus to what was being conveyed.

Through these steps came a broadening awareness of repetitive story points that occurred across episodes. And in line with that, it helped to step back every so often and articulate the general narrative flow of the party's argument through the overall interview. Out of that came the identification of occasional significant narrative shifts in how the party's story was being told. It also was important to spell out the implications of such narrative shifts, in terms of what was then emphasized by the party.

**Temporal Analysis of Repetitive Themes**

The temporal structure of these transcripts was examined in the following way. In vivo codes were generated for each transcript. In vivo coding is a procedure utilized in grounded theory generation. The idea was to stay as close as possible to the participant's concepts and frames of reference, by using the participant's own language in labeling the codes. Such codes were closely tied to a given transcript, and often retained a certain vividness of expression that was extremely helpful, both in capturing the flavor of the person's way of thinking and in suggesting linkages and hypotheses among the concepts (Strauss, 1984). These in vivo codes were then utilized in several forms of temporal analysis.

By temporal analysis I mean a search for temporal form. This manifested itself in three ways in particular. First, there was simple repetition. Which phrases or idioms did a given party repeat, and was there any pattern to their occurrence in the transcript?

Second, there were clusters of phrases occurring in close proximity, (with proximity determined by a lag analytic procedure). Which combinations reliably occurred together,
at a greater than expected probability? Third, there were the relative durations of different ideas. Which ones seemed to be of longer duration, and how were ideas framed relative to one another? Methods appropriate to these manifestations of temporal form are described below.

Reading and re-reading the transcript, to determine which phrases were used repeatedly by the party, established in vivo codes for each interview. It goes without saying that immersion in the text was critical for this process to take place. There was an issue of scale here, in that repetition obviously was not examined at the instrumental level of individual words; otherwise words such as "I" or "the" would have the most repetitions. The phrase had to be sufficiently distinctive and even idiosyncratic to draw some notice.

As mentioned above, I thought it important during the early stages of analysis to retain the flavor of each interview by using codes that were virtual quotations. This still left the problem of similar turns of phrases that could be functionally equivalent to one another, and in this matter there was room for researcher subjectivity and judgment. However, tables have been included in the manuscript that laid out the frequency and distribution of the in vivo codes with each transcript, and these also listed the phrases considered functionally equivalent, so that the reader could make a determination as to the plausibility and usefulness of this part of the analysis. In terms of logistics, each code was assigned a shorthand label for ease in discussion, as well as a letter used as its lag code determination in the lag analysis portion of the study.

The in vivo codes that emerged for each transcript—along with their lag code designations, abbreviated labels, and equivalent phrases—were compiled in tables and listed in descending order of frequency with total number of occurrences for that transcript. The procedure for displaying cumulative frequency was as follows. Each code was originally listed with every line number at which it occurred in the transcript. The
total number of lines in the transcript was used to divide the interview into four quarters, and the number of code occurrences by quarter was tallied. These were progressively summed and divided by total occurrences, to give a cumulative percentage for each code for each quarter. Then, a 95% confidence interval was established for each of these, by taking the expected cumulative percentages if codes were evenly distributed throughout the transcript (i.e., 25%, 50%, and 75% for the first three quarters), and adding and subtracting 1.96 times the standard deviation (SD) for each one based on the total occurrences for each code.

The rationale for these procedures is detailed below, and it provides several illustrations of Bateson’s (1979) method of double description, to broaden understanding by creating information of different logical type. Deriving the in vivo codes by counting the number of occurrences in an interview was one measure of which themes were important to a given party. That measure was reflected in the frequency tallies listed in the respective tables. Tabulating multiple occurrences created information of a different logical type than any given instance, by combining information about overall time span with the yes-no determination of whether a theme occurred. This allowed the researcher to have greater confidence that a given theme truly was important.

Because each occurrence was already matched with a line number of where in the transcript it occurred, the possibility of distribution information also arose, which was another layering of logical type. If “how often” (i.e., frequency) approximated “how strong” a theme was, with this next layer “where it occurred” (i.e., distribution) could be used to approximate “how long” it lasted. Frequency was thus a pattern of instances, while distribution was a pattern of frequencies. These different transformations of the repetition data became triangulated estimates of degree of importance to a party.

A problem arose, however, with how to discern a useful pattern in the distribution data. In a sense, the noise had to be filtered out, so conclusions could be based on a
reliable signal. Transcript line numbers initially were used as a time-coordinate in graphing the occurrences, resulting in segmented lines of differing lengths and ascending slopes. In order to compare them, it was necessary to standardize, by collating the number of occurrences of each theme, by the quarter of the transcript in which they occurred. This resulted in standardized four-segment lines, but now of irregular slopes. A further standardization was to transform the data into cumulative frequencies by quarter, thereby restoring the ascent to each slope.

Before such lines could be meaningful reflections of "duration," however, it was necessary to introduce two further types of double description. A graph—specifically, a cumulative frequency polygon (Hays, 1994)—of perfectly random cumulative frequencies by quarter would be a diagonal line of 45 degrees, (i.e., 25% in the first quarter, 50% in the second, etc.) Comparing the actual slopes with this idealized random slope displayed most lines as somewhat convex or concave, relative to the 45-degree diagonal. Convex lines signified more occurrences early in the interview, while concave lines indicated a delay in the appearance of the theme with proportionately more occurrences later on.

It remained to determine whether the deviation of a given frequency from the random slope was an artifact, or a reliable distinction upon which to base a conclusion as to duration. By standardizing occurrences as cumulative percentages (i.e., as ratios in relation to 100%), random distribution by quarter could be viewed as the expected probabilities of 25%, 50%, and 75%, respectively. In a similar manner, actual percentages by quarter could be viewed as the observed probabilities of occurrence. In such a situation, equations for the binomial test could be utilized, to provide a 95% confidence window for each cumulative percentage, (with a representative presented as Equation 1, below, adapted from Sackett, 1979).

Few lines exactly matched the expected 25%, 50%, and 75% coordinates of the random line, but frequencies such as 33%, 60%, and 80% (e.g., code D of transcript
SI01) could still be essentially randomly distributed across each quarter, from a statistical standpoint. To make such a determination, I chose the 95% confidence interval for each quarter of each theme, to use as a standard of measure. Nineteen times out of twenty, frequencies at or outside their respective 95% confidence windows were likely to be significant deviations from the random line, and thus worthy of concluding there was a pattern to their distribution across the interview. The criteria for those conclusions as to duration are presented below, following a brief demonstration of the calculations involved.

By way of example, with code A (i.e., "make sense?") of transcript SI01, there were 31 total occurrences, ten (or 32%) of which occurred in the first quarter of the transcript. The formula—which was then translated into the appropriate spreadsheet characters—for the first quarter 95% confidence interval for that code was:

\[
= 0.25 \pm (1.96 \times \text{SquareRoot} \left( \frac{0.25 \times (1.00 - 0.25)}{31} \right))
\]

(1)

This yielded a confidence window of from 10% to 40%, which encompassed the actual frequency of 32%; therefore, this code was essentially evenly distributed for the first quarter, statistically speaking.

When an actual percentage fell at or outside the confidence window, it was highlighted and used to make a determination of "duration" of the code relative to the entire interview. If the actual cumulative percentages all fell within their respective 95% confidence intervals—showing they were statistically evenly distributed throughout the interview—it was labeled an "enduring" code. If one or more percentages were significantly higher than expected (i.e., at or above the +1.96*SD cutoff point), that meant that a proportionally higher number of occurrences was happening early on in the interview and peaking, so to speak. Therefore, that code was labeled "decreasing" in
duration over the course of the interview. Conversely, when one or more percentages were significantly lower than expected (i.e., at or below the -1.96*SD cutoff point), that meant significantly fewer occurrences appeared in the early sections of the interview, while proportionally more occurred later on. Such a code was labeled "increasing" in duration.

Lag Analysis of Thematic Clusters

The process of lag analysis used in this study was a modification of lag sequential analysis, pioneered by Sackett (1979), Gottman (1979), and others. The aim was to establish statistically significant co-occurrence of events, by comparing their conditional probability of co-occurrence to the unconditional probability of occurrence. Sackett (1987) described the procedure this way:

An unconditional probability (UCP) is the frequency of a code divided by the total number of codes in the series. . . . The UCP measures the chances of observing a behavior at any randomly selected second. A lag probability measures temporal co-occurrence of behavior pairs within or between interactor sequences. A criterion behavior is selected, and counts are made for the number of times the criterion is matched by itself (autolag) or by other behaviors (crosslag) at various steps from each criterion occurrence. (p. 859f., emphasis in original)

The null hypothesis was that the observed probability of a behavior following a given criterion would simply match its expected probability (i.e., the UCP).

A binomial test was used to assess the statistical likelihood of obtaining this result. The basic formulas were given by Sackett (1979, p. 627), with slight modification here as to the form of the mathematical copy, (with abbreviations as follows: Z = Z-statistic, P = probability, SD = standard deviation, and N = number of occurrences):
\[ Z = \frac{P_{\text{observed}} - P_{\text{expected}}}{SD_{\text{expected}}} \]  

(2)

where

\[ SD = \left\{ \left[ P_{\text{expected}} \times (1 - P_{\text{expected}}) \right] / N_{\text{Total Criterion}} \right\}^{1/2} \]  

(3)

This test could be applied for each code following each criterion, at whatever lag positions following the criterion one might wish.

However, there was a potential problem when the same code was allowed to follow itself—the condition called "autolag" above. As Sackett (1987) noted, "criterion behavior autocorrelation biases the UCP null model by constraining or expanding the range of opportunity for crosslag occurrence" (p. 865). The discrete events of textual self-report data lend themselves to autolag occurrence, since it was common for the same theme or phrase to be used more than once within a given block of text. Therefore, it was necessary to correct for autocorrelation, by subtracting out the number of autolag occurrences, and thereby adjusting the set of (a) unconditional probabilities, (b) crosslag conditional probabilities, and (c) Z-statistic values, in keeping with Sackett's (1987) recommendations. This modified Equation 3, above, by using \( N_{\text{Adjusted Total Criterion}} \) in place of \( N_{\text{Total Criterion}} \).

The major modification of the lag model as it was utilized here, as compared to the literature, was that strict conditional probability at each lag position following each criterion was neither necessary, nor particularly desirable in this study. Lag sequential analysis has been commonly applied to interaction data between two persons, in which the unfolding occurrence of each behavior forms part of the context for the other's response. In this study, the lag model was applied to within-person data derived from narrative accounts. In such a situation, there was no reason to suppose that codes would
be generated and co-occur in the exact same sequence each time. A narrator would have a
greater sense of what s/he wanted to mention, and greater freedom over the order of
mention, than would be the case when two conversational partners were interacting.

In such circumstances, it seemed enough for the purpose of determining reliable
clustering if the person's themes co-occurred in sufficient proximity--rather than in
precisely the same sequence--at a higher than expected probability. And this was
measured by grouping all the co-occurrences of each criterion with each code (for
instance, criterion A followed by code B), within a window of five lag positions
following each occurrence of the criterion of interest. In other words, each respective
criterion-code combination occurring within the five-lag window was treated as the same
event for statistical purposes, regardless of how many intervening codes there may have
been within those five lag positions. This was consistent with an option raised by Sackett
(1987), to “define a time window. For example, frequencies might be summed for the 5-
sec interval after the trigger sequence onset” (p. 876, emphasis in original). In my case, I
used a window of five events, rather than five seconds.

I believe there was some naturalistic warrant for grouping such co-occurring
events together in this way, within a five-lag window. It was a fairly conservative
estimate of listener attentiveness and retention. Short-term memory has often been
modeled with a capacity of seven, plus or minus two (Miller, 1956). If that were a fair
appraisal, then a listener would be able to attend without too much difficulty to recurring
themes along a moving window out to about five lag places.

From a statistical standpoint, using party-generated phrases as the in vivo codes--
rather than second-by-second time sampling or some other type of more frequent event
sampling--would not generate enough events to statistically analyze the frequencies at
each separate lag position following the criterion. However, by grouping events that
occurred in reasonable enough proximity to one another, it was still possible to test
whether certain combinations occurred at a higher than expected rate. As Sackett (1987) noted, "Using a time window also has the advantage of increasing the total frequency of counts in the table, thereby increasing the power of the profile test" (p. 876). This procedure was sufficient to raise the adjusted criterion frequencies of all but three codes to 30 occurrences or more, the conventional size of N to allow use of the Z-test statistic (Sackett, 1979). Grouping within such a five-lag window also helped to correct for any random noise introduced by including potentially unimportant codes in the analysis.

The mechanics of this process were as follows. As alluded to above, not every temporal unit was coded with some form of behavior. That is to say, event sampling was utilized for the lag analysis, not time sampling. Moreover, I had to determine what events seemed worth sampling. My decision was to use an implicit determination supplied by the participants, in their recurring use of certain phrases. Thus, only repetitive themes or phrases were considered in vivo codes and assigned letters to represent the lag codes. These lag codes were then laid out in serial order, according to the line number of the transcript where each one occurred. In addition, a "wastebasket" category (Sackett, 1979, p. 631) was created and labeled lag code X, whenever there was a gap of ten lines or more in the transcript between other adjacent codes. Lag code X, here, became essentially a place-holder in considering the sequential patterning of codes.

Use of such an extra category was necessary because, for the lag analysis model to work, there had to be exhaustive and mutually exclusive codes applied to the data. While the definition of lag code X was a bit arbitrary, it helped to guard against widely separated codes being ranked side by side. It may also have had some naturalistic basis, in terms of a likely memory decay function occurring for the listener over time. Other than noting the number of such gaps between other codes, and including that amount in the total number of code occurrences, code X was not included in lag analysis.
combinations (or cumulative distributions throughout the transcript), since its presence was simply an artifact of the selection of phrases used as genuine in vivo codes.

Once the complete data set for the transcript was established, each code was treated in turn as a criterion, and a tally generated of the criterion-code combinations from the next five lag positions. For clarity in the tables reporting lag analysis results in this study, a capital letter designated a code used as criterion, while a lowercase letter represented a code in one of the lag positions. So then, tallies were made of all Aa (autolag) occurrences, all Ab, all Ac, and so forth, before moving on with all Ba, Bb, etc.

This was accomplished by means of repetitive spreadsheet formulas, which examined each five-lag window, and then summed the results for each criterion-code combination. Specifically, a series of internested Boolean conditions were applied to each set of six adjacent codes (i.e., criterion plus five lag codes), as follows. First of all, the criterion code was compared with a target criterion of interest, with a certain tally to follow if true, otherwise a zero was generated. Under the true condition, each lag position code was compared in turn with a target code of interest, generating a one if true and a zero if false, and these tallies were added to output the amount for that cell. The next cell applied the same procedure to the next set of six codes, all the way through a string of several hundred codes, and the results for each combination of criterion and code were added together.

These summed tallies were then outputted to another spreadsheet, which applied the adjusted binomial equation—i.e., a conflation of Equations 2 and 3—to each criterion-code combination, adjusting for autolag bias in computing the crosslag conditional probabilities. Z-values so generated that exceeded 1.96 were considered significant at the 0.05 level, while those that exceeded 2.58 were deemed significant at a level of 0.01. Results that reached these levels of significance were compiled into tables for each interview, along with the verbal meaning of each combination, and discussed in the body
of the paper. Because a two-tailed binomial test was applied, values could also be below -1.96 or -2.58 at the same levels of significance, respectively, in which case the combination was occurring much less often than would normally be expected. In such instances, the question became, why did this particular pairing not occur more often? The speculative nature of such arguments from silence was evaluated conservatively in presenting the results.

It is important to realize that both the lag analytic procedure and the analysis of repetitive themes derived data from a macro scale, consisting of patterns across the entire interview. Such data were not available to the listener operating in real-time, as was more commonly the case with the narrative analytic procedures. Even there, with the narrative analysis, the interview was examined in slow motion, by an intensive transcript analysis. But the procedures of the narrative analysis were comparable to interpretive procedures a real-time listener might employ. Such was not the case with the temporal and lag analyses of repetitive themes and thematic clusters, respectively. In these latter instances, data were generated at a different logical level, out of the macro scale of the entire interview. This was an important form of triangulation, utilized in this study.

Integration and Theory Construction

This section raises the fourth of the five “What” questions for this chapter, namely, what is important to other? The analytical forms of triangulation of the previous section attended to what was important from the viewpoints of the particular parties, and how those meanings could be discerned by the listener / researcher. This section goes beyond the idiosyncratic content of specific mediation participants and their narrative accounts of the process. It asks, how can the results be made useful to others? This is the issue of generalizability. It looks more at the process of meaning-making than the specific content, per se.
Synthesis of Contextual Framing and Duration

As used here, framing was an integrative method of examining the durations of in vivo concepts relative to one another. On the one hand, it spelled out the impact of repetition and distribution of in vivo codes in the interview. It especially dealt with the designations of "enduring," "decreasing," or "increasing" with respect to duration, and how each code helped to frame and give shape to the overall narrative. On the other hand, it drew upon the results of the lag analysis, in elaborating the import of combinations that occurred significantly often in the interview. In particular, it took note of the durations of each part of the combination, to see whether certain appraisals gained greater prominence or, alternately, could not be sustained as the interview progressed.

The notion being examined here (according to Hypothesis 1, in particular) was that themes of greater duration were around longer, and thus could frame and influence the narrative more extensively. It was also important to notice which themes appeared to be abandoned, and how their omission from the ensuing discussion affected what remained. Focusing on such issues of duration and framing was a way to marshal the evidence from the temporal analysis of each interview, and combine it with the types of conclusions that emerged from the narrative analysis. In gathering these various strands together, the attempt was made to carefully ground any conclusions in the data as given, and to portray the density of their linkages, so that any new fracturing of the data into categories for grounded theory analysis would have a rich base of description and exemplification to draw upon.

As mentioned earlier, this was a study of contextualization, drawn from a detailed examination of over sixty storytelling episodes, occurring across two interview participants. This certainly comprised a rich enough data set to begin a process of grounded theory generation, similar (in kind, if not extent) to other efforts in the discourse analysis tradition, such as those of Labov and Fanshel (1977) and Pittenger,
Hockett, and Danehey (1960). It may well be important at a later stage to engage in theoretical sampling and extend this kind of intensive examination to other interviews and transcripts, so that the saturation of categories that began to emerge in this study could be confirmed or disconfirmed. But the present effort, I believe, provides a firm beginning for examining perceived significance in terms of categories of temporality. Moreover, in a social constructionist study with researcher as co-creator of meaning, the generation of potentially useful grounded theory is an integral part of the actual results of the study, and thus is initiated within the Results chapter below.

**Grounded Theory Generation**

In its overall aims, this was essentially a qualitative study, utilizing self-report data from interviews with mediation participants, and submitting transcripts of the interviews to a grounded theory analysis. Of necessity, every grounded theory analysis takes something of a unique course down the gradient provided by the data. However, there were certain principles that have guided the process, and these are enumerated here. From transcription all the way through iterative analyses, immersion in the data has been critical. This has been a key component to help guard against researcher bias, by continually checking emerging results against the data themselves. Transparency has been an important feature in these chapters, by laying out my own assumptions and hypotheses, so that those, too, could be scrutinized by the reader.

In early approaches to the transcripts, a process of open categorization was used—that is, grouping the data into a broad array of researcher-generated categories. This was followed by axial coding of a number of the content codes that arose, consisting of specifying the conditions, contexts, strategies, and consequences for those situations. I found, however, that this moved too quickly away from the parties' own voices and their distinctive ways of understanding their experiences. Consequently, I utilized a procedure of in vivo coding of the transcripts—that is, using short vivid phrases of the parties (or
condensations thereof) as the initial set of codes for each transcript—to stay close to the parties' own conceptualizations.

Several forms of triangulation were utilized in this study. One form was to distinguish different logical levels, such as the content of a given passage, the context in which it occurred, and the processes used for creating context. Another form came with each subsequent storytelling episode that was examined, by a process of immersion and constant comparison. Another was to tap the strengths of both qualitative and quantitative approaches, by using several types of analysis (classified as narrative and temporal, and described above).

Another form of triangulation was to first fracture the data by the analytical procedures, and then synthesize them into new groupings. Such groupings were then consolidated into an initial formulation of certain prime categories, revolving around a core dealing with temporality. Axial coding of these categories generated enactments, conditions, environs, consequences, and a few exemplars for each one. Yet another form of triangulation came from a second interview transcript, which was examined in similar detail and with the same forms of triangulation mentioned above.

The second interview provided a way to begin the saturation process by crosschecking emerging conclusions. This included an active search for discrepant exemplars, leading to a finer discrimination among the categories already present in the theory. Of particular note was the notion of permutations between existing categories, providing a richer and denser set of linkages between the constructs. Selective coding of some of the results in the second transcript—that is, applying the theory generated to that point to new data from the next interview—was used to help saturate the theory, with essentially no new categories or linkages emerging.

As demonstrated below, the results have been presented with a good deal of exemplification and thick description of categories and constructs, so that the theory's
groundedness could be evident. Along with this, the researcher's reflexive subjectivity has been displayed, where appropriate, so that both the process and the conclusions could be transparent to the reader. These were the characteristics of sound qualitative protocols, which have been used to address questions of validity, meaningfulness, and generalizability of the results.

It remains to ask the fifth of the five “What” questions for this chapter, that is, what do we do? This is the pragmatic question of how to proceed in the study and in the manuscript. The answer here is really quite straightforward. The reader may remember from previous chapters that how to proceed is a matter of invoking closure, so as to usefully move on. In the present context, it means demonstrating how the methodology of this chapter was put to use within the crucible of actual data. That is the task to which I next turn.
CHAPTER IV

RESULTS

Structured Interview SI01

Prospectus

The first structured interview (SI01) was with a woman in her forties, who was in the midst of getting a divorce from her husband. They had participated in half a dozen mediation sessions over the previous eight months, and were currently waiting for the agreement to be written up so it could be presented to a judge. The parties had had substantial difficulties between them in their marriage, as well as difficulties working things out in the mediation. The interview includes her frustrations over the husband not fully carrying out what they had agreed, as well as new insights that arose for her through the process.

Narrative Analysis of Episodic Accounts

This section on narrative analysis is an attempt both to tell the party’s story, and to show how she accomplished the telling. Telling the party’s story involves a great deal of particularity and idiosyncratic details, which are unique to this dispute. Demonstrating how the telling is accomplished provides seeds for a more generalized grounded theory of how any telling may be accomplished. The ultimate concern of this study is the latter attempt. The particular content of an account will vary from party to party, and from one occasion to the next. However, the forms available to accomplish the telling will presumably be a smaller and more stable subset of techniques. It is the aim of this study to specify those techniques, and explore their interrelationships.

In conducting the first structured interview (SI01), and in analyzing the transcript of it later, I experienced a recurring sense of dislocation. The responses of the mediation
participant rarely seemed to line up with the questions I was asking. It was as if the turtles kept shifting. Sometimes in the middle of the participant’s response, and even as the conversational turn moved from questioner to responder, the assumptions I was standing on with my particular inquiry seemed to move beneath my feet. What was answered seemed to reflect some ongoing standing concerns of the responder, and it was almost as if my questions—especially the questions about what had changed through mediation—were disturbances to those predominant concerns. While it appeared to lack clear articulation (from my standpoint), the responder had already settled on her mediation story. She had already generated a preferred account of why the mediation had not really made much difference, and questions about “significant changes” were either irrelevant or obstructions to getting that account across.

This vague sense of disconnect between inquiry and response arose for me with my very first substantive question of the interview, following a few preliminaries about demographics. That section of the transcript reads as follows, a portion that could be considered a micro-episode:

Interviewer: ...Before the mediation began, what were your hopes and expectations for change?

Participant: We went to counseling before mediation.

I: Okay.

P: Um, three different sessions.

I: Okay.

P: And they didn’t help.

I: Okay.

P: So then, we’re getting a divorce. And, um, my expectation was it wouldn’t be a long or very fighting, back-stabbing type of behavior. [SI01, li.32-42]
The direct answer to the question about expectations occurs in the last two lines, that the mediation would not be long or fighting or back-stabbing. These seem surprisingly modest for expectations, because they appear to deal more with the process than the outcome of the mediation. Moreover, their negative cast as expectations for change is a bit jarring, seeing as one has to indirectly infer the change from a current state of supposed frequent fighting.

This says nothing, however, about the prior events of attending counseling, and why the party felt the need to preface her initial account with this orienting information. By itself, it forms a perfectly fine, if somewhat uninteresting, micro-story--complete with a beginning, a middle, and an end: "we went to counseling....they didn't help....we're getting a divorce." This is a common trajectory leading to divorce mediation; why is it inserted here as context for the party's subsequent remarks (whether locally or with the whole rest of the interview)? As to form it actually seems to arise from a too-literal hearing of the questioner's indefinite use of "before the mediation began." One possibility is that it sets up later complaint episodes, with its implied moral self-justification along the lines of 'I tried.'

The party's repetition of the qualifier "before mediation" raises what may be a better way to construct a "story point" (Wilensky, 1983b) for this little narrative, particularly if the party was keying on "what were your hopes." In effect, the party may have replied, 'Before mediation, I had great hopes; we even went for counseling to make it work out. Now, since deciding to get a divorce, my hopes are very minimal--just avoid the worst of the back-stabbing.' This is admittedly a construction, and not what the party literally said. But it ties together the prefacing micro-story with the delayed response to the question, into a more integrated opening narrative. Either way, whether as set-up for future (projected) complaint scenarios, or as justification for why the party does not
currently hope for much, it is an attempt to deal with the text as given, including its seemingly poor alignment with the interviewer's initiating question.

This opening set of narrative events is immediately followed by an episode pivotal for constructing further sense out of puzzling features that emerge later in the interview. It comes in response to another global question, about what changes had occurred by the end of the mediation. The party replies as follows:

P: I don't know that there was really a lot. I mean, I suppose we could have bickered and argued over more stuff, but most of it we had already decided before the mediation. It was just to get my husband probably to accept it and to put it in writing. [SI01, li.46-50]

First of all, there is the same disconnect between question and answer. That is, the only change is from something that "could have" happened, specifically more bickering and arguing. What is more interesting, however, is that the party does not seem to notice the discrepancy between needing to "get my husband...to accept" something that supposedly "we had already decided." This inherent contradiction makes for an exceedingly interesting plot twist. That is to say, lodged within the "development" portion of this episode's story grammar (Mandler, 1984, p. 22), is a pivotal goal based on a faulty premise. Later, I show how certain ironic features of future episodes emerge from this key contradiction at the outset of the entire narrative.

To make those features clear, however, it is useful to parse this episode by means of Mandler's (1984) story grammar. Any story can be seen as a setting followed by one or more chained (or nested) episodes, where each episode has a beginning, a development (i.e., a plot complication), and an ending commentary. The development itself can be elaborated as the protagonist's reaction, and a resulting goal path, which includes an attempt and its outcome. Applying these notions to this simple episode can yield the following series of events. The setting is the previously mentioned conclusion, "we're
getting a divorce." The beginning event chronologically in this particular account (what I call the premise, in the above paragraph) is that "most of it we had already decided." The reaction of the protagonist is an expectation (previously mentioned) that "it wouldn't be...long" or particularly contentious. Her goal, therefore, is "just to get my husband probably to accept it and to put it in writing." The attempt is implied, that they "bickered and argued" to some extent, yet the outcome is basically that it "could have" been worse.

So far, this a very understandable narrative proceeds as expected. Its setting and opening event prefigure its predictability. Getting a divorce with most of it already decided makes for a pretty lame story. What is there left to tell? So it comes as quite a surprise when the ending does not match where the story was heading. Her ending commentary—which is mentioned first simply because of the structure of the interview questions—is the surprising result that "I don't know that there was really a lot" of change. From those preceding story constituents--especially the assessment that it could have been worse--one might expect a commentary along the lines of 'it worked out pretty well.' She does not say that, however. She declares that not a lot has changed. At numerous points later in the interview, she spells out in some detail what she means by that commentary that nothing has changed: "it's taking forever,...he wouldn't carry them out,...we're still playing with that,...will it ever be done?...we can't decide." It seems a litany of complaint scenarios is still to come, all with a similar story point. And it is my contention--or one could say, my reconstruction of the underlying turtles--that all of these derive from an unnoticed contradiction here at the beginning, namely, that if it is necessary to "get" him to accept something, then plainly it is not a plural "we" who have made the decisions to date.

A flavor for these later complaint episodes with their similar story points can be gained from the following excerpts. The interview context of each of these is a question about changes arising from the mediation. So it is all the more striking that each of these
responses, despite good-humored efforts to answer the question as given, comes out as a puzzled indictment over the basic lack of change. For instance, in answering what part of the mediation made a particular difference to her, the party replied:

P: ...Um, [the mediator] got my husband to do things that he probably would have taken longer to get done. Even though he did up, it seems like, most of the leg work, as far as numbers and that kind of thing, which [the mediator] needed in order to write, -- [the mediator] hasn't finished the writing part but -- to get him to do it, I guess. He's a procrastinator, it would have taken him forever, just to, [laugh] it's taking forever, okay. [SI01, li.69-76]

Of special note in this passage is that the story point of the broader narrative pops out, as it were, in the last four words here. Despite the party's goal that it not be a long drawn-out affair, despite some progress in that the mediator "got" her husband to do stuff, despite her putting the best face on it that it "would have taken longer," the best summation of her story in the ending commentary is that "it's taking forever." So in answer to the interviewer's question, nothing is really making much of a difference for her.

Another of these complaint scenarios occurs with the very next interview question. In trying to answer what changes occurred in her interaction with her husband because of the mediation, she seems to get lost in their ongoing pattern of relating:

P: A lot of times we'd address issues with [the mediator], and he wouldn't carry them out. They were, when couples are married there's buttons you can push, and that's what he would do. He's like, um, not pay me for certain things or say he doesn't owe me for certain things, and it's not in writing so he doesn't have to follow through on it. He's been playing that ever since the beginning. And like, um, [pause] the original question was again? What changes...

I: What changes in your interaction?

P: Um, we're still playing with that. [SI01, li.93-103]
The conversational form of this exchange is that of a counter-assertion, which is elaborated into a string of story complaints (Coulter, 1990). The implied assertion of the interviewer's question is that naturally there has been some change in the two parties' interactions, as a result of the mediation. Her counter-assertion is that her husband basically has not changed, as shown by several chained incidents. The main story line appears first, in tripartite structure (with a delayed ending commentary); namely, "we'd address issues,...he wouldn't carry them out,...he's been playing that ever since the beginning." Inserted into that structure is an orienting incident--which tells the interviewer what to listen for (Young, 1982)--with its own beginning, middle, and end; specifically, "when couples are married,...buttons you can push,...that's what he would do." Linked to that is a single-word beginning for a further micro-episode, with her use of "like...", indicating one or more examples are to follow. Then three brief illustrations are embedded into the narrative and offered as evidence: "not pay me,...say he doesn't owe me,...it's not in writing so he doesn't have to." The ending component about "playing" that game doubles as commentary for these examples and as closing commentary for this whole section, and it is repeated for effect after the party realizes the original question never really got answered.

It may seem like a stretch to call such brief phrases and sentences "episodes," as per Mandler's (1984) story grammar. But that structure is simply a heuristic devise for getting closer to the "valued end point" (Gergen & Gergen, 1988, p. 20) of the narrative. One could use Toulmin's proposed structure for argumentation (as cited in Jackson & Jacobs, 1980, p. 263) to arrive at the same story point. That is, the claim of this party's argument is that her husband "wouldn't carry...out" issues raised with the mediator. The supporting data consist of the three brief examples, of his not paying, not owing, and it not being in writing. The warrant for that being convincing evidence is its occurrence "ever since the beginning." Finally, the supplementary backing for her argument is the
well-known adage that married couples know what "buttons you can push" to annoy the other. It seems even in this small narrative, we have an instance of equifinality, in that different conceptual templates overlaid on the data arrive at essentially the same narrative end point.

One could use a similar structure to display the client's argument in the very next section. Although it is still a complaint scenario about her husband, it is easier to use an argumentation template rather than an episodic template to follow the thread of the passage, because of its emphasis on changes in her own thinking. The excerpt reads as follows:

P: My thinking of the mediation is, it opened my eyes to what he was doing in his behavior and how he copes....

[4 lines omitted]
P: And the way he's still dysfunctional, if that makes any sense. Like when he has the kids and taxes are due next week and he's still not done with them, and [the mediator] said to have them done by the first. Does that make sense?
I: Okay.
P: And, and the game-playing and the manipulation that he does that's real passive-aggressive type thing. So I mean, he did it before, but now he's doing it for other people, too. Does that make sense?...

[5 lines omitted]
P: Yeah. I thought it was more just me, (chuckle) and him. But it's not, it's him and the world. [SI01, li.158-180]

Here the party is making the claim—which is similar to a story point for the episode—that her husband is "dysfunctional" in his way of coping with "the world." The supporting data are the example of the taxes not yet being done, and general characterizations of his actions as "game-playing,...manipulation,...passive-aggressive."
The warrant for these being convincing data comes from the circumstances, namely, that "taxes are due next week,...and [the mediator] said to have them done," as well as the newly-realized pattern that he behaves this way with "other people, too," not just the party. Supplementary backing can be found from its ongoing nature (i.e., "he did it before"), and seeing the relational dynamics as just one instance of a more comprehensive life script the husband operates with (i.e., thinking it was "just me...and him, but it's not").

Another telling example of a complaint scenario happens later in the interview, during follow-up queries from the interviewer about the party's use of the mantra "it could have been worse." In trying to explain what actions of the mediator kept it from being worse, the party ends up taking both husband and mediator to task for the basic lack of progress:

P: ...It seems like it's taking him forever to get done. And it's like, the numbers were there, and, and like, yet [the mediator] didn't decide who does what with what. I don't know if it was the hold up that we were supposed to decide or what, because we're looking to [the mediator] for guidance on how to do it, and yet it seems like [the mediator] is pushing it back to us to decide, and yet, that's why we're here is because we can't decide on something that's...
I: Okay.
P: ...equal.
I: Okay.
P: Does that make sense? [SI01, li.391-403]

Quite a convoluted plot develops in this small narrative incident. It all revolves around who is going to decide, and it relates back to that early contradiction that the husband must be forced (or at least maneuvered) into accepting something he supposedly had a hand in deciding. The recurring story point puts in an appearance--again, being
mentioned first simply because of the question/answer format of the interview--namely, "it's taking him forever to get done." The implication is that, therefore, it is taking forever for the party as well—as she puts it later in the interview--"to have it done (laugh) and get done [sic] with my life." She then tries to explain how they arrived at this dispreferred ending, again using the simple frame, "it's like...", to signal the truncated anecdotes to come. She evokes her early premise (i.e., "we had already decided") with the claim "the numbers were there," and implies that it was up to the mediator to do something with those numbers. She then uses "contrastively-matched counters" (Coulter, 1990, p. 196) to tack back and forth between assertion and counter-assertion over the mediator's role.

For instance, it may have been the case that "we were supposed to decide," yet "we're looking to the mediator for guidance," yet "the mediator is pushing it back to us to decide," yet "we're here...because we can't decide." This last turn of the argument is quite an admission, and it brings up the irony I alluded to earlier. In following this point and counterpoint over the mediator's role, the party ends up contradicting her own starting premise—that is, supposedly "we had already decided," yet now she affirms "we can't decide on something's that's...equal." Here is a sizeable narrative shift in this party's overall story.

After this long strung-out series of argumentative events, her closing metacomment (i.e., "Does that make sense?") is rather poignant, because frankly many times it did not fully make sense at the time, whether to her or to me. And it is only by inquiring of the text about that lack of apparent sense, and attending to the recurring disconnections between question and answer, that a deeper kind of sense starts to emerge. Once again, my standing concerns (i.e., the turtles I was perched on), as reflected by the questions of the structured interview, were preeminently about "changes" for the party, which were supposed to occur through the intervention of the mediation. What if the most "significant" outcome of a mediation, for a given party, is no change? What if that
party's whole narrative is geared to try to explain that outcome, or more likely, to attribute responsibility and blame for that lack of change? Then perhaps what arises is a plot with a moral story line, as is shown here, which is basically unperturbed by the questioner's concerns, as she goes about assigning culpability—sometimes with her husband, sometimes with the mediator—for the lack of any appreciable change in her circumstances.

It also leaves the field open for a different kind of significant change to emerge, a narrative change in the telling of her own story. This was seen above, as she ended up supplanting her earlier premise with a conclusion more fitting to the facts. It is not the case that they had "already decided" the most important aspects of the divorce. Rather, this couple's experience is that basically they "can't decide" by themselves, and perhaps not even with the help of a mediator. And acknowledging such a state of affairs—as a new beginning constituent for a series of episodes—would lead to quite a different story. What is significant from my vantage point is that such a narrative shift only emerges quite far along in the interview, and more to the point, within the very context of a research interview that normally would not have occurred for the mediation party at all. That is to say, the research interview itself is its own performative event, which can impart new meaning onto a previously stable (if strained) self-narrative. This view is in keeping with a social constructionist approach to communication, which states that all communications have the potential to narratively reconstitute the terms of prior acts of meaning-making.

It is important to clarify what is meant by "narrative shift" in the above remarks. By narrative shift, I wish to designate changes not simply within the logic of the story as currently presented, but essentially ones that make it a different story that is being told. These are changes of sufficient placement or magnitude that they alter key constituting terms of the narrative, so that in effect the story line itself shifts. In one sense they may occur as complications and plot twists, in that previously ineffective goals and reactions
of the protagonist are abandoned. But it is perhaps better to see them as unassimilated bits of alternate story plots, that compete with the dominant narrative and have the potential to shift that main story line to an alternate track altogether. In this case, the shift comes about partly because of its placement--i.e., it is a fundamental starting premise that is contradicted. The shift occurs also because of its magnitude--i.e., what was previously thought to be "already" decided is actually a situation where they "can't" decide.

It is worth noting that a narrative shift of this order did occur previously in this interview. The context was a follow-up query about how the perceived lack of change on the husband's part was affecting the mediation and the party's participation in it. She replies as follows:

P: I, don't think I talked as much as I could have. But then [the mediator] really didn't want to hear all that extraneous stuff either. If that makes any sense.

[3 lines omitted]

P: ...you know, he'd be late with things and he's the one holding the money where he has just as much money as I do. He played that game a lot.

I: Right, okay. And so, the uh, mediator was sort of putting limits on bringing all those reasons and things into the process.

P: And yet [the mediator] never really took care of the issues either. You know what I mean? It, it's still not done. So I don't know. Is it, will it ever be done? Probably not. I'll just have to accept it (chuckle) and go on, you know,... [SI01, li.217-233]

There are features here of the dominant story line, as well as seeds of a sizeable narrative shift. Let me first parse the episode with Mandler's (1984) story grammar, before going on to draw the implications for a shift in the overall story line.

The narrative setting for these particular remarks by the party--alluded to in this passage and spelled out in preceding material--is the frequently mentioned charge of
"game-playing" by the husband, by being late with payments or claiming he is not obligated since it is not in writing. Chronologically, the beginning event in this section is the perception that the mediator "didn't want to hear all that extraneous stuff," calling forth a reaction in the protagonist of not talking as much as she could have, because of an implied goal that she wanted to get on with things. This interpretation of the sequence is supported by a prior episodic sequence dealing with the mediator's actions: "[the mediator] redirected a lot of times, um, would tell us that issue's not important. Sometimes I felt some of the issues that [the mediator] abruptly [sic] were [important], but to get it going you had to do it." [SI01, li.65-68] The party's goal in that excerpt is "to get it going," just as in the main passage under consideration here she wishes to "go on." But the attempt to achieve that goal is described as the mediator not really taking care of the issues, with the resulting outcome that "it's still not done." This is the same story point encountered several times before. It is followed, however, by quite a different ending commentary, which I am calling a significant narrative shift.

Instead of her previously articulated goal that the mediator "get my husband...to accept" some necessary changes, here she explicitly posits that she herself will "just have to accept" that that may not happen. That is a substantial change in her outlook, even though at this stage in the narrative it is still somewhat tentative. Mandler (1984) suggests that episodes can be embedded and causally connected by writing the outcome or ending components of one episode into the beginning component of new episodes. In a sense that is what is done here, although it takes quite some time before this new insight for the party is picked up and utilized as a true narrative shift in composing an alternate story line for the entire narrative. Here it remains a somewhat discordant story point, accentuating her reflective appraisal: "will it ever be done? Probably not." It does prefigure, however, a gradual shift of emphasis, from a steady focus on the intractability of her husband's behavior, which in turn casts herself as having to wait for him to change,
to an increasing focus on her own desire to move on. The contrast is made explicit later in the interview: "he's just happy to go day to day the way it is...And I would like to have it done (laugh) and get done with my life." [SI01, li.489-492]

Fragments of this alternate story line appear elsewhere in the interview. Early on, she describes some early success with that dominant goal of getting her husband to change and become more responsible. But it also captures a slight shift in the setting for the overall narrative.

P: ...the first advance [the mediator] made with like our first meeting was getting him to recognize, yes, she is getting a divorce, and yes, you do need to get a job, and yes, you do need to move out.

I: Okay.

P: Where before I was Miss Nice Guy for a couple years, and he lived off our savings and whatever money we had left. [SI01, li.122-129]

At the outset of the interview questions, this party had set up her account with the claim "we're getting a divorce." Technically, that was not accurate, and it makes a difference for the kind of story that subsequently unfolds. In this passage, the mediator more nearly reflects the true state of affairs. "She" is the one getting a divorce. While the husband may dissent and try to obstruct the process—and by this party's account, that happened quite a lot—he cannot change that fact.

A narrative based on her action of initiating a divorce is quite different from one where supposedly most of it has already been jointly decided. While the party does not make much of this rival opening setting for her narrative, it does make better sense of her eventual admission that they cannot decide on an equitable division between them. The true setting is that she is divorcing him, in spite of his objections, and running into obstacles from him as a result. When she acknowledges the error of her previous
behavior (i.e., being "Miss Nice Guy"), she also contributes to this rival story line, which gives her greater warrant for her goal of getting on (or "done") with her life.

So what kind of goal path emerges in this rival narrative? What actions are suitable attempts, and what outcomes are sufficient, with a goal of the protagonist moving on? Here again, we have fragments at best, and they do not differ greatly from those of the dominant narrative. They bear the same stamp of resignation that this party displays in describing the results of the mediation, but perhaps with less frustration and surprise. She has already acknowledged that likely she will "just have to accept" less than what she had hoped. Near the end of the interview, she takes a more reflective stance toward what the mediation could achieve:

P: ...You always have hopes that you [pause] will be a better person because of this, but I don’t, I don’t think it does, I mean. You, you want things that aren’t attainable. Or the other person to give or do what you want, but you, you don’t really ever get that. [SI01, li.656-661]

Here is an explicit acceptance that she could not simply get her husband to "do what you want," because such expectations "aren't attainable."

She even softens in her misgivings about some of the mediator's actions, again, near the end of the interview:

P: And sometimes, I don’t know if [the mediator] did it more out of his benefit, because he was having such trouble accepting it.

[12 lines omitted]

P: ...even the way [the mediator] decided on certain things, it's like, fine, your favoritism him [sic], but, you know, [the mediator] has to be impartial hopefully. I mean, if [the mediator] picks a certain way to do things based on him, that's, you know, I guess that's the way it's gotta be. [SI01, li.852-872]
It seems even favoritism toward the other party is acceptable, if it results in this party getting on with her life. As she sums up here, "I guess that’s the way it’s gotta be."

This in itself could actually serve as the ending commentary for this alternate story line, where she herself has chosen to get the divorce, the two of them cannot decide on something that is equal between them, she may just have to accept that in order to move on, the mediator may even have benefited the other party more than herself, but "it's like, fine,...that's the way it's gotta be."

There is in fact another passage that is even more pointed in spelling out her closing realizations, and thus it serves as a supplementary ending commentary:

P: And in the end, I still don’t think either one of us, I mean, you don’t win. It, it seemed more like a lose-lose. Does that make sense?

I: Okay.

P: ...I think what my anticipation expectations were for mediation, be-, when we started.

This gives the impression of resignation, but in a more accepting kind of way than the dominant narrative, with its frustrating litany of ending commentaries, each spelled out into its own complaint scenario. On the surface, the practical outcome is even worse than her assessment that not a lot has changed, through the divorce mediation. By virtue of the fact that it is a divorce, the changes are actually "lose-lose," for both of them.

She, however, has actually changed quite a bit. Her apparent awareness and acceptance of those losses is a substantial change from her previous state of surprise and frustration. And this is a change seemingly produced by the research interview itself. In
the process of answering the interviewer's questions, she has altered her appraisal of key features of her own narrative. And she has emerged with a rival narrative, which is much less dependent on simply waiting for her husband to change, and more focused on her own interest and resolve in moving on.

**Temporal Analysis of Repetitive Themes**

This section presents additional triangulated views of interview SI01. As mentioned in the Methods chapter above, temporal analysis is the search for temporal form, as manifested by repetition, lag analysis, and framing. Repetition is a way of looking for persisting themes, lag analysis is a way of looking for reliable clusters of themes, and framing is a way to examine the relative durations of different themes. These processes were applied to the transcript of the first structured interview and are described first individually and then in concert below, in an attempt to layer the findings into a sustained argument.

Throughout this study I have attempted to preserve the voice of the participants as much as possible and for as long as possible through the analysis phase of the study. For this reason, the unit of analysis in searching for temporal form has been the in vivo code, generated by noting which phrases and idioms a party repeatedly used. As the data were examined via narrative and temporal analyses, the codes were found to fracture into new groupings dealing with temporality, and the resulting grounded theory of temporal enactment of meaning is presented in its first formulations later in this chapter.

In the first structured interview (SI01), a number of repetitions of phrases and themes by the party occurred. All that were identified in the transcript are represented in Table 2. It shows the shorthand in vivo codes in decreasing order of frequency, the letters assigned as lag codes for ease in recognizing proximity during the lag analysis portion of the study, the total number of occurrences of each code, various phrases that were
Table 2.

Occurrence, Distribution, and Duration of In Vivo Codes in Structured Interview SI01.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Lag Code</th>
<th>In Vivo Code</th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>Equivalent Phrases</th>
<th>Cum.% by Quar.</th>
<th>Duration</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>1st 2nd 3rd 4th</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>make sense?</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>does that make sense?</td>
<td>25 50 75 100</td>
<td>expected</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>if that makes sense</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>you know what I mean?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>get (him) to do</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>get him to [do something]</td>
<td>60 80 93 100</td>
<td>decreasing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>have / had to do it</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>(not) address</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>address issues</td>
<td>27 40 67 100</td>
<td>enduring</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>not address issues</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>not say everything</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D</td>
<td>still not done</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>still not done</td>
<td>33 60 80 100</td>
<td>enduring</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>taking forever</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E</td>
<td>could be worse</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>could have been worse</td>
<td>50 71 100 100</td>
<td>decreasing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>would have taken longer</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F</td>
<td>not follow thru</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>[husbd] not follow through</td>
<td>42 92 100 100</td>
<td>decreasing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>[husbd] wouldn't carry out</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>G</td>
<td>get divorce</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>getting a divorce</td>
<td>25 50 75 100</td>
<td>enduring</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H</td>
<td>not arguing</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>not / could have ...</td>
<td>45 64 91 100</td>
<td>enduring</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I</td>
<td>lose / not win</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>lose / not win / lose-lose</td>
<td>0 0 36 100</td>
<td>increasing</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 2 cont.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Lag Code</th>
<th>In Vivo Code</th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>Equivalent Phrases</th>
<th>Cum.% by Quar.</th>
<th>Duration</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>J (not) in writing</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>in writing</td>
<td>60 90 90 100</td>
<td>decreasing</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>K realize</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>realize / recognize</td>
<td>70 70 70 100</td>
<td>decreasing</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>L game-playing</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>game-playing</td>
<td>56 100 100 100</td>
<td>decreasing</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M dysfunctional</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>dysfunctional</td>
<td>33 67 100 100</td>
<td>decreasing</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N still relationship</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>still have a relationship</td>
<td>0 17 100 100</td>
<td>incr./decr.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>O already decided</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>already decided</td>
<td>40 100 100 100</td>
<td>decreasing</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P original question</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>the original question was?</td>
<td>25 50 75 100</td>
<td>enduring</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q in denial</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>in denial</td>
<td>75 100 100 100</td>
<td>decreasing</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>X gap &gt;= 10 lines</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>&quot;wastebasket category&quot;</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

\(^a\)Cumulative percentages are listed by quarter, according to the line number where each coded theme occurred in the transcript. Underlining denotes those that occurred at or outside a 95% confidence interval, that is, the expected probability +/- 1.96 standard deviations for each code.

considered functionally equivalent in determining the codes, the cumulative frequency of each code grouped by the quarter of the transcript in which they occurred (as determined by the corresponding line number of the transcript), and finally a determination based on
the cumulative distribution of whether each code could be considered "enduring", "decreasing", or "increasing" in duration. In listing the codes or equivalent phrases, parentheses signify an optional variant—for example, with code C, "(not) address" means both “address issues” and “not address issues” were included in the code. When brackets appear, they denote the implied meaning in each instance.

To briefly recap what was explained in the Methods chapter, in the listing of cumulative frequencies in Table 2, a percentage is underlined if it falls at or outside a 95% confidence interval for each code. This was determined by taking the expected cumulative percentages if codes were occurring randomly at an even distribution throughout the transcript—i.e., 25, 50, 75, and 100 percent, respectively, for the four quarters—and then adding and subtracting 1.96 times the standard deviation for each code, to set a 95% confidence interval. A percentage was considered to be occurring at a rate significantly above or below chance, if it fell outside or at the boundary of its respective confidence window. Because a cumulative percentage of 103%, for instance, has no meaning, the upper and lower bounds of each confidence window were limited to 100% and 0%, respectively, in determining significance.

If a code was evenly distributed, statistically speaking, throughout the transcript—i.e., if each cumulative frequency occurred within its respective 95% confidence interval—then that code was considered to be an "enduring" theme in terms of duration. If one or more cumulative frequencies were occurring at a significantly higher than expected rate, that is, if most instances of a code occurred relatively early in the interview and were seldom mentioned later on (e.g., tapering off by the third or fourth quarter), then that theme was considered to be "decreasing" in duration. Finally, if few occurrences occurred early on and a substantially higher proportion happened late in the interview, as shown by a significantly lower than expected rate in the cumulative frequencies, then that theme was considered to be "increasing" in duration.
Examining Table 2 in more detail yields the following. There were various types of in vivo codes. Some were considered *metacommunication* with the researcher, such as code A ('does that make sense?') or code P ('the original question was?'). It is notable that both of these were quite evenly distributed across the interview, and for that reason were labeled enduring themes. That is to say, the clarification or confusion they represented did not pile up, so to speak, in any given section of the interview. There were other codes that had a *bipolar* quality to them, in that both their positive and negative forms were included in the same code. Examples would be code C ('address issues' and 'not address issues'), code J ('in writing' and 'not in writing'), and perhaps code B ('get [him] to do') in that the person who had to do something or whom the mediator got to do something was variously identified as the husband, the party, or an indefinite "you."

The reason the two poles were listed as the same code in these instances was that the party clearly had a particular hope, whether realized or not, such as getting something in writing or addressing certain issues, while for code B the compulsion aspect was clearly present, regardless of who was being described. Another possible reflection of a bipolar process might have been the combination of codes K and Q ('realize' vs. 'in denial,' respectively), and I demonstrate later from the lag analysis that this contrast did reliably occur together, no matter which code came first as the criterion code. It is worth noting that of all these codes that could be called bipolar, only one was considered an ongoing concern in terms of duration, namely, code C, ‘addressing certain issues’ or ‘not having them addressed.’ All the others were decreasing in duration, meaning the party did not continue to emphasize getting something ‘in writing’ or not, someone being ‘compelled to do something,’ being ‘in denial,’ or even making certain ‘realizations.’

There were a number of in vivo codes that were termed *complaints*, for instance, code D (‘it's still not done’), code F (‘husband wouldn't follow through’), code L (his ‘game-playing’), code M (his ‘dysfunctionality’), code Q (‘in denial’), code I (it was
'lose-lose'), and the negative poles of code C ('didn't address the issues') and code J ('it's still not in writing'). Once again, the majority of these complaint codes were decreasing in duration—that is, they received less emphasis as the interview proceeded—in particular, complaints focused mostly on the husband (e.g., his 'game-playing,' 'dysfunctionality,' and 'not following through'). Only two were considered enduring in their emphasis, by the decision criteria enumerated above, namely, code D that it is 'taking forever' and 'still not done,' and code C that issues were 'not addressed.' And only one complaint was introduced in the latter half of the interview, and thereby considered a theme of increasing duration, namely, code I: that both parties end up 'losing' in this process.

There were also a few positive evaluations expressed and repeated, for instance, the positive poles of two of the codes treated already--i.e., code C (we'd 'address issues') and code J (to get it 'in writing')--as well as code E ('it could have been worse'), code H ('wasn't a lot arguing'), code N (we 'still have a relationship'), and code K (it's made me 'realize'). Trying to 'address issues,' and 'not arguing,' were enduring themes in terms of duration, while the theme of 'still having a relationship' was an evaluation introduced late and limited to the second and third quarters of the interview, making it first an increasing theme and then a decreasing one in terms of duration and emphasis. The rest of these positive evaluations were of decreasing duration, meaning the party largely abandoned them as the interview proceeded.

Finally, there were a couple of codes that could be termed settings or orienting codes, specifically code G ('getting a divorce'), a code of enduring duration, and code O (having 'already decided' or 'thought about'), a code of decreasing duration occurring only in the first half of the interview.

**Lag Analysis of Thematic Clusters**

The in vivo codes were also examined in terms of statistically significant co-occurrence. The procedure was a modification of lag sequential analysis, with the change
from one code to another forming the "event data" (Sackett, 1979, p. 632) of the sampling method. To review the analytical situation, in vivo codes arose as repetitions, in the party's own phrases or idioms, occurring during an interview that lasted approximately an hour and a quarter. Normally, the sequential relationships are examined between every combination of codes at every lag position out to whatever distance or delay is thought reasonable.

Because a time sampling technique was not employed in the current study—which could have specified a larger number of lag positions at a predictable distance from each criterion—I thought it important to restrict the number of lags examined to about five. I presented arguments in the Methods chapter above, that such a window has some naturalistic basis in terms of listener retention and attentiveness.

Verbal report data are already discrete events; therefore, the same code was allowed to follow itself (autolag), contrary to typical event sampling. However, because such autocorrelation biases the unconditional probabilities of the null model used in lag analysis, modifications were made to the calculations of the unconditional probabilities, the crosslag conditional probabilities, and the Z-statistic values. This was accomplished by using adjusted frequencies, which did not include the number of autolag occurrences, in keeping with the suggestions of Sackett (1987, p. 865).

Due to the relative brevity of the interviews, there were not sufficient repetitions to examine with statistical validity the conditional probabilities between codes at each serial position following a criterion code. I determined, however, that grouping together any occurrences within a window consisting of five lag positions would provide a reasonable measure of "proximity" between two codes in the same locale of the transcript. In the process, enough lag events would be generated to employ the binomial test with statistical validity.
Due to the need for mutually exclusive and exhaustive coding to apply lag analysis, I formed a "wastebasket category" (Sackett, 1979, p. 631) by considering a gap of ten lines or more in the transcript between adjacent codes as its own code (lag code X). In other words, within each instance of the wastebasket (whether it was ten lines long or several dozen), no coded themes appeared. There were twenty-eight such occurrences that emerged from this transcript as the other in vivo codes were laid out in serial order, although no frequency distribution or lag analysis was conducted on this wastebasket code, as it would have been simply an artifact of the other codes that were selected for analysis.

The results of this lag analysis of in vivo codes occurring within five lag places of each code as criterion, for structured interview SI01, are summarized in Table 3. It should be noted that this table only presents the findings that are statistically significant, when applying the binomial test. A convention employed for clarity in presenting the results is to capitalize a code when it signifies the initial criterion in determining the five-lag window, and to leave the code in lower case when it signifies a significant probability of co-occurrence within its respective five-lag window.

Table 3 shows which criterion codes had significant results, the specific combinations of codes involved, the Z-value obtained from applying a two-tailed binomial test, the level of significance for each combination, as well as the in vivo meaning of each criterion and each lag code. In the one instance where the conditional probability was significantly less than expected (combination Fa), a minus sign is used for both the Z-value and the meaning, as a reminder that that combination did not occur very often at all.

Z-values for all the lag analyses were computed according to the following formulas derived from Sackett (1979, p. 627), with P signifying probability, SD
Table 3.
Lag Analysis of In Vivo Codes in Structured Interview SI01: Significant Combinations Occurring Within Five Lag Places of Criterion.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Criterion</th>
<th>Combination</th>
<th>Z-Test</th>
<th>Meaning of Combination</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>Eq</td>
<td>4.46**</td>
<td>get (him) to do / have to do</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Bj</td>
<td>2.77**</td>
<td>in denial</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>En</td>
<td>3.83**</td>
<td>(not) in writing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Eh</td>
<td>3.03**</td>
<td>could be worse</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>still have relationship</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>not arguing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F</td>
<td>Fb</td>
<td>4.36**</td>
<td>[husband] not follow through</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Fa</td>
<td>- 2.24*</td>
<td>get (him) to do / have to do</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- make sense?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>G</td>
<td>Ge</td>
<td>2.52*</td>
<td>getting a divorce</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>could be worse</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H</td>
<td>Hn</td>
<td>2.87**</td>
<td>not arguing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Hj</td>
<td>2.08 *</td>
<td>still have relationship</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(not) in writing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I</td>
<td>Ia</td>
<td>2.49*</td>
<td>lose / not win</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Ic</td>
<td>2.27*</td>
<td>make sense?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(not) address issues</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>J</td>
<td>Jl</td>
<td>3.48**</td>
<td>(not) in writing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Jd</td>
<td>3.22**</td>
<td>game-playing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>still not done</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 3 cont.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Criterion</th>
<th>Combination</th>
<th>Z-Test</th>
<th>Meaning of Combination</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>K</td>
<td>Km</td>
<td>4.61**</td>
<td>dysfunctional</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Kq</td>
<td>2.61**</td>
<td>in denial</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M</td>
<td>Mp</td>
<td>3.43**</td>
<td>dysfunctional +</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>original question was...?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N</td>
<td>Ni</td>
<td>2.27*</td>
<td>lose / not win</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>already decided +</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>O</td>
<td>Oj</td>
<td>3.53**</td>
<td>(not) in writing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q</td>
<td>Qk</td>
<td>5.42**</td>
<td>realize</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Qm</td>
<td>2.01*</td>
<td>dysfunctional</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Note.** Lag code is capitalized when used as the criterion, and lower case when occurring within five lag places of a criterion. Z-statistic has been corrected for autocorrelation.

*p < .05, two-tailed. **p < .01, two-tailed.

signifying standard deviation, SQRT signifying square root, and N indicating number of instances:

\[
Z = \frac{(P_{\text{Observed}} - P_{\text{Expected}})}{SD_{\text{Expected}}} 
\]
where

\[ SD = \text{SQRT} \left[ \left\{ \frac{P_{\text{Expected}} \ast (1 - P_{\text{Expected}})}{N_{\text{AdjustedTotalCriterion}}} \right\} \right] \] (5)

As mentioned above, the criterion frequency used in calculating standard deviations was adjusted to remove the number of autolag occurrences—i.e., the same code following itself—since including such events would have biased the unconditional null model "by constraining . . . the range of opportunity for crosslag occurrence" (Sackett, 1987, p. 865). In point of fact, there were sizeable autocorrelations for five different in vivo codes, namely, B ('get [him] to do'), F ('not follow through'), I ('lose / not win'), K ('realize'), and N ('still have relationship'). Because the Z-statistic yields an approximately normal distribution, absolute Z-values for a two-tailed test that are greater than or equal to 1.96 are significant at \( p < 0.05 \), while absolute Z-values greater than or equal to 2.58 are significant at \( p < 0.01 \).

Some sense of the import of Table 3 can be gained by listing a few illustrations from the transcript of combinations enumerated in the table. For instance, one passage that occurred early in the interview included five in vivo codes in four combinations (i.e., Eh, Hj, Oj, Bj) that significantly recurred elsewhere, all in the space of four lines: "we could have [code E] bickered and argued [code H] over more stuff, but most of it we had already decided [code O] before the mediation. It was just to get my husband probably to accept it [code B] and to put it in writing [code J]" [SI01, li.47-50]. A pair of adjoining passages mentioned three in vivo codes in four significant combinations (i.e., Kq, Qk, Km, Qm): "I didn't realize [code K] I guess because I was being Miss Nice Guy [code Q]...it helped me recognize [code K] how much his ADD really did contribute to the dysfunctional [code M] marriage....And the way he's still dysfunctional [code M]" [SI01, li.139f., 160-164]. An evaluative passage occurring a third of the way through the
interview mentioned five in vivo codes in four significant combinations (i.e., En, Hn, Eh, Ge): "I think it could have been worse [code E]...the game-playing [code L] like a lot of divorced [code G] couples do, and they fight and argue [code H] over the kids, and they use the kids to just split, you know,...the relationship [code N]. I think, um, it could have been worse [code E]" [SI01, li. 312-318].

There were numerous passages that were representative of one or two combinations occurring in concert. An early section illustrated three in vivo codes in sequence with two significant combinations (i.e., Fb, Bq): "he'd just ignore it [code F]...he's still trying to do that [code D] in a way, but it's gotten him...to do [code B] more than he did before...He's always been in denial [code Q]" [SI01, li. 108-112, 119]. Another sequence of three codes illustrated two other significant combinations (i.e., Jl, Jd): "I can say, well it's [in] writing [code J], you owe me the first of the month, or he like, this month he didn't write my last name on the check so I can cash the check....You know, this kind of g- [sic] [code L], it's like, forget it....It's still not [code D] in the bank" [SI01, li. 240-244, 252f.]. One short passage displayed four in vivo codes, three of which occurred in two significant combinations (i.e., Ia, Ic): "it's sort of (chuckle) disappointing [code I] because, I mean, another person gets him to do it [code B], where before why couldn't he do it when we were married? You know what I mean? [code A] ...he still doesn't talk about, I mean, we didn't get a lot into personal issues [code C]" [SI01, li. 456-463]. Another combination (i.e., Ni) was illustrated by adjoining comments in the transcript: "you still both come out where you're not hating each other [code N], it, you still have a relationship [code N] to work with,...there's some degree. There will always be, why couldn't you make this marriage work? [code I]" [SI01, li. 574f., 596f.].

A final short excerpt illustrated both a significant combination and the type of autocorrelation—that is, one code following itself—that was weeded out of the lag analysis (i.e., Ia and Ii, respectively): "And in the end, I still don't think either one of us, I mean,
you don't win [code I]. It, it seemed more like a lose-lose [code I]. Does that make sense? [code A]" [SI01, li. 731-733]. Such illustrations give a feel both for this particular party and for the clustering of themes that occurs in this interview. The results displayed in Table 3, as well as Table 2, are further presented below in compilation with considerations of framing, as several of the data streams for this interview are integrated.

**Contextual Framing and Duration**

In putting these various temporal findings together (and interweaving considerations from the narrative analysis), a network of conclusions starts to emerge, with holds import for a theory of temporal duration for enacting various layers of meaning. This compilation involves a detailed recital of the evidence, so that any conclusions about temporal duration are sufficiently grounded. The order of presentation is roughly chronological as to how themes appeared through the interview. In my own mind I like the metaphor of a stage production, in terms of who is on stage at any given point, and when do they leave? This image is used to group the presentation into two main subsections.

**The Early Cast of Characters**

At the outset of the interview there is a brief prefacing micro-story, essentially summed up as: "we went to counseling...they didn't help...we're getting a divorce" [SI01, li. 34-40]. This raises one of the enduring themes in this transcript, that of 'getting a divorce' (code G). It is a change of setting from trying to work things out through counseling, and in that sense it contextualizes what follows. It is also mentioned in one way or another twelve times in the interview, evenly distributed in each quarter of the transcript, so we can surmise that it is a continuing frame for the party's experience. The narrative analysis was finer grained in noting that there was the possibility later on of a narrative shift by virtue of who was getting the divorce--is it "we" or is it "she"?--but that distinction was not overtly picked up by the party to recontextualize her thinking.
An important string of comments occurs shortly after this point. When asked what changes had occurred by the end of the mediation, the party answers in terms of what could have happened—"I suppose we could have bickered and argued over more stuff" [SI01, li.46-47]—and this was listed as two in vivo codes: 'could be worse' (code E) and 'not arguing' (code H). She goes on to claim: "most of it we had already decided before the mediation. It was just to get my husband probably to accept it and to put it in writing" [SI01, li. 48-50], a passage noted as quite formative in the narrative analysis section. The in vivo codes here are: 'already decided' (code O), 'get him to do' (code B), and 'put in writing' (code J).

Some interesting instances of co-occurrence are exemplified in these early passages. First I describe the distributions and durations of these themes. 'Not arguing' (code H) is repeated eleven times in the interview, slightly front loaded in the transcript but essentially evenly distributed. That is, it is an enduring theme. It is also mentioned in this early section of the interview as the party's expectation for mediation, so one would expect that she would have a stake in demonstrating that this was the case. Her evaluation that it 'could be worse' (code E), or some variant of that phrase, also occurs frequently, repeated fourteen times in the interview. However, it is mentioned at a decreasing frequency, with 50% of occurrences in the first quarter of the transcript, and no mention at all in the last quarter. In other words, here is an evaluative ending commentary for a number of episodes, which basically could not be sustained. It is tempting to consider it supplanted by the notion of 'losing / not winning' (code I). Suggestive evidence comes from noticing that soon after the last mention that the frustration 'could be worse' (code E) [SI01, li. 640-642] comes a new commentary that "you want things that aren't attainable [code I]" [SI01, li. 658f.]. The importance of this assessment regarding 'loss' is elaborated below.
The claim that they had 'already decided' (code O) or thought about certain decisions is another decreasing theme, with all five repetitions limited to the first half of the interview, making it an unsuccessful frame for explaining the progress of the mediation. The insistence that mediation 'get (him) to do' something (code B) is also decreasing in duration throughout the interview, especially with the husband as the object of the compulsion (comprising ten of the fifteen occurrences), which in that form is virtually limited to the first half of the transcript. As was noted in the section on narrative analysis, there are important references to the party herself 'having to do' (code B) or accept something, including a key reference late in the interview, which may indicate a significant narrative shift in her story. Finally, references to putting something 'in writing (or not)' (code J) is mentioned eleven times at a decreasing rate (i.e., 90% of such references occur in the first half of the transcript), indicating that she may have been placing less emphasis on that hope as time went on.

These different themes do display some reliable pairings, again with pairing signifying that a given code occurred within five lag places of a criterion code, at a significantly higher rate than would be expected by chance. It is worth repeating that Z-values greater than 1.96 are worth believing (from a statistical point of view) nineteen times out of twenty, while Z-values greater than 2.58 are worth believing ninety-nine times out of a hundred. Mention of 'divorce' (code G) is reliably followed (i.e., Ge @ Z = 2.52) by stating that it 'could be worse' (code E), but as was just noted, the former is an enduring theme while the latter is decreasing. In other words, her words represent an unsuccessful attempt at evaluating the impact of getting a divorce, and the field is left open for rival evaluations.

Changes in the Ensemble

One such candidate for being a rival evaluation emerges late in the interview as a theme of increasing duration, namely, 'losing' (code I, with eleven repetitions, all in the
last half of the transcript). While its pairing with code G does not reach statistical significance (i.e., \( Gi @ Z = 1.64 \)), there is a passage of sizeable narrative import, which I termed above a supplementary ending commentary for the entire narrative: "those were probably rose-colored glasses, because really you can’t really win-win, I don’t think, in a divorce. It’s more lose-lose. Cause it’s a loss more than a gain in your life" [SI01, li. 746-749]. It seems by the end of the interview divorce has come to be seen as an inherent no-win situation. Ricoeur (cited in Young, 1982) made the telling remark that "'the story's conclusion is the pole of attraction of the entire development'" (p. 313), which if true, would mean that 'lose-lose' is a candidate for the party's eventual main story point.

Returning to the early part of the interview, the mention of 'not arguing' (code H) elaborates in what way it 'could be worse' (code E), and these two themes do reliably occur together (i.e., \( Eh @ Z = 3.03 \)). Each of these are also reliably paired with a new theme (code N) that emerges in the second and third quarter of the transcript, namely, we 'still have a relationship' (i.e., \( En @ Z = 3.83 \), and \( Hn @ Z = 2.87 \)). In other words, these are all attempts at optimistic appraisals of the mediation. However, looking at the durations of these themes suggests that such assessments could not be sustained, seeing as both the 'could be worse' theme and the 'still have relationship' theme are decreasing by not continuing past the third quarter of the transcript. For instance, the last mention of code N is the muted commendation, "I still feel that it helped so we didn't argue and kill each other [laughing]" [SI01, li. 635f.], hardly a ringing endorsement of still having a relationship.

Among the codes of decreasing duration mentioned above, there are other reliable pairings. Specifically, mention of 'in writing (or not)' (code J) often follows references to having 'already decided' (i.e., \( Oj @ Z = 3.53 \)), as well as references to 'getting (him) to do' (i.e., \( Bj @ Z = 2.77 \)). The former claim, that they have 'already decided'--with its implication that it should be no problem to formalize the decisions in a written
agreement—is a theme abandoned by midway through the interview. The latter combination (i.e., Bj) suggests that getting an agreement ‘in writing’ was one of the party's key goals for starting mediation, whether formulated as getting the husband to put something in writing, or getting him to comply because it was in writing. Its ultimate failure as an effective frame for the mediation, however, is signaled by its more common formulation in negative terms: for example, "he'd say, well I don't have to do it cause it's not in writing yet" [SI01, li. 197f.].

It is worth noting that it 'not being in writing' (code J) is reliably followed by a complaint of 'game-playing' (code L) by the husband (i.e., Jl @ Z = 3.48); for instance, "it's not in writing so he doesn't have to follow through on it. He's been playing that ever since the beginning" [SI01, li. 98-100]. 'Not being in writing' is also followed by a complaint that the agreement is taking forever and 'still not done' (code D, with Jd occurring @ Z = 3.22). The former complaint of 'game-playing' is not sustained by the party--that is, it is repeated nine times, all in the first half of the transcript. However, the latter complaint of it 'taking forever' is an enduring theme, with fifteen repetitions evenly distributed throughout the transcript. In essence, it supplants one of her positive evaluations, the variant forms of code E that it 'would have taken longer' and 'could have been worse'. A good illustration of this is in a key passage examined in the narrative analysis section: "He's a procrastinator, it would have taken him forever, just to [laugh], it's taking forever, okay" [SI01, li. 75f.].

The party also abandons her frequent theme of 'getting the husband to do something' (code B). Early on, it is reliably paired with 'denial' (code Q) usually as a contrast (i.e., Bq @ Z = 4.46). For instance, the mediator ‘got the husband to accept’ some changes, whereas before the husband was 'in denial' over the need for change and the party was being ‘Miss Nice Guy’ [SI01, li. 127]. Both these codes are fairly short-lived, however, except for a late mention of the party herself (not the husband) being
'forced to accept' things. Another form of pairing with code B is its reliable occurrence (i.e., Fb @ Z = 4.36) after code F about the husband 'not following through'. For instance, "he'd just ignore it....but it's gotten him...[to] do more than he did before" [SI01, li. 108-112]. 'Not following through' on issues is a fairly substantial theme, with twelve repetitions. A good example is the contrast: "A lot of times we'd address issues with [the mediator], and he wouldn't carry them out" [SI01, li. 93f.]. However, almost all of these references occur in the first half of the transcript. That is to say, here is another complaint code of decreasing frequency and duration--like earlier complaints about the husband--becoming another unsuccessful frame for a sustained appraisal of the process.

In the last excerpt quoted in the previous paragraph, there is a more frequent in vivo code mentioned, namely, 'addressing issues (or not)' (code C). There are fifteen repetitions of this code evenly distributed in the transcript, and pretty evenly split between the positive and negative forms. This is an enduring theme, but in an ambiguous way because its status is mixed. Sometimes there is commendation--e.g., "[the mediator] covered a lot of areas that needed to be worked through" [SI01, li. 348f.]--and sometimes there is censure--e.g., "and yet [the mediator] never really took care of the issues either" [SI01, li. 229f.]. And this vacillating theme of 'addressing issues (or not)' is only reliably paired (i.e., Ic @ Z = 2.27) with a theme of increasing duration later in the interview, that of 'losing' (code I), far from a clear statement of satisfaction by the party.

Even more striking in the lag analysis is the fact that this theme of 'losing' or 'not winning' (code I) reliably follows only one other theme, that of 'still having a relationship' (code N, with Ni @ Z = 2.27), once again hardly a strong endorsement of their way of relating. In its own right, the theme of 'losing' is reliably followed by checking and confirming its understanding by the interviewer, with the metacomment 'does that make sense?' (code A), or some variant (i.e., Ia @ Z = 2.49, the only reliable
pairing of code A with any theme). It seems, the 'lose-lose' conclusion is an important one for the party to get across.

Finally, there are several themes of relatively short duration that do cluster together. For instance, being 'in denial' (code Q) and being 'dysfunctional' (code M) reliably occur together (i.e., Qm @ Z = 2.01), along with 'realizing' (code K) someone is 'dysfunctional' (i.e., Km @ Z = 4.61) or is 'in denial' (i.e., Kq @ Z = 2.61). This latter combination also occurs in inverse order as a contrast. For example, someone was 'in denial' but now is 'recognizing' something (i.e., Qk @ Z = 5.42). Regardless of the order of these clusters, they are all relatively infrequent codes appearing at decreasing rates through the transcript. The one modification to this statement is the reliable pairing of 'dysfunctionality' (code M) with a rare but evenly distributed theme (code P), the metacomment 'the original question was...' (i.e., Mp @ Z = 3.43). While not statistically analyzed in terms of individual lag positions, it is worth mentioning that the metacomment always occurs at a lag 4 or lag 5 position following the criterion. In other words, it appears as though on several occasions the party got into a brief discussion involving someone being 'dysfunctional,' and lost her way as it were in terms of answering the interviewer's query, necessitating a repeat of the question.

Summary of Trends

This has been an extensive and complicated marshaling of the evidence for how themes were framed in this interview, and the potential impact of their durations relative to one another. The reason for this is to clearly ground any conclusions in the data as given. At this point, a summary of the broad trends of this analysis is in order. First of all, there is ongoing emphasis on two themes mentioned right at the outset of interview SI01. These are essentially changes in the form of relationship between the party and her husband, specifically, 'getting a divorce' (code G) and 'not arguing' (code H). The party appears to believe that other developments would naturally follow from these two
beginning constituents, but neither one is sufficient, it turns out, in generating other desired changes for the party.

Next, there are several themes that are put forward as frames for the mediation, which ultimately prove unsuccessful and have to be abandoned. These are the claim that they have 'already decided' (code O) much that they need to, the hope that they could 'put it in writing' (code J), and the paradoxical claim that they need to 'get the husband to do' (code B) certain things, specifically accept the new state of affairs. Getting an agreement 'in writing' is a key initial goal of the party, but its frequent expression in negative terms (e.g., 'not in writing' yet) points to the difficulties that arise for the party in sustaining this as her ultimate goal. There is a pivotal episode early in the interview where all three of these themes are placed in conjunction. And as was seen during the narrative analysis, it contained what I called a faulty premise, in thinking things had 'already been decided.' It is the contradiction of this premise later in the interview that spurs a sizeable narrative shift in the party's overall story. In other words, here was a change of sufficient placement (i.e., contravening a fundamental premise), as well as sufficient magnitude (i.e., not only is it not "already" decided, they essentially "can't" decide), so that the old story could not simply continue.

The ramifications of this shift are then seen in other repetitive themes that also must be abandoned. These include various complaints against the husband, which recur in decreasing frequency as the interview progresses. For example, 'game-playing' (code L) and 'in denial' (code Q) do not occur past the halfway mark of the transcript, while 'not following through' (code F) and being 'dysfunctional' (code M) do not occur past the third quarter. These assessments found initial voice in a series of complaint scenarios, as part of a moral story of attributing blame, and in reaction to the plot complication that nothing was changing for the party. Ultimately, however, they did not supply an adequate resolution to the story, and so were discarded.
There are a couple of optimistic portrayals that are attempted as ending commentaries for various episodes, namely, 'could have been worse' (code E) and 'still have a relationship' (code N). The latter gains more ascendancy as the complaint themes start to subside. However, it basically cannot be sustained, and does not appear past the third quarter of the transcript. The former is more interesting, in that it attempts to describe both the impact of the divorce and the progress of the mediation. But it, too, does not survive past the third quarter, and gradually gets supplanted by two other themes, which end up as the main conclusions of this party. These are the ending commentaries, 'still not done' (code D) and 'lose-lose' (code I). As was seen in the narrative analysis, the mediation ‘taking forever’ and the results ‘still not being done’ is a critique sustained throughout the interview, which forms an ongoing story point for the dominant narrative. The theme of ‘losing’ is a new appraisal of increasing duration, begun midway through the interview and supported by a variety of evidence, until it becomes a supplemental story point for a rival narrative, dealing with changed expectations and the need for acceptance by the party.

This focus on what the party herself ‘has to do’ (code B) is an ambiguous theme in the interview. It forms part of the compulsion of code B—which basically decreases in duration when applied to the husband—but in emphasizing the party’s acceptance of things she cannot change, it becomes in some ways an alternate ending commentary for the party's revised narrative. It bears some family resemblance to another ambiguous theme, that of ‘realizing’ (code K) or ‘recognizing’ certain realities, although the use of verbatim phrases as in vivo codes in this analysis does not capture well those instances where a ‘realization’ is only implicitly present. If such implicit references were included, then this theme of ‘realizing’ would be of sustained or increasing duration. For instance, late in the interview, the party shares several reflections, which deal with changes in what she originally came in thinking, what she thought would happen, and in her hopes and
expectations. Following such reflections, her key evaluation that the outcome was basically 'lose-lose' becomes especially prominent. This qualification on the concept of duration, introduced by a distinction between explicit versus implicit presence, may convey variability in applying grounded theory categories of temporality.

There are a few more instances of ambiguous themes—ambiguous because they are enduring themes but their impact is not clear. One is whether the mediation 'addressed issues or not' (code C), where the vacillation within this code may reflect the emerging unsustainability of optimistic appraisals of the mediation, such as those noted above (e.g., code E, 'could be worse,' and code N, 'still have a relationship'). There are also two enduring themes that serve as metacommunications with the interviewer, specifically, 'does that make sense?' (code A) and 'the original question was...?' (code P). The ambiguity here comes from a duality in their temporal status, reflecting different logical types. By definition, a metacomment has a time-limited, local referent, and so it does not contextualize communications occurring outside that frame. Repetitions, however, can be distributed throughout a given interview, and this sense of persisting duration might thereby reflect a certain communicative style. This party occasionally got lost in responding to a question, and frequently checked out whether her comments made sense. This suggests that she may have been using her responses to create some of the sense in the first place. Here is another qualification on the notion of duration, which may have import in constructing a grounded theory out of these various findings. In other words, attention should be paid to the correct logical level in evaluating the impact of a given idea, and duration or temporal scale may be an indicator of where to place logical levels in relation to one another.

Grounded Theory Generation

So then, in the foregoing summary of the temporal analysis of interview SI01, there are ongoing themes that persist, unsuccessful themes that are deselected, promising
themes that emerge and supplant other appraisals, and ambigious themes reflecting special case situations. There are also pivotal episodes, moral story lines, key story points, narrative shifts, and ramifications on the continuance of other themes. Lists such as these provide the beginnings of a grounded theory of meaning-making. Of necessity, this section represents a first approximation of appropriate categories for such a theory. An important aspect of grounded theory generation is to fracture the data into new groupings, with a view toward developing robust categories. The constructs of these lists already represent groupings that go beyond the content of the in vivo codes. In addition, I believe the two lists itemized here can be usefully categorized as temporal duration and temporal progression, respectively.

To start with the latter, the notion of progression conveys a sense of one item following another, either in linear sequence or in cyclical fashion. The types of constructs comprising the second list all carry a sense of the story going somewhere. There is movement, there is intention, there is heading in a direction and making a point. For instance, a moral story line is concerned with what and who is right, and it keeps coming back—whether by illustration, accusation, or justification—to establishing that firmly. A pivotal episode is pivotal for a reason, in that it makes a key difference for something that comes later. Gergen and Gergen (1988) note that a narrative always has a "valued end point" (p. 20), and as was seen above in the quotation from Ricoeur (cited in Young, 1982), the conclusion forms a "pole of attraction" (p. 313) for the unfolding of the story. Narrative shifts entail constitutive changes that alter what story is being told, and head it in an entirely new direction. The very notion of ramifications is one of divergent consequences branching in multiple directions. All of these share a common sense of movement and progression.

The other list captures the notion of duration through time. Whatever is mentioned in an interview must arise at some point in time, and items of importance
persist and carry the most pertinent meanings forward. Stories exist in a temporal medium, and events enter and take their place on a temporal stage. To continue the theatrical metaphor, some events and meanings stay on stage, as it were, longer than others, and it is the meanings that are on stage at any given moment that give shape to the unfolding drama. They can mark their presence on stage either overtly, through explicit mention, or indirectly by virtue of framing and giving context to the meanings that are overtly present. This latter dynamic creates a situation where a meaning has supposedly left the stage, and yet its presence lingers on and makes itself felt among the current acting ensemble. In other words, its duration continues beyond other meanings that have left the stage, and into the scope of the immediate performance still on stage.

The procedure known as axial coding can be applied to these categories, to fill them out and elaborate them into their varied components. Corbin and Strauss (1990) described axial coding as follows: "Through the coding paradigm of conditions, context, strategies (action/interaction), and consequences, subcategories are related to a category" (p. 13). I believe the more neutral term "enactments" may be preferable to "strategies," which would convey more of a sense of explicit goals. I also wish to reserve the term "context" to fill a role in the emerging theory; consequently, I would replace it with the term "environs." With those changes in mind, axial coding is an attempt to answer the question: How is this category enacted, under what conditions, in which environs, with what consequences? A further question can be added: What are some exemplars that illustrate this category's appearance? Results of such a procedure of axial coding on the categories of "temporal duration" and "temporal progression" are displayed in Table 4.

**Temporal Duration**

The category of temporal duration can be classified into components that specify how it is enacted. These are the ways the category manifests itself. Duration is primarily embodied through mechanisms of repetition and framing. Selection / deselection may be
Table 4.
Axial Coding of Grounded Theory Categories of Temporality.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Enactments</th>
<th>Conditions</th>
<th>Environ</th>
<th>Consequences</th>
<th>Exemplars</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Temporal Duration</td>
<td>Repetition</td>
<td>Copy of Original</td>
<td>Recursive Beliefs</td>
<td>Add Emphasis</td>
<td>Mantra</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Functional Equivalent</td>
<td>a) what speaker produced</td>
<td>Provide Continuity</td>
<td>Litany</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Systemic Variant</td>
<td>b) what hearer heard</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>c) belief in mutuality</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Framing</td>
<td>Demarcating Boundary</td>
<td>Different Logical Levels</td>
<td>Contextualize</td>
<td>Bracketing Comment</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Internestated Comments</td>
<td>Orient</td>
<td>Preface</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Evaluate</td>
<td>Summation</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Selection /</td>
<td>Shift of Attention</td>
<td>Expectations</td>
<td>Provide Focus</td>
<td>Correction</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Deselection</td>
<td></td>
<td>a) confirming</td>
<td>Follow What's Effective</td>
<td>Counter-assertion</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>b) disconfirming</td>
<td></td>
<td>Puzzle</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Temporal Progression</td>
<td>Sequence</td>
<td>Serial Order</td>
<td>Give Directionality</td>
<td>Beginning/Middle/End</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Event/Consequence</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Episodic Structure</td>
<td>Tension &amp; Resolution</td>
<td>Linear Patterns</td>
<td>Tell Events in a Setting</td>
<td>Story Line</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Make a Story Point</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Offer Accounts</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
a further mechanism that expresses itself in how long meanings effectively persist. The column labeled Conditions, in Table 4, essentially gives the defining feature(s) of the respective enactment. The heading Environs is meant to convey the conceptual locale within which the enactment operates.

The column labeled Consequences is the closest to what the speaker is attempting to accomplish with a given communicational technique. From a speech act perspective, it is a combination of the illocutionary and the perlocutionary effects (Austin, 1962), although the enactments dealt with in this theory are of a more general and instrumental pattern than individual speech acts per se. The final column, Exemplars, is not meant to be exhaustive, but simply to suggest ways of recognizing the respective enactment.

Repetition. As its name implies, repetition has to do with generating or noticing a copy of previous material. That is the condition that warrants use of the term repetition. In addition to that, it also has to do with copies or variants that are judged to be sufficiently similar. An example would be code A in transcript SI01, where I felt that 'does that make sense?', 'if that makes sense,' and 'you know what I mean?' were all essentially equivalent phrases for the party.

This raises the question, when assigning codes, of a range of variations, some of which may be deemed functionally equivalent to the original, while others are considered to be other themes or merely incidental comments. For example, with code N, I considered occasional remarks that the husband was 'against getting a divorce' to be nonequivalent to statements that the parties 'still have a relationship.' Alongside these distinctions are instances where there is a systemic variant employed, such as changing the subject or object of the action, or switching from the positive form to the negative. An example of the former is code B, where 'I'll have to accept it' and 'get him to accept it' were sufficiently close in form, because of the compulsion aspect, to be grouped together. An example of the latter is code J, where 'get it in writing' and 'not in writing yet' both
shared the same concern that the agreement be put in written form. The question in such cases is whether the change is a substantive one that makes it a different code, or whether there is sufficient similarity to capitalize statistically on having a greater number of instances included within the same code.

When looking at the *environs* or conceptual area surrounding the notion of repetition, it is important to remember that repetition occurs during communication, that is, in an interactional medium. That means it is in the context of a language game coordinated between two (or more) parties. Consequently, there are several layers of recursive beliefs operating between the parties about what was just communicated. There is the belief of the speaker of what was just produced, which in the case of repetition is a copy or functional equivalent of some phrase used previously. Then there is the belief of the listener about what was just heard, including a determination of whether this is a familiar idea that has been heard before, and if so, how that previous context might be affecting the current communication. Then there is a belief by the original speaker as to whether the listener heard the message as intended, and whether the anticipated consequence or impact on the listener can be expected to follow. There is probably an additional recursive layer, dealing with the listener's belief about whether the speaker thinks the message has been heard as originally conveyed and intended. Indeed, it is possible to imagine an indefinite series of regressions in recursive beliefs about the other. But in practical terms these four layers are probably sufficient to denote the complicated intertwining of explicit and back-channel responses between two parties, as they decide on whether they have a mutual frame of reference for moving on.

Such recursivity is not unique to the use of repetition in a dialogue, but is a feature of how all meaning is jointly negotiated. When such layers are operating smoothly in the unfolding communication, then the parties mutually believe they have understood an utterance, including such aspects as repetition, when they are free to go on
in their communication (Wittgenstein, cited in Cronen, Pearce, & Changsheng, 1989/90, p. 6); otherwise, some measure of modification or repair is in order. This presentation of recursive systems of belief is not essential for a pragmatic understanding of repetition, as used in this theory, but it does form the conceptual and social constructionist backdrop for how the technique gets used in communication.

More relevant are the practical consequences of using repetition, and as stated above, this is much closer to the naturalistic understanding of the speakers and listeners themselves. One way of recognizing that a theme is important to a party—indeed, even recognizing that a theme is present—is by noticing which statements and phrases are mentioned more than once. The effects of such repetition (when it is heard as intended) are essentially to add emphasis through the reiteration of previous themes, and to provide continuity by displaying similarities between ostensibly different comments.

These functions are illustrated in two different ways by the exemplars of repetition mentioned in Table 4. Mantra is used to signify a phrase that is resorted to again and again, repeated almost with an automatic quality the way a repetitive chant might be intoned. An example from interview SI01 is code E, with its variants, 'could have been worse,' or 'would have taken longer.' A slightly different exemplar is suggested by the term litany. As with mantra, litany carries the notion of cumulative emphasis through a repetitive recital of fixed responses, and several of the individual complaint codes of interview SI01 have this quality. The effect is also achieved, however, by realizing that several of these different codes are similar precisely as complaints, so that as they are combined in the same passage their cumulative effect is greater. An example is the adjacency of codes F ('not follow through') and L ('game-playing') within the span of ten lines early in interview SI01: "he wouldn't carry them out....there's buttons you can push....it's not in writing so he doesn't have to follow through on it. He's been playing that ever since the beginning....we're still playing with that" [li. 93-103].
Framing. Another form of enactment for temporal duration is through framing. The essential, defining condition for framing to occur is for there to be a demarcating boundary between adjacent comments, such that one set of comments gets nested inside another. There are various ways that this can come about. The excerpt cited in part in the previous paragraph offers a good illustration.

First comes the overall complaint against the husband, introduced with a preface to indicate this was typical behavior on his part: "A lot of times we'd address issues with [the mediator], and he wouldn't carry them out." This is the story point of this entire response—essentially telling the interviewer no changes occurred in their interaction, because the husband would not follow through with anything—and as the main conclusion it contextualizes the material around it. That is to say, other remarks take their cue, as elaboration or exemplification, from this single driving point. The demarcation is quite stark in the very next words: "They were, when couples are married there's buttons you can push, and that's what he would do." The party stops herself mid-phrase, to insert a brief orienting incident, complete with its own introductory preface (i.e., "when couples are married...") and a global summation (i.e., "that's what he would do"). These two comments are the encompassing frame for the vague accusation that the husband pushes buttons. Then there is another demarcation, again, inserted mid-phrase, as the party gives an illustration: "He's like, um, not pay me for certain things..." This is followed by another closing summation: "He's been playing that ever since the beginning." The party then reorients herself to the broader context posed by the interviewer's question, with her own metacomment: "And like, um, [pause] the original question was again?" In all these chained examples, framing takes place by such exemplars as introductions, summations, interruptions in the flow of the sentence to insert something germane to the overall point, and even metacomments about the response itself.
The overall consequence of framing is to contextualize the immediately following or preceding remarks. Framing orients the listener as to how to understand what will be said next or what was just said. Sometimes it begins with a single word, for example the word "like," indicating that an illustration is to follow. A frequent closing frame is to offer a brief commentary that evaluates the material under discussion and tells the speaker's preferred assessment of it.

It is important to realize that such a comment is at a different logical level from the nested material. It is a remark about the material, rather than from within it. That is the reason that there is this discernable boundary between the two types of comments. It is as if the remarks are shifting among different layers of discourse. This is the conceptual environs within which framing operates.

In fact, with the device of framing, multiple layers of context can be built up, to give nuanced shape and contour to the unfolding communication. And because of the complex system of contextualization that can thereby result, one must attend to the appropriate logical level when examining which blocks of material are considered adjacent. For instance, a remark may be made at the beginning of an interview, and thereby contextualize all that is to follow. Such was the argument in the narrative analysis section above, for the prefacing micro-story regarding previously going for counseling but now getting a divorce. The party reported a relational shift that recontextualized the whole discourse. In such a case the initial demarcation may occur, but a corresponding closing frame may not take place until near the end of the interview. And again, that was the argument made for the code 'lose-lose,' used in some of the late summations of interview SI01, which functioned as a closing commentary on the whole divorce mediation process.

It may seem a stretch to say the demarcations occurred between adjacent comments, what with all the intervening material. But bookends (i.e., such things as
orientations and summations) are at a different logical level from the books in between, regardless the size of the shelf. Because what was framed was a large block of material—virtually the entire interview—the demarcation can still be thought of as occurring at the interface of those adjacent blocks.

**Selection / deselection.** I believe another form of temporal duration can be seen in terms of selection and deselection. This was an unexpected finding of this study. I originally thought—and expressed it in terms of Hypothesis 2, in Chapter II—that significant themes would be selected to increase their duration, and thus their influence on other themes in the interview. A prominent finding of the temporal analysis, however, was how frequently inadequate themes were deselected by the party, and thus decreased in their sphere of influence. A glance at Table 2 shows nine of the sixteen in vivo codes classified as "decreasing" in duration and influence, as interview SI01 proceeded. Only two specifically "increased" in frequency and duration (statistically speaking) from early to late in the interview. In a sense, all the codes can be thought of as selected by the speaker for mention in the interview. But this would be to render the concept of selection empty of meaning, by losing its capacity to discriminate. If selection is to be an active process by the party and a useful distinction for the researcher, then it should more properly be applied to the six codes classified as "enduring" on Table 2, since in order for them to persist each one had to be reiterated by the party on numerous occasions throughout the interview.

The mark or *condition* of selection / deselection as an enactment of temporal duration, I believe, is a shift of attention such that selected items are attended to, and deselected items are noted by their absence. The concept of selection only makes sense in a context where alternate selections are possible. It is much like the notion of change, examined in a previous chapter. Change only has meaning in relation to some kind of stability, that is, by virtue of something which is not changing. In the same way, selection
derives meaning in relation to what is not selected. And if some kind of alternate possibility is not noted, then the act of selection usually passes unnoticed. It is that noticing that comprises the shift of attention, listed as a defining feature in the Conditions column of Table 4. The case is simpler with regard to deselection, for then there is more of a sense of dislocation or surprise when an expected item is not selected.

Indeed, this matter of expectations seems to form the conceptual environs within which selection and deselection take place. The fact that a listener can register surprise demonstrates that some form of expectation is operative. It is the mismatch between a reference standard and what is actually perceived that manifests itself in terms of surprise. When a perception matches the standard (or nearly so), results are simply monitored. Expectations are still present, but they are being confirmed by the unfolding communication. An expectation that is sustained persists in terms of duration. Disconfirmed expectations, however, ultimately decrease in duration, although the sense of disconnection is noted and attended to.

The consequence of such a process for the listener is to provide focus to the communication, as the ebb and flow of expectations confirmed and disconfirmed is monitored. The consequence for the speaker is more central, in that deselection of avenues of explanation that are not working leads to greater effectiveness in the communication. From what has been described, one might gain the impression of quite a cumbersome process of tracking, pursuing, and abandoning lines of communication. I believe it is just the opposite, in that numerous studies of communication (e.g., Pea & Russell, 1987; Pearce & Cronen, 1980) have demonstrated the ability of both speakers and listeners to utilize a variety of verbal and nonverbal means to alter to flow of communication, by attending to subtle cues of how the process is proceeding.

To apply this to interview SI01, the party had her expectations disconfirmed again and again, as she explained what should have been a simple process of getting an
agreement in writing from her husband. Yet, even here, with a goal so central to her hopes of moving on, she was able to deselect that as her main impetus, select a more fitting evaluation—such as, “this is ‘lose-lose’ ”—and pursue a more effective strategy, namely, that she herself would just have to accept the current state of affairs and go on from there. Making such realizations and shifts of attention constitutes the narrative shifts for the party, described in the narrative analysis section above.

Significant exemplars of selection / deselection in action consist of such things as corrections and counter-assertions. Also, when either the speaker or listener detects what they consider to be a puzzle of sorts, greater attention and duration is given to that line of communication, until the puzzle is resolved. A good example of this from interview SI01 is the section where the party ends up contradicting her own starting premise that it was 'already decided,' with a string of "contrastively-matched counters" (Coulter, 1990, p. 196): "it's like, the numbers were there,...yet [the mediator] didn't decide....I don't know if...we were supposed to decide or what,...we're looking to [the mediator] for guidance...yet it seems like [the mediator] is pushing it back to us...yet, that's why we're here is because we can't decide" [li. 392-399]. Here the party tracks back and forth from selection to deselection over who is supposed to decide, in trying to explain the frustrating and puzzling difficulty they were having in the mediation.

**Temporal Progression**

Another prime category of this grounded theory, parallel to that of temporal duration, is temporal progression. The key notion of progression is that the communication leads somewhere. Not every comment that can be mentioned is useful to mention, and not every comment carries the communication forward. These remarks imply the questions, *forward where?* and *useful for what?* Progression carries the implicit notion of intentionality, that is to say, most communication is goal-directed. It is not simply aimless, it makes a point, or at least that is its intent. And the dimension that
crystallizes this feature of direction and intent, and makes it apparent, is what I am calling here temporal progression. The data presented so far in this study suggest that there are two key forms for enacting progression in communication. One is the linear notion of sequence, the other is a more intricate pattern of episodic structure.

**Sequence.** As might be expected from its name, sequence refers to a serial ordering of parts, listed as the *condition* in Table 4. In the context of this study, it means the serial arrangement of events in communication. This need not mean precise chronological order, as various kinds of ordering can have the linear portrayal of one event following another, that is characteristic of a sequence. As Young (1982) noted, in her study of narrative communication, "events do not just succeed one another, they come to some point" (p. 300). For instance, events could be told in logical or causal order, or some mixture of these that seems to meet to communicational goals of the speaker.

A typical *exemplar* is to tell an event (or series of events), followed by the effects or consequences. Another exemplar is to arrange a basic story with a beginning, middle, and end. That is to say, there would be some kind of prefatory statement, an ensuing development, and a conclusion or ending commentary. Such a sequence of story parts will be explored in more detail below, in examining episodic structure. Suffice it to say for now that one of the devices employed in the structuring of stories into episodes is that of linear sequencing. There were numerous specific examples of this with interview SI01, displayed in the narrative analysis section above. Some followed the party's own sense of sequence, and provided good adhesion to the party's communicational devices. Others were more a meaning-making procedure of the researcher, for instance, as a story grammar template was fitted to the data, thus reinterpreting or reconfiguring the party's remarks. In the latter case, this sometimes entailed altering the actual sequence of the party's events or sentences.
The conceptual *environ* within which sequence operates is the simple observation that time is one of the dimensions we live in. Not everything of interest can happen simultaneously, and even if it could, it could not all be retold simultaneously. Of necessity, we exist in a medium of linear patterns unfolding over time. This does not constrain all existence to mere linearity, since it is possible for there to be reflexive influences that alter the structure of reconstructed or remembered time. But it does guarantee that there will be much sequential unfolding of one event after another, in how we experience existence and how we communicate about that existence. This much must be said, however. The very fact of there being other forms of sequence than simply chronological, shows that there is some room to shape and fashion the type of linearity we live in.

The practical *consequence* of sequence being a formative part of communication is to give directionality to speech. This is to emphasize the intentionality discussed earlier. Because of a sequential progression of how events are presented in communication, it is possible to take a discussion somewhere. Understanding can be shaped, not just by the literal unfolding of events, but also by how they are reworked and re-presented by communication itself. This is to make of communication an ontological activity, that creates new experience out of previously lived events. Other types of temporality, such as the mechanism of framing discussed above, share in imputing this ontological status onto communication. But the mechanism of sequential (re)ordering is at least one prime vehicle for this to happen.

**Episodic structure.** The other type of enactment of temporal progression suggested by the initial data of this study is episodic structure. Communication is fashioned, not simply into propositions, but into episodes, which are linked together into stories. Various attempts have been made to delineate the core features of stories. Some, like Mandler (1984), take a structural approach such as devising a story grammar,
consisting of exchange rules for constructing stories. Others, like Wilensky (1983b), take a more existential approach, speaking of the story point that is the main object of the telling.

While a story grammar can be a useful heuristic for analyzing episodes, it is obvious that stories are not created simply to take that particular structure. And while all kinds of story points can fill the content created by the episodic form, the essence lies at a different logical level of description. As Bateson (1979) might ask, what is the pattern that connects all the diverse instantiations? I believe the defining feature of a story episode (listed as the condition in Table 4) is a pattern of tension and resolution. This is captured well in Ewick and Silbey's (1995) definition of narrative, which is built out of "selective appropriation of past events . . . temporally ordered . . . often in the context of an opposition or struggle" (p. 200).

A good illustration of this is an episodic incident from early in interview SI01, as the party tries to describe some of the difference mediation started to make for them: "the first advance [the mediator] made with like our first meeting was getting him to recognize, yes, she is getting a divorce, and yes, you do need to get a job, and yes, you do need to move out. . . . Where before I was Miss Nice Guy for a couple years, and he lived off our savings and whatever money we had left" [li.122-129]. This is certainly a selective recounting of what was most pertinent to this party from their first session, conveying the tension between her own previous permissiveness and the need for the husband to change his outlook. The sense of struggle is captured in the reiteration, "yes, she is . . . yes, you do . . . yes, you do . . .", and the resolution is implied in calling this an "advance" that got him to "recognize" certain realities that he was not open to before.

Nor do episodes have to be very long or involved. The potential brevity of an episode comes across in a passage we have encountered before: "He's a procrastinator, it would have taken him forever, just to, [laugh] it's taking forever, okay" [li.75-76]. The
tension here is on two fronts. First of all is the tension between how long it would normally have taken a procrastinator to get certain things done, with an implied resolution that things are not taking that long. But the key tension which makes the incident most interesting from a narrative standpoint—and which only gets resolved through the party's self-effacing laughter at her predicament—is the self-contradiction and struggle with herself, as she tries to insist it is not taking "forever," but is finally forced to admit that that is exactly what is happening. Such patterns of tension and resolution, carried through the telling of large or small incidents, are what constitute the inherent interest of narrative ways of structuring communication.

The *environs* and conceptual ground for such a mechanism is the possibility of structuring material in cyclical patterns. As Young (1982) observed, it is matter of "constructing the story backwards to include whatever is necessary to account for it, thus arriving at the beginning. Beginnings do not so much imply ends as ends entail beginnings" (p. 282). She noted the privileged position given to conclusions or last events, stating, "Framing events as stories invests them with the sense of an ending" (p. 283), and that is their point. She went on to make this distinction: "However, points are not ends; they are recognitions of the relation of ends to beginnings" (p. 300). The cycle of construction of a story is from the end to the beginning, while the cycle of telling is from the beginning to the end. Stories live and breathe in this recursive realm, where linearity is a tool, not a necessity.

The *consequence* of structuring communication in such cyclical patterns is to be able to tell events in a setting, crafting them as necessary to make a story point. A common story point, especially in interviews about contentious mediation experiences such as these, is for the speaker to be able to give a preferred account of what transpired. And once offered, such accounts can take on an ontological life of their own (Young, 1982, p. 280), which is a sizeable benefit to be derived from storytelling. Even stories
that do not give such a privileged position to the storyteller, nonetheless operate with a certain point of view. A story is a concise way to connect "that there" with "this here," and that can be an important form of linkage.

Once again, Young (1982) provided an insightful observation: "Events, it turns out, are not just tellable, but tellable on occasions. It is their relevance to this occasion that is the point of the telling. Point is what connects stories to occasions" (p. 301). To speak of occasions here is immediately to draw the listener into the realm of the story, as episodes reach out to engage and affect the listener one way or another. Evidence for this can be seen from the most common exemplar of communication structured as narrated episodes, namely, the presence of a story line. There is something memorable about stories, and it is frequently the case that the listener is able to reconstruct and reduce the narrated events into a story line. A story line is a distillation that condenses the more important linkages of the narrative into a concise formulation. Following the thread of the story is thus an apt metaphor for capturing the sense of progression when it comes to episodic structuring.

Structured Interview SI02

Prospectus

The second structured interview (SI02) was with a woman in her forties who had completed mediation a few months previously. The dispute was with her ex-husband over adjusting custody arrangements for one of their teenage daughters. The daughter had indicated she wanted to try living with her father, and the parties had worked out a way to change physical custody and alter some of the financial arrangements. The interview deals with how they arrived at that outcome, the difficulties they encountered, and the changes in perspective and behavior that ensued. An added complication was having to complete the written agreement on their own, due to health difficulties for their mediator.
Narrative Analysis of Episodic Accounts

Interview SI02 can be divided into twelve distinct series of narrative incidents, keyed to the eleven substantive questions of the interviewer (i.e., not including the demographic questions). The third question about what part of the mediation process made a particular difference is given a two-part answer by the party, dealing with the positive and negative aspects, respectively. There appears to be a good deal of internal structure to how the incidents are narrated, in terms of adding clarifying anecdotes and reiterating guiding themes. There is actually frequent use of a framing device—known in literary analysis as _inclusio_—which in its simplest form consists of an ABA' pattern of returning to a previous point in bookend fashion. It is also easily elaborated into an ABB'A' pattern (and more complicated versions), which entails returning to previous points in reverse order of their mention. In a verbal account, inclusio serves the function of emphasizing key points and marking closure for each sub-portion of the narrative. There is also a good deal of moral positioning going on for this party. These and other features will be explored below with a selection of what I deem to be the more important episodes.

The first series of narrated incidents (i.e., SI02, li.76-156) displays some of the _structure_, mentioned above. The party explains her reasons for going to mediation as follows: "I was going basically because I was getting a lot of pressure from my ex-husband and my daughter....And I was trying to understand why she would want to go live with her dad" [li.81-86]. This concern about her teenage daughter's wishes to live with her father, along with the joint mention of the daughter and ex-husband, help to structure this first series, by being reiterated in the middle and at the conclusion of the answer, as follows: "she simply wanted to [pause] test the water out there and live with her dad," [li.117f.] and "he only wanted to allow [her] to come" [li.155f.].
There is further structure in this series, in terms of the party "trying to understa\d why," mentioned above, which gets reiterated as "I wanted to be reassured those were the reasons" [li.122f]. This is explored through three inserted incidents: (a) "she approached me on her own" [li.98f.], (b) "I then asked her to talk to her counselor" [li.107f.], and (c) "I had talked to three different attorneys" [li.137f.]. The party's overriding concern is made explicit with the outcome of these latter two incidents; on the one hand, "I was convinced by [her counselor] that...it was nothing I had done" [li.128, 131], and on the other, "it could appear that I had abandoned her, so I wanted something written up, by an attorney" [li.142-4]. A final comment expresses her satisfaction, namely, "I was convinced" [li.153f.].

With the second series of incidents (i.e., SI02, li.158-224), the party raises an issue of taking responsibility for the children and the finances. It comes in answer to a question about what changes had occurred due to the mediation, part of which is the change in residence, that is, "the daughter is living with her father" [li.160]. She mentions that "it was agreed that he would take over the, um, medical bills and provide insurance" [li.174f.], but this is surrounded with language taking a one-up position morally. For instance, she notes, "he had been paying me... [but] was no longer paying me any support" [li.163-5]. She stresses, "I had covered everything" [li.170], and adds when she states he would now take over the medical bills, that it was "something I had done for years" [li.176]. She then describes a complication coming from the hospital and insurance companies, that "apparently they don't recognize documents, and he needs to go in there and physically say he'll take responsibility for these bills" [li.188-90]. She closes the episode with a wry restatement of the problem: "So, hopefully he'll get down there and (slight laugh) accept responsibility, because the bills are still in my name" [li.222-4].

An interesting development happens with the third series of narrative incidents (i.e., SI02, li.229-304). Here she continues the moral positioning begun in the previous
series, but with a greater insistence that "I made the majority of the concessions"
[li.239f.]. What is striking is that this is the part of the response where ostensibly the
party is trying to describe the positive impact of the mediation, in contrast with the next
series where she then enumerates its negative effect.

The party begins this series with a preface—"even though it was very difficult and
I didn't want to be there and I didn't want to give up custody" [li.236-8]--which functions
to frame her subsequent decisions and actions as laudatory and even sacrificial. She then
initiates a reply, which takes sixteen lines of transcript to find its concluding phrase: "the
positive aspect for me was that I was very angry... [13 lines omitted] and, um, my anger
started to come out" [li. 242f., 257]. In between these two bookends, as it were, is a long
lacuna explaining her anger and resentment toward her ex-husband. She layers her
accounts with morally tinged language; for instance, "I had always..., I took on the
brunt..., I was having to face...." She emphasizes how difficult it was and how attorneys
were telling her not to do it. Only then does she proceed with articulating in more detail
the positive aspects.

By highlighting these features of her account, I do not mean to imply censure of
her in any way. My intention here is impartial description. From my vantage point, I am
simply noting the conversational and language-game categories that could be used to
describe her remarks, summarizing them as a form of moral positioning. Nonetheless, it
is also the case that in a Euro-American culture, for one adult to comment (especially at
length) on the process dimensions of another adult's speech is itself often taken as a form
of one-up positioning. It is supposed to be reserved for parents correcting their children,
teachers commenting on students' papers, drill instructors whipping new recruits into
shape, and perhaps inevitably, researchers describing their participants' actions. It is
worth noting that, in a fine-grained grounded theory analysis, these would all be potential
sources of theoretical sampling for the category of "moral positioning."
Returning to this particular set of narrative incidents, there is a compelling sequence of cognitive reframings, in the portion of her reply that enumerates the positive aspects of mediation for her. These reframings raise again an overriding moral concern with how her decision will be perceived, whether by herself, others, or the legal system. It is conveyed by a string of explicit contrasts.

P: So, um, [pause] the positive for me was to look at this and where I was, and realize that, um, be able to sort it out that this wasn’t, um, a child abandoning me, this wasn’t that I ‘had done something wrong, that this wasn’t, um, -- even though I felt like I was making a lot of concessions -- it wasn’t a reflection on my parenting skills. And I think going through the mediation process allowed me to see that. [li.279-286]

This is a slightly different form of moral positioning. Here, it is not so much a comparison with her ex-husband’s responsibility or lack thereof, but more a matter of whether she herself is doing right by her daughter. She again uses a contrast, and sets it off by means of a “counterfactual variant” (Scheff, 1990, p. 106) of what could have happened but did not, to emphasize the appropriateness of her decision, especially the favorable relational impact it had:

P: So, [pause] in hindsight I can see that [daughter] would, if we hadn’t done the mediation process, [daughter] probably would have been living with me, would probably be resentful that, that I hadn’t allowed her to live with her dad. And I think the long term effect would be much more harmful to ou- [sic], hers and my relationship. [li.293-9]

At the end of this series of incidents is a clear example of framing by means of inclusio, bringing closure to this response about positive changes. She emphatically states, "That would be a positive" [li.304], exactly matching her opening phrase (following the preface) of "the positive aspect for me" [li.279]. With her very next words
she initiates the flip side perspective: "A negative, um, fact is that...") [li.306]. This project of specifying both the positive and the negative aspects had in fact been heralded by a metacomment, when first asked about the difference mediation made for her. She had inquired, "I mean, in a positive or a negative?" [li.231], and then gone on to delineate both.

The negative aspect (i.e., SI02, li.306-354) is essentially captured in the phrase, "it caused a lot of disruption in my life, and in my home environment" [li.306-8]. She spells out the interactions between her daughters, the difficulty the other daughter was having with her father, and the emotions of going through mediation, adding, "in some respects I think the divorce was easier for me" [li.351-2]. Mediation was disruptive to their living arrangements and disruptive emotionally. This is not to say, however, that she was ultimately dissatisfied with the mediation process itself, and she makes that distinction clear, stating, "in mediation I felt like I had some power, I had some decisions to make" [li.340-1]. In other words, it was difficult, but still empowering.

With the next series of narrative incidents (i.e., SI02, li.355-444), there is an interesting variation on the use of inclusio to frame her reply. The question from the interviewer is about changes in her interaction with her ex-husband, and her answer essentially is, "I feel more comfortable with the way he treats me" [li.359f.]. In other words, the ex-husband has made an important change, to her way of thinking. She goes on, however, to articulate two forms of perspective-taking, at the beginning and end of her reply, respectively. At the outset, she notes the ex-husband's acknowledgment of her perspective: "I think he recognized some of the concessions I made" [li.362f.]. By the end, however, she is able to include herself among those who can see another perspective: "It's given me, given me some appreciation of what my ex-husband must have had to do to try to be involved in his daughters' lives,... That's hard on me and it's only been three or four months (slight laugh)" [li.431-9].
This is an asymmetrical (not identical) form of bracketing, and it encompasses another instance of asymmetrical bracketing. In describing her decision process, she states:

P: And there were points that I, that this, that's exactly where I was; I didn't want to do this. But I just kept -- the, the [counselor] of my daughter's, her words just kept coming up, that, you know, "In the long run this is probably the best for [the daughter], and your relationship with her will remain intact." [li.378-83]

Not only is there an asymmetrical balancing between her negative and positive evaluations of the process here, namely, "I didn't want to do this" versus "this is probably [for] the best." There is also a certain asymmetry and contrast between shorter and longer time scales involved in the party's respective assessments; specifically, "there were points" where she felt pessimistic, compared to looking at "the long run" and feeling more encouraged. Such a shift between the impact of different time scales may comprise a significant form of cognitive reframing.

A later series of incidents (i.e., SI02, li.512-563) focuses more on apparent changes in the ex-husband's thinking and behavior, again utilizing bracketing comments to structure and carry her point. She states her basic assessment as follows, "he's been more pleasant to me or been more apologetic" [li.517f.], and then inserts a short vignette to demonstrate her point. She describes medical bills that are "his responsibility now,... I've handed them to him and he's been very angry about these bills" [li.523-6], adding that he "threw the bill at me and stomped out of the house" [li.540f.]. She then notes--reiterating her opening comment--that he later called her back to state, "I apologize for my behavior, it was really inappropriate" [li.546f.]. She then draws the conclusion--which is likewise repeated for effect--that "he's recognizing first of all, all the stuff I've gone through with paperwork and medical bills and insurance companies,... and maybe appreciate some of the stuff I've gone through" [li.548-50, 555f.]. And she closes with a
restatement of another earlier point: "it's just the fact that these bills have to be paid, and they're now his responsibility" [li.559f.]. The narrative is carried along by her repetition of notions such as "apologize," "responsibility," and "recognize/appreciate."

In the last third of the interview, the party gives her assessment of the mediation process, as well as some extended comments regarding closure. In comparing mediation to working with attorneys (i.e., SI02, li.781-878), the party states, "in mediation, we got to, um, [pause] we dealt with the feelings, we, you know, we dealt with the tension and the anger and, um, recognized where it was coming from" [li.789-92]. She elaborates as follows:

P: You know, the attorney said to me, "Well, this could be viewed as abandonment." And because I was abandoned by my mother, um, you know, I, the mediation forced me to look at: "You're not abandoning these children. That's how you felt as a child." [li.810-15]

This returns to a theme brought up early in the interview, with credit given to the mediation for allowing that realization to happen. The means for it to happen is that "it forced us to look at what is here and now" [li.820], which, true to form, gets reiterated at the end of this series with the comment, "[the mediator] would sit down and say, 'Now, wait a minute. Is this actually what's going on, or this from your past?'" [li.851-3].

Following this, a series of narrative incidents, spanning over one hundred and seventy lines of the transcript (i.e., SI02, li.887-1058), picks up on themes she alluded to near the beginning of the interview, namely, their completing the process on their own because of time constraints. Early on she states:

P: And, um, because our mediator got sick and there was a time constraint, my ex-husband and I continued on our own through paper. I mean, we basically ended up writing our own and revising our own...document, that was presented to then an attorney. [li.33-9]
Near the end of the interview, she notes that "[the mediator] has never followed up" [li.894], and elaborates that her ex-husband "wanted to get this done, signed, get it in front of a judge, get it okayed, so he could say to the child support people, 'I don't need to figure support anymore'" [li.905-7]. She then specifies in detail how they went about making their own written agreement, with the eventual concluding comment, "I wanted something in writing, too, saying that I wasn't abandoning this child" [li.1051f.]. She also gives a good deal of attention to the mediator's lack of follow-up and not even billing them as yet, speculating that "I'm wondering if [the mediator] just thought...that we would work it out" [li.1030-2]. While she claims she was not angry about that turn of affairs, one wonders whether the space she devotes to narrating it reflects an implicit sense of abandonment by the mediator in arriving at a timely written document.

The concluding series of narrative incidents (i.e., SI02, li.1063-1163) restates her overall satisfaction that she "would use the mediation process" again [li.1066]. She claims they "wouldn't have been able to do this without some initial mediation" [li.1068f.], and again uses reiterated bracketing comments to delineate the key features that were beneficial. Specifically, she states and repeats that they "needed a third party" [li.1075 & 1138], how she herself does not like confrontation or conflict [li.1086f. & 1153f.], and especially "I like the empowerment that this mediation process has made me feel.... I feel...like I stood up for myself" [li. 1091f. & 1096f.]. Her summation provides a complementary series of such closing bookends for this passage: "So yeah, I would use it again.... I think we would probably try to do it ourselves. But if we couldn't, I think we'd seek a third party" [li.1160-3].

**Temporal Analysis of Repetitive Themes**

Investigating the patterns of repetition with interview SI02 tends to reinforce the themes that emerged in the narrative analysis. A detailed listing of major themes that are repeated during the interview is given in Table 5. As with the similar table for the
Occurrence, Distribution, and Duration of In Vivo Codes in Structured Interview SI02.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Lag Code</th>
<th>In Vivo Code</th>
<th>Total Equivalent Phrases</th>
<th>Cum % by Quar.</th>
<th>Duration</th>
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<td></td>
<td>1st</td>
<td>2nd</td>
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<td>mediation helped having a third party</td>
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<td>50</td>
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<td>where oldest wd live</td>
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<td>35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>where youngest lives custody</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>difficult emotions</td>
<td>emotions to deal with very difficult pressure / disruption concessions</td>
<td>64</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D</td>
<td>party's decision</td>
<td>my decision (not) what I wanted I agreed / I allowed had power / not victim</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E</td>
<td>pay bills / support</td>
<td>pay the bills child support</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F</td>
<td>in writing / legal</td>
<td>put in writing legal / before a judge time constraint</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>46</td>
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Table 5 cont.

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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>1st 2nd 3rd</td>
<td>4th</td>
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<tr>
<td>G</td>
<td>daughter's wishes</td>
<td>35 what daughter wanted</td>
<td>54 86 97</td>
<td>100 decreasing</td>
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<td>her wishes</td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>H</td>
<td>responsibility</td>
<td>34 whose responsibility</td>
<td>62 91 97</td>
<td>100 decreasing</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>take responsibility</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>I</td>
<td>appreciation of other</td>
<td>30 appreciation of other</td>
<td>0 30 87</td>
<td>100 increasing</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>recognize what went thru</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>fair / look at both sides</td>
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<td></td>
<td>could both live with</td>
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<tr>
<td>M</td>
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<td>33 39 83</td>
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<td>not an unfit mother</td>
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<td></td>
<td>nothing I had done</td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N</td>
<td>husb.'s attitude better</td>
<td>15 his attitude was better</td>
<td>0 93 100 100</td>
<td>incr./decr.</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>apologetic</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>O</td>
<td>husband upset</td>
<td>15 ex-husband upset</td>
<td>0 73 100 100</td>
<td>incr./decr.</td>
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<tr>
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<td>angry / difficulties</td>
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<th>Duration</th>
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<td>14</td>
<td>convinced / reassured</td>
<td>64 71 93 100</td>
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<td>trying to understand why</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>wondered if / the reason</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>try to figure out / sort out</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q</td>
<td>her counselor</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>her counselor</td>
<td>80 100 100 100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>X</td>
<td>gap &gt;= 10 lines</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>&quot;wastebasket category&quot;</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Cumulative percentages are listed by quarter, according to the line number where each coded theme occurred in the transcript. Underlining denotes those that occurred at or outside a 95% confidence interval, that is, the expected probability +/- 1.96 standard deviations for each code.

Previous interview, this table presents each in vivo code along with its lag code letter, the total number of occurrences of each theme, phrases which were deemed functionally equivalent in assigning the codes, the cumulative frequency of occurrence by quarter (according to the line number in the transcript where each instance appeared), and a designation dealing with the duration of the code's effective influence across the entire interview.

Once again, a percentage is underlined if it falls at or outside a 95% confidence interval, compared to the expected cumulative percentages for a random distribution throughout the transcript. Percentages significantly below their expected frequencies
signify few occurrences early in the interview and comparatively more later on, and thus those codes are labeled “increasing” in duration. Percentages significantly higher than expected indicate there were relatively more occurrences early on, and thus such codes are labeled “decreasing” in duration. And codes with an even distribution, statistically speaking, across the interview were termed “enduring” in their influence.

Table 5 designates three codes as enduring, by these criteria. Specifically, they are the themes of dealing with ‘difficult emotions’ (code C), emphasis on the ‘party’s decision-making’ (code D), and ‘not being an unfit mother’ (code M). By virtue of their appearance throughout the interview, these are persisting concerns for the party. Taken together, they indicate that while the process was very difficult for the party, with a lot of pressure and concessions on her part, she nonetheless felt empowered to make decisions without feeling like a victim, and did not come away feeling as though she had abandoned her daughter or made poor choices as a mother.

There are five codes deemed to be increasing in their influence across the interview. Most notable is the conclusion that using mediation and ‘having a third party’ was a ‘helpful process’ (code A), a theme mentioned more often than any other code, and more frequently as the interview went on. There is a significant increase, following the third quarter of the interview, of two codes in particular, namely, references to ‘child support’ and what ‘bills there were to pay’ (code E), and emphasis on the parties ‘completing the mediation on their own’ (code J) because the mediator got sick. There is increasing attention later in the interview given to ‘appreciation’ and ‘recognition’ (code I) of the other party’s needs and perspectives. In addition, there is an increased attention to issues of ‘trust or mistrust’ (code L) after the first quarter of the interview.

On the opposite side of the spectrum are six codes of decreasing duration and influence. While a prominent concern in terms of number of times mentioned, the theme of ‘custody’ and ‘where the daughters would live’ (code B) receives decreased attention
as the interview progresses. In a similar vein, focus on the 'daughter's wishes' (code G), as well as the party's being 'convinced' or 'reassured' (code P) about the daughter's reasons, are primarily early concerns in terms of the interview. Filling supporting roles in relation to these concerns are references to a 'counselor' (code Q) or an 'attorney' (code K), both of which receive declining mention as the interview goes on. And finally, the emphasis on 'taking responsibility' (code H)—which in the narrative analysis took the flavor of a complaint and one-up position relative to the ex-husband—is not carried over much into the latter part of the interview.

In addition to the codes already examined, there were three codes with more complicated cumulative frequencies, suggesting some mixture of increasing and decreasing influence. For instance, comments about the ex-husband that his 'attitude is more apologetic' (code N), and statements that at times the 'husband has been upset' (code O), receive no mention initially, then frequent mention in the middle of the interview, before being disregarded later on. The concern over getting something 'in writing' and 'before a judge' (code F) is initially highlighted, then ignored for a while, before being picked up again late in the interview. Other than to note when such themes are being emphasized, it is not very useful to use a singular construct like duration for such bimodal distributions.

Lag Analysis of Thematic Clusters

In this study, lag analysis denotes statistically significant co-occurrence of themes. In a modification of conventional lag sequential analysis, a code occurring at any of the five lag positions following each criterion was considered the same event. Conditional probabilities of all two-item criterion-code combinations were calculated, and compared with their respective unconditional probabilities of occurrence, transforming the results into standardized Z-values using a two-tailed binomial test. All such calculations were adjusted to remove the biasing which occurs from autocorrelation,
Table 6.
Lag Analysis of In Vivo Codes in Structured Interview SI02: Significant Combinations Occurring Within Five Lag Places of Criterion.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Criterion</th>
<th>Combination</th>
<th>Z-Test</th>
<th>Meaning of Combination</th>
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<td>Ai</td>
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<td>mediation helped + appreciation of other</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Al</td>
<td>3.42**</td>
<td>trust / mistrust</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Ad</td>
<td>2.99**</td>
<td>party's decision</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Ac</td>
<td>2.16*</td>
<td>difficult emotions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>Bg</td>
<td>5.78**</td>
<td>where live / custody + daughter's wishes</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Bp</td>
<td>3.98**</td>
<td>convinced / reassured</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Bq</td>
<td>2.85**</td>
<td>her counselor</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Bm</td>
<td>2.48*</td>
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<td>Bk</td>
<td>2.24*</td>
<td>attorney</td>
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<td>C</td>
<td>Cn</td>
<td>3.55**</td>
<td>difficult emotions + husband's attitude better</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Cd</td>
<td>2.09*</td>
<td>party's decision</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D</td>
<td>Dc</td>
<td>4.38**</td>
<td>party's decision + difficult emotions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Dg</td>
<td>4.10**</td>
<td>daughter's wishes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Dk</td>
<td>2.23*</td>
<td>attorney</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E</td>
<td>Ej</td>
<td>10.73**</td>
<td>pay bills / child support + completed on our own</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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Table 6 cont.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Criterion</th>
<th>Combination</th>
<th>Z-Test</th>
<th>Meaning of Combination</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Eh</td>
<td></td>
<td>8.38**</td>
<td>responsibility</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ef</td>
<td></td>
<td>5.56**</td>
<td>in writing / legal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eo</td>
<td></td>
<td>2.28*</td>
<td>husband upset</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>in writing / legal +</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fj</td>
<td></td>
<td>5.11**</td>
<td>completed on our own</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fh</td>
<td></td>
<td>4.91**</td>
<td>responsibility</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fe</td>
<td></td>
<td>4.24**</td>
<td>pay bills / child support</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fn</td>
<td></td>
<td>2.72**</td>
<td>husband's attitude better</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>G</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>daughter's wishes +</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gb</td>
<td></td>
<td>6.54**</td>
<td>where live / custody</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gp</td>
<td></td>
<td>5.86**</td>
<td>convinced / reassured</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gq</td>
<td></td>
<td>5.62**</td>
<td>her counselor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gd</td>
<td></td>
<td>2.01*</td>
<td>party's decision</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>responsibility +</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>He</td>
<td></td>
<td>8.14**</td>
<td>pay bills / child support</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hf</td>
<td></td>
<td>4.85**</td>
<td>in writing / legal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ho</td>
<td></td>
<td>4.59**</td>
<td>husband upset</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>appreciation of other +</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ib</td>
<td></td>
<td>3.50**</td>
<td>where live / custody</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Io</td>
<td></td>
<td>2.43*</td>
<td>husband upset</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ia</td>
<td></td>
<td>2.41*</td>
<td>mediation helped</td>
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Table 6 cont.

<table>
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<th>Combination</th>
<th>Z-Test</th>
<th>Meaning of Combination</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>J</td>
<td>Je</td>
<td>7.45**</td>
<td>completed on our own + pay bills / child support</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>J</td>
<td>Jf</td>
<td>3.59**</td>
<td>in writing / legal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>K</td>
<td>Km</td>
<td>5.05**</td>
<td>not abandon / not unfit</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>K</td>
<td>Kf</td>
<td>2.90**</td>
<td>in writing / legal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>L</td>
<td>Ld</td>
<td>3.04**</td>
<td>party's decision</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>L</td>
<td>Lb</td>
<td>2.76**</td>
<td>where live / custody</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M</td>
<td>Mk</td>
<td>6.68**</td>
<td>attorney</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>8.33**</td>
<td>husband's attitude better +</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N</td>
<td>Ni</td>
<td>3.31**</td>
<td>appreciation of other</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N</td>
<td>Nh</td>
<td>2.80**</td>
<td>responsibility</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>O</td>
<td>On</td>
<td>8.77**</td>
<td>husband upset</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>O</td>
<td>Oh</td>
<td>3.10**</td>
<td>responsibility</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>O</td>
<td>Oi</td>
<td>3.09**</td>
<td>appreciation of other</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P</td>
<td>Pg</td>
<td>4.59**</td>
<td>convinced / reassured +</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P</td>
<td>Pm</td>
<td>2.84**</td>
<td>not abandon / not unfit</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 6 cont.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Criterion</th>
<th>Combination</th>
<th>Z-Test</th>
<th>Meaning of Combination</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Pq</td>
<td>2.77**</td>
<td>her counselor</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pb</td>
<td>2.45*</td>
<td>where live / custody</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q</td>
<td></td>
<td>her counselor +</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Qp</td>
<td>11.46**</td>
<td>convinced / reassured</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Qg</td>
<td>2.97**</td>
<td>daughter's wishes</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Note.** Lag code is capitalized when used as the criterion, and lower case when occurring within five lag places of a criterion. Z-statistic has been corrected for autocorrelation.

*p < .05, two-tailed. **p < .01, two-tailed.

be as follows: the party frequently discusses ‘custody’ issues about ‘where her daughter would live’ (code B) in the context of her ‘daughter's wishes’ (code G) to live with her father, along with the party's need to be ‘convinced’ (code P) it was the right thing to do, with such reassurance often coming through the ‘daughter's counselor’ (code Q).

Further examination of the combinations listed under criterion B shows another interesting cluster of four themes. Picking out combination Bp again, and grouping it with combinations Bm and Bk, leads to a trail of other reciprocal combinations. For instance, criterion P lists Pb (noted before) as well as Pm, while criterion M lists Mk, and criterion K lists Km. Here there are not as many significant combinations as before, with only seven appearing out of twelve possible two-item crosslag combinations. But it is enough to note a reliable BPMK cluster of the following themes: the party frequently discusses the daughter living and being in the ‘custody’ of her father (code B), in the
context of wanting to be ‘convinced and reassured’ (code P) that she is ‘not abandoning’ her daughter or being an ‘unfit mother’ (code M), with such a concern being highlighted because ‘attorneys’ (code K) were telling her it could be viewed as abandonment.

Another cluster of themes can be seen under criterion J, with combinations Je and Jf being statistically significant. Tracing those lag codes when they served as criterion codes confirms that order does not matter in clustering these three themes. Thus, the reciprocal combinations of Ej and Ef are present under criterion E, just as Fj and Fe appear under criterion F. All six of the six possible crosslag combinations of these three codes occur at a greater than expected rate, statistically speaking. The meaning of this JEF cluster is as follows: the parties ‘completed the mediation on their own’ (code J), because of a time constraint of needing something ‘legal, in writing’ (code F), due to concerns over unpaid back ‘child support’ (code E). Included in this cluster with code E is incidental mention of not yet ‘getting billed’ for the mediation sessions they did have.

The reciprocal combinations Ef and Fe, seen above, also appear with two other themes in another notable cluster. This is most clearly seen with criterion H in Table 6, where the combinations He, Hf, and Ho appear. Tracing the reciprocal forms of these combinations shows Eh, Ef, and Eo under criterion E, Fh and Fe under criterion F, and Oh under criterion O. In other words, out of twelve possible crosslag combinations of these four codes, nine of them are statistically significant. The meaning of this HEFO cluster of four themes is basically as follows: there is a need for the ex-husband to ‘take physical responsibility’ (code H), as agreed, for certain medical and insurance ‘bills’ (code E), because the medical establishment will not respect their not-yet-legal ‘written agreement’ (code F), a process that is making the ex-husband very ‘frustrated and upset’ (code O).

Two of the combinations dealt with in the previous paragraph—specifically, Ho and Oh--also appear in a different cluster of four themes. Criterion N of Table 6 shows
the situation most clearly. There the combinations No, Ni, and Nh appear, which are
nicely balanced by their counterparts under criterion O, that is, combinations On, Oi, and
Oh. Tracing the other connections shows Ho under criterion H, as mentioned above, and
Io under criterion I. That is to say, out of the twelve combinations that were possible for
these four codes (leaving aside autolag pairs), eight of them are statistically significant.
The meaning of such a NOHI cluster is as follows: the ‘ex-husband’s improved attitude’
and even ‘apologizing’ on occasion (code N) is contrasted with times when he is ‘angry
and upset’ (code O), both of which exemplify an ambivalent stance toward who should
be ‘taking more responsibility’ (code H) for the daughters, and these difficult transitions
are leading to greater ‘recognition’ and ‘appreciation for the other’s situation’ (code I)
shown by both parties.

Another four-theme cluster can be examined via pairings involving criterion A,
specifically, combinations Ac, Ad, and Al. Similar pairs include Cd under criterion C, Dc
under criterion D, and Ld under crite. on L. It is also worth noting that the reciprocal
combination Ca approaches statistical significance, with a Z-value of 1.95. Out of the
twelve possible crosslag combinations of these four codes, six are clearly significant, and
another one nearly so. The meaning of this ACDL cluster of themes is as follows:
‘mediation has helped’ (code A) in dealing with the ‘difficult emotions’ (code C)
involved for the party, in empowering her to ‘make a decision’ (code D) about her
daughter, and in working through issues of ‘trust and mistrust’ (code L) between the
party and her ex-husband.

There are two further instances of a reliable pairing of two themes, regardless of
the order of mention in the interview. One is the set of reciprocal pairs, Ai and Ia,
signifying that ‘mediation helped’ (code A), especially in promoting ‘appreciation of the
other person’ (code I). In fact, the party frequently comments how having a third party
forced them to listen to the other, look at both sides, and recognize what the other person
was going through. The other instance is the set of reciprocal pairs, Dg and Gd, indicating that examining what she will allow and 'making an empowered decision' (code D) are integrally related to attending to her 'daughter's wishes' (code G) to try living with the girl's father. Included in the latter code G are references to avoiding a build-up of 'resentment' between the daughter and the party, in their own relationship. In addition to the numerous clusters of themes examined in the foregoing paragraphs, there are half a dozen instances of unilateral pairing between a criterion and code. The meanings of these final combinations are provided in the body of Table 6, and will simply be listed here by their respective lag code designations: Cn, Dk, Fn, Ib, Kf, and Lb.

In contrast with the positive instances of co-occurrence displayed in Table 6, the situation with Table 7 is different. Table 7 presents instances where statistically significant criterion-code combinations did not occur, for interview SI02. In many cases, neither of the set of reciprocal combinations appeared, and the table is set up to highlight that confirmatory fact. It is important to be very conservative in interpreting these results, because they are essentially arguments from silence. They raise the question, is there a reason why a given combination did not occur as often one might expect simply on the basis of chance?

Some intriguing, albeit speculative, findings are raised by Table 7. For instance, examining the non-occurring combinations involving code A—whether as criterion or in a lag position—suggests the following. It seems that the way 'mediation was helpful' (code A) was not necessarily to address issues of 'finances' or 'child support' (code E), nor to clarify the 'daughter's wishes' (code G), nor to make the 'ex-husband's attitude better' (code N), nor to 'convince or reassure' (code P) the party about how to proceed, nor even to come up with a 'legal agreement' and 'put it in writing' (code F). Given that the helpfulness of mediation was a frequently mentioned theme in the interview, one must look elsewhere for the nature of that help. Certain possibilities were presented in the
Table 7.

Significant Lack of Occurrence of In Vivo Code Combinations in Structured Interview SI02: Lag Analysis Within Five Lag Places of Criterion.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Noncontiguous Codes</th>
<th>Z-Tests*</th>
<th>Non-Occurring Combinations</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ae // Ea</td>
<td>-3.46 // -4.11</td>
<td>mediation helped &gt;&lt; pay bills / support</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Af // Fa</td>
<td>-2.88 // -2.50</td>
<td>&gt;&lt; in writing / legal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ag // Ga</td>
<td>-2.45 // -3.96</td>
<td>&gt;&lt; daughter's wishes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ah // Ha</td>
<td>-3.78 // -3.45</td>
<td>&gt;&lt; responsibility</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>An // Na</td>
<td>-2.00 // -2.36</td>
<td>&gt;&lt; husb.'s attitude better</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>// Ba</td>
<td>// -4.30</td>
<td>&gt;&lt; where live / custody</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>// Pa</td>
<td>// -2.80</td>
<td>&gt;&lt; convinced / reassured</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>// Qa</td>
<td>// -2.28</td>
<td>&gt;&lt; her counselor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bj</td>
<td>-2.82</td>
<td>where live / custody &gt;&lt; completed on our own</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bn</td>
<td>-2.36</td>
<td>&gt;&lt; husb.'s attitude better</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>// Eb</td>
<td>// -3.14</td>
<td>&gt;&lt; pay bills / support</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>// Hb</td>
<td>// -2.83</td>
<td>&gt;&lt; responsibility</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cf // Fc</td>
<td>-3.13 // -3.20</td>
<td>difficult emotions &gt;&lt; in writing / legal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cj</td>
<td>-2.34</td>
<td>&gt;&lt; completed on our own</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>// Ec</td>
<td>// -2.17</td>
<td>&gt;&lt; pay bills / support</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>// Kc</td>
<td>// -2.20</td>
<td>&gt;&lt; attorney</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Do // Od</td>
<td>-2.33 // -2.09</td>
<td>party's decision &gt;&lt; husband upset</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>De</td>
<td>-3.00</td>
<td>&gt;&lt; pay bills / support</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dh</td>
<td>-2.76</td>
<td>&gt;&lt; responsibility</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Tab 7 cont.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Noncontiguous Codes</th>
<th>Z-Tests*</th>
<th>Non-Occurring Combinations</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Dj</td>
<td>-2.57</td>
<td>&gt;&lt; completed on our own</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eg // Ge</td>
<td>-3.34 // -1.99</td>
<td>pay bills / support &gt;&lt; daughter's wishes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ei // Ie</td>
<td>-2.33 // -2.14</td>
<td>&gt;&lt; appreciation of other</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>El // Le</td>
<td>-2.03 // -2.71</td>
<td>&gt;&lt; trust / mistrust</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Em // Me</td>
<td>-2.32 // -2.17</td>
<td>&gt;&lt; not abandon / not unfit</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fi // If</td>
<td>-2.83 // -2.83</td>
<td>in writing / legal &gt;&lt; appreciaion of other</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>// Nf</td>
<td>// -2.10</td>
<td>&gt;&lt; hsb.'s attitude better</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>// Of</td>
<td>// -2.17</td>
<td>&gt;&lt; husband upset</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gh // Hg</td>
<td>-2.30 // -2.43</td>
<td>daughter's wishes &gt;&lt; responsibility</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gj</td>
<td>-2.42</td>
<td>&gt;&lt; completed on our own</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hj // Jh</td>
<td>-2.23 // -2.36</td>
<td>responsibility &gt;&lt; completed on our own</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hm // Mh</td>
<td>-1.96 // -2.20</td>
<td>&gt;&lt; not abandon / not unfit</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>// Lh</td>
<td>// -2.30</td>
<td>&gt;&lt; trust / mistrust</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ik // Ki</td>
<td>-2.12 // -2.36</td>
<td>appreciation of other &gt;&lt; attorney</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ij</td>
<td>-2.17</td>
<td>&gt;&lt; completed on our own</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>// Mi</td>
<td>// -2.03</td>
<td>&gt;&lt; not abandon / not unfit</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note. Reciprocal combinations of noncontiguous codes are listed together, at the first appearance of the respective two-item combination. Subsequent combinations involving the initial code are listed next.
sections on Narrative Analysis and Repetition above, such as working through difficult emotions (code C), realizing she was not abandoning (code M) her daughter, and making an empowered decision (code D).

Other surprises arise in examining non-occurring combinations involving code H—again, whether as criterion or in a lag position. For instance, the theme of 'taking responsibility' (code H) is not paired with taking over with the mediation and 'completing it on our own' (code J), nor with worries over 'not abandoning' (code M) her daughter on the part of the party. Other than to note the lack of significant co-occurrence between such themes, where the content of the codes might suggest otherwise, little else should be made of the results reported in this particular table.

**Contextual Framing and Duration**

As with the comparable section dealing with interview SI01, this section on contextual framing is an integrative review of previous results with interview SI02. That is, it draws upon the evidence of narrative content, repetitive themes, and thematic clusters, all of which are unique to this interview, and relates them to the issue of relative durations among this particular party’s meanings. Its goal is to describe the contextual forms distinctive to this interview, and thus it will not necessarily--that is, for any a priori reasons--be commensurate with the forms of contextual framing in the previous interview. Comparability of forms between the interviews would be a discovery, not a premise. However, at the level of generating grounded theory categories out of the disparate results of these two interviews, I believe there is indeed a pattern which
connects them, to again use Bateson's (1979) phrase, and which likely is a "metapattern. . . a pattern of patterns" (p. 11, emphasis in original). That metapattern, in my judgment, consists of a network of relationships within the notion of temporality. Such comparisons, however, must await a spelling out of generative contextual forms with this interview—a lexicon, if you will—before their relations to a larger temporal pattern can be made clear.

Logical Levels of Scale

In discussing relative durations within this interview, it is important to realize that questions of duration are essentially questions about the effective sphere of influence of a given idea. This is happening on two scales. One, the local scale of what a listener can immediately follow, presumably has limits on the listener's attentional bandwidth and working memory. Anything to be conveyed must either be (a) in sufficient proximity to the attentional focus of the listener to be within those limitations, or (b) structured into a larger constellation that as a unit—rather than as disparate parts—can occupy a smaller share of attention and memory. The other scale for a theme's effective sphere of influence is the macro scale—say, of an entire interview—where duration is built up through repeated mentions of a given theme. This is the scale addressed by Table 5, with its column designating various themes as enduring, increasing, or decreasing. A listener has much less precision on this scale, because obviously s/he does not have the luxury of slowing the interview down via a written transcript, to count themes and examine them line-by-line. Focusing at this level (for the listener operating in real-time) is akin to realizations such as, "This sounds familiar; I've heard this before."

Point of view is important here. From the listener's vantage point, the difference is not simply phenomenological, but actually two distinct logical levels of discourse. Findings that a researcher might make about the macro scale are simply not accessible in the same way for a listener as the actual narrative unfolds. For instance, an assertion about a theme's "increasing duration" is a statement about its appearance across the entire
interview, which is compiled from a measure of its cumulative frequency, and precise data such as these are not available to the working memory of the listener. Only the most general conclusions--subject to vagary and revision--are built by the listener, out of the accumulating weight of the speaker's argument.

There is a bridge, however, between these levels of discourse, and it comes from a consideration of the speaker's goals and vantage point. Goals in the process of fulfillment are still persisting in their sphere of influence, even though they may not yet be obvious to a listener. And data such as those examined in the temporal analysis sections are extrapolations about the speaker's goals as they were enacted in her or his communications. That is to say, the macro scale or level of discourse is about the intentions of the speaker, and the reflexive sphere of influence of his or her own ideas. The local scale or level of discourse also entails the communicative goals of the speaker, but on that scale it is much easier to weave in assessments about what a listener may have been able to discern from the narrative as it unfolded.

To speak, then, on a local scale about relative durations is to attend to proximity of ideas on the one hand, and the structuring of themes into larger constellations on the other. Clustering of themes (formalized into reliable clusters through lag analysis) has been my chief way of addressing the former, while what I generically call framing is my way of addressing the latter. On a local scale, framing largely issues out of a narrative analysis of the material. Overlaid on these--and this from the macro level of discourse--are considerations of repetition, with their emergent designations of duration relative to the whole interview.

Inclusio

I begin then with forms of framing, which are brought out in the narrative analysis section above. A prominent example of framing in this particular transcript is repeated use of the literary device of inclusio, consisting of stating a theme near the beginning of
an episode or narrative segment, and then repeating it in bookend fashion near the end of
the segment. As will be explored in the next subsection, such a device can also be nested
within itself, to give an ABB'A' chiastic type of pattern. Duration on this kind of local
scale at least includes persistence between the bookends, as it were, for the length of that
narrative bookshelf. It likely also includes a sphere of influence upon the surrounding
ideas, which are contextualized by that particular frame.

For example, in responding to the first substantive (as opposed to demographic)
question of the interview about her hopes or expectations with mediation, the party
replies that she "was trying to understand why" the teenage daughter wanted to try living
with her father. This is a key part of her answer for the interviewer, so much so that this
thread is followed through several related mini-episodes for the duration of that series of
responses. The party repeats the theme several dozen lines later, in stating she went with
her daughter to counseling "to be reassured those were the reasons," concluding that
episode with "I was convinced by [her counselor]." She then picks it up again to frame
another mini-episode about seeing attorneys and using mediation to get something in
writing. In starting that episode, she states, "I still was not convinced that was the best
thing," and in closing it she states, "I was convinced." Here is an example with multiple
reiterations, demonstrating how inclusio brackets related material, to set forth the party's
narrative project and bring closure to it once it is achieved. It is a very clear way of
indicating which portions of the narrative should be considered together.

Chiastic Structure

A more complicated example occurs in the third series of narrative incidents. An
interesting feature of inclusio is that it can be used to build up tiers of superordinate and
subordinate material, with brackets delineating where each tier starts and stops. This
layering effect is called a chiastic structure, in literary analysis. In the third series (i.e.,
SI02, li.229-304), a four- or five-tier collection of themes can be isolated within the
transcript, essentially taking the following pattern:

A -- positive aspect
  B -- difficult, give up custody
  C -- very angry
  D -- complaints about ex-husband
  X -- "I had always been responsible"
  D' -- complaints
  C' -- anger came out
  B' -- hard, miss her
  A' -- positive

The letters here are not to be confused with lag code designations used elsewhere in the
analysis. The first tier, A and A' (pronounced "A prime"), is what the entire response is
about, and it is clearly laid out as "the positive aspect for me was..." [li.242, A-bracket at
the beginning], and "that would be a positive" [li. 304, A'-bracket at the end].
Incidentally, this largest tier in this block of material is contrasted with the whole next
series of responses, which would go on to specify the "negative" aspects of the mediation.
In other words, the actual structure in this section of the interview is even more
complicated than this illustration portrays.

The second tier, B and B', is also clearly laid out, but in a slightly transposed
position. The opening bracket, B, takes the form of a preface, and so it actually precedes
the statement of the A-bracket. She states, "even though it was very difficult and I didn't
want to be there and I didn't want to give up custody, physical custody of my daughter"
[li.236-8, B-bracket]. This is evenly matched near the end with the statement, "these
[few] years that are hard for me with her living with her dad. I mean, they are hard. I miss
her" [li.299-301, B'-bracket].
The third tier, C and C', is clearly marked with the statements, "I was very angry" [li.242f., C-bracket] and "my anger started to come out" [li.257, C'-bracket]. In the narrative analysis section above, I argued that what I am here calling the A-bracket and the C'-bracket essentially form a virtual sentence, as follows: "I think the positive aspect for me was that, I was very angry about, um, [pause] I wa-, ...[13 lines of interposed material]... And, um, my anger started to come out" [li.242-257]. The thought is clearly not completed until she states that the anger actually came out. But inserted into that structure is a long lacuna justifying the anger, which I label here as the fourth tier, D and D', consisting of complaints about the ex-husband. It is even possible to detect a short fifth tier, which I label with an X because it occurs in the crossover position of the chiasm, before the closing brackets of the other tiers start appearing in reverse order. This fifth tier is essentially the statement, "I felt that I had, um, always been responsible in taking care of the kids, and paid the bills" [li.248-50], and this heightens the contrast with the ex-husband and the reasons for her anger.

All of this specifying of tiers forming a chiastic structure in this section of the transcript is admittedly a detailed construction, imposed by a fine-grained analysis of the written distillate of the interview. But it emerges from what is basically a very simple method of stating what you intend to say, and then restating it when you are finished, in a bracketing fashion. When such a method is used consistently, as with this particular participant, a very nuanced narrative can be presented, which is easily navigated by the listener, by attending to the flow of foreground events and background contexts such brackets provide.

It is useful to consider what can be accomplished by means of this simple method. In the series of incidents just examined, the inserted tiers present powerfully contextualizing information. Support for this contention comes from the sense that the party herself could not continue in a linear fashion with her story, until she had provided
successive sets of background material that would illuminate her view of the events. The initial context comes from the interviewer, in raising what part of the mediation process made a particular difference. She sets out her project with a clarifying metacomment—viz., "I mean, in a positive or a negative?" [li.231]—and proceeds to sequentially describe first the positive aspects, then the negative. Before she can specify how it was positive (i.e., A-bracket), she seems impelled to emphasize how difficult it was (i.e., B-bracket), by means of a prefacing comment. But in order to lay out how useful it was to have her anger come out (i.e., C'-bracket), she must first describe the anger (i.e., C-bracket) and then the reasons for it (i.e., D- and D'-brackets), and even contrast that with her own responsible behavior (i.e., X-crossover).

The usefulness of this method of prospective and retrospective comments can be further highlighted by comparing it with the same series of events but without the chiastic structure. Scheff (1990), citing Pittenger and his colleagues, recommended coming up with counterfactual variants of what might have happened but did not, to set a text off in bolder relief. In the present instance, this would mean a conflation of each set of brackets in order to consider the party's comments as a mere sequence of remarks.

Such a reconstruction might sound something like this: "There was a positive aspect to me; the mediation process was positive. It was very difficult and I didn't want to give up physical custody of my daughter. I mean, these years are hard; I miss her. I was very angry, and my anger started to come out. My ex-husband had a lot of problems with things he had done, one thing after another. I had always been responsible in taking care of the kids and with the bills." This is a hypothetical rearrangement of the party's basic remarks, putting them in sequential form. If the party then went on to begin the next response with "A negative fact is that...", I believe the interviewer would likely interrupt and say, "I'm not sure I understood which part was the positive aspect for you." A mere
chronicle or sequence of events does not convey the same interconnections as with other forms of speech.

By contrast, inserting tiers of material by means of bracketing comments is a way to present a great deal of informative content in a more understandable and integrated manner. Each inserted tier provides supplementary context and support for the unfolding narrative. And with each insertion, the prior point is temporarily suspended, until it can be resumed in proper context, once the inserted material has made its point. Because of this suspension of a previous point in order to provide context via an insertion, the tiers of a chiasm bear a family resemblance to orientations and evaluations in storytelling.

Young (1982) stated that "orientations consist of information deemed necessary in order to understand what is transpiring in the Taleworld" (p. 295). Similarly, she says, "Sacks describes evaluations as instructions for hearing-as" (p. 305). Themes conveyed via opening and closing brackets serve similar functions. They instruct the listener how to interpret the narrative as it is unfolding. Their immediate duration is for the length of the brackets along with the intervening material, with a sphere of influence rippling out to adjoining brackets. Violations of Gricean conversational maxims (Jacobs, et al., 1991) may provide some indications about the limits of such spheres of influence. For instance, if a given insertion seems to violate maxims about relevancy—e.g., stay relevant to the topic—or quantity—e.g., "no more and no less than is needed" (Penman, 1991, p. 26)—then a listener may choose to disregard further influence from that segment unless a repair is forthcoming.

Asymmetry in Bracketing

An interesting variant of the use of parallel bookends is to make the brackets more asymmetrical than identical in terms of content. This is seen in the series dealing with changes in the ex-husband and their interaction (i.e., SI02, li.355-444). As explicated in the narrative analysis section, there are several instances of asymmetry in the bracketing
comments of that series. One is between the ex-husband and the party in acknowledging the other's perspective, as captured in the comments: "he recognized some of the concessions I made" and "it's given me...some appreciation of what my ex-husband must have had to do." Another instance is the asymmetry between negative and positive assessments of the mediation's outcome, specifically, "I didn't want to do this" versus "this is probably [for] the best." Concurrent with this latter instance is the asymmetry between shorter and longer time scales, respectively, when the party contrasted "there were points," with "in the long run."

It should be noted that this last example of asymmetry gives mixed support for the hypotheses mentioned in Chapter II. There appears to be support here for the first hypothesis that longer duration meanings make more of a difference than shorter duration meanings. However, the themes assessed for changes in duration in this study do not coincide with the particular notions that were given greater consideration "in the long run" by the party. Thus, there is no particular support here for the second hypothesis—at least not as measured by the "duration" designations of Table 5—that when a party increases the duration of a meaning its perceived significance increases.

**Adjacency**

Inclusio, in its various permutations, is not the only method for supplying context. Simple adjacency in the presentation of ideas can do the same. This is seen in portions of the narrative analysis that emphasized the moral positioning of the party relative to her ex-husband. Often it is conveyed by accenting the first-person singular pronoun, in asserting agency and responsibility. Examples early in the interview include the segments: "I had covered everything... I had done [it] for years... I supported him... I had always... I took on the brunt... I was having to face..." There is a cumulative effect of increased duration on the local scale, achieved by piling on such moral justifications in close proximity to one another.
Explicit Contrasts

Explicit contrast is another method for highlighting and contextualizing important developments. When the party specifies some of the gains from mediation, she does it by accentuating how her actions should not be regarded. For instance, "this wasn't, um, a child abandoning me, this wasn't that I had done something wrong, that this wasn't... a reflection on my parenting skills" [li.281-5]. The rejected meanings that she is deselecting are made very explicit. The threefold repetition of "this wasn't..." suggests a certain rhetorical skill by this party, but I do not believe this is simply an oratorical tool here. I believe this represents is a form of cognitive reframing, stated as much for the party's reinforcement and benefit as for the listener.

The situation is complex, however, when it comes to assigning duration in this segment, and here the local versus macro levels of discourse are somewhat at odds. The theme of 'mediation being helpful' (code A), which appears in this segment, is increasing in its emphasis across the entire interview, while the theme of 'not being an unfit parent' (code M) is enduring. These are assessments garnered across multiple mentions, at a different logical level than any particular instantiation. An additional complication comes from using the same code M, for both the affirmative (i.e., "this could be...abandonment") and the negative (i.e., "I did not abandon") formulations of the theme.

Within this local scenario, however, the specific content of the charge of poor parenting--or its variant, that of abandonment (by either mother or daughter)--in a sense decreases by being dismissed. The accusation is not sustained; its sphere of influence declines. At the same time--complicating the matter still further--the emphatic, threefold assertion is a way of highlighting and actually increasing the influence of this verdict of not guilty. The upshot of all of this is to realize that "duration" may have different dynamics, depending on the level of discourse at which it is discussed.
Story Episodes

Another type of contextual framing takes place by means of the storiness or episodic telling of certain incidents. As noted before, "framing events as stories invests them with the sense of an ending" (Young, 1982, p. 283). Moreover, a story grammar (Mandler, 1984)--e.g., specifying settings, beginning constituents, complications, reactions, outcomes, and ending commentaries--can be used to lay out the component parts of the episode. An instance of this is a short vignette told by the party to illustrate some positive changes in her ex-husband (occurring in the interview series, li.512-563).

Her initial point in this section of the interview is that "he's been...more apologetic," and to demonstrate this change she tells a brief incident that happened recently. The beginning constituent setting up the episode is the statement, "I was still getting...medical bills. These are bills that are, um, his responsibility now." The plot complication occurring in the middle of the episode is that "I've handed them to him and he's been very angry...; threw the bill at me and stomped out of the house." The reaction of the protagonist is that "I at that point thought, 'Oh, this isn't gonna work.'" The outcome is "he called me back, and he said, '...I apologize for my behavior, it was really inappropriate.'" And the ending commentary--occurring outside the frame of the apologetic vignette--consists of the statement, "Which alludes back to, he's recognizing first of all, all the stuff I've gone through..., because just in a month's time he is real frustrated already with the paperwork." This kind of story episode is a prime means for adding interest, elaboration, and support for the assertions being made by a speaker. It serves to increase the sphere of influence for the themes it is illustrating, by embedding them in a more vivid and memorable way into the ongoing narrative.

Clustering

In addition to all these various forms of contextual framing--whether simple inclusio, chiastic tiers, asymmetry, adjacency, explicit contrast, or story episodes--it is
also possible to look at the clustering of themes in proximity to one another. In the lag analysis section above, a number of reliable clusters were uncovered with this interview. Reliable here means, first of all, that certain two-item criterion-code combinations occurred at a statistically greater rate than their unconditional probabilities of occurrence, and secondly, that several reciprocal versions of the combinations were also statistically significant. By such criteria, interview SI02 displays five distinct four-theme clusters, labeled according to their lag code designations as BGPQ, BPMK, HEFO, NOHI, and ACDL. There is also one three-theme cluster, JEF, as well as two two-theme clusters, AI and DG. Questions of duration with these clusters will be examined below.

As noted in the lag analysis section, the meaning of the BGPQ cluster is that 'custody' issues (code B) were weighted by the party in favor of the 'daughter's wishes' (code G), but with a parallel need for the party to truly be 'convinced' (code P) it was good for her daughter, an assurance provided by the 'daughter's counselor' (code Q). In terms of duration across the interview, all of these codes are of decreasing influence. I believe this is an indication that this cluster of themes does not need to be sustained, because it gets resolved (and communicated) early in the interview. An indication of how early is supplied by noting, from Table 5, that all occurrences of code Q are in the first half of the transcript. So clearly, a reliable cluster including code Q could not be occurring past the midpoint of the interview.

Another cluster containing codes B and P in tandem is the BPMK cluster. The meaning here is that in considering alternate 'custody' and 'living arrangements' (code B), the party wanted to be 'convinced' (code P) she herself was 'not abandoning' (code M) her daughter, because 'attorneys' (code K) were telling her it could be viewed that way. Again, all of these are themes of decreasing duration, except for the claim that this is 'not abandonment,' which is of enduring concern to the party across the interview. This pattern of duration designations suggests that the party did not continue to focus on these
concerns as a cluster, having resolved and communicated the issue fairly early in her story.

The ACDL cluster emphasizes how ‘mediation was helpful’ (code A) in processing ‘difficult emotions’ (code C), making an ‘empowered decision’ (code D), and in addressing issues of ‘trust and mistrust’ (code L). The ‘helpfulness of mediation’ and the ‘trust / mistrust’ concern are themes of increasing duration, while the issues of ‘decision-making’ and ‘difficult emotions’ are enduring themes throughout the interview. This indicates that this cluster receives increased attention and emphasis as the interview goes along. The fact that codes A and L rarely occur in the first quarter of the transcript gives further support to the idea of these themes clustering together later in the interview.

The JEF cluster is significant regardless of which two-item codes are combined. Its meaning is as follows: due to unpaid ‘child support’ (code E) there was a time constraint to get a revised ‘agreement in writing’ (code F), leading the parties to ‘finish the mediation on their own’ (code J) when the mediator got sick. While the duration of code F is a little ambiguous, all three of these themes are basically of increasing duration across the interview. This suggests that this cluster is another late emerging concern for the party to get across.

The durations of the individual themes in the HEFO cluster are all different from one another. Code H is a decreasing theme, code E is increasing, while codes F and O are essentially bimodal in distribution across the four quarters of the transcript. Code O offers some limits on the appearance of this full cluster, with no occurrences of that code in the first or fourth quarter. The overall meaning of the cluster is that because their ‘written agreement’ (code F) is not recognized by the medical establishment, the ex-husband must ‘take physical responsibility’ (code H) for certain ‘bills’ (code E), and is getting very ‘upset’ in the process (code O). The composite picture coming out of the pattern of
durations suggests that this is a transient concern appearing in the middle of the interview.

The NOHI cluster also has a mixed pattern of durations of its individual themes. Codes N and O are bimodal with all occurrences in the second or third quarter of the transcript. Code I is an increasing theme with no occurrences in the first quarter, while code H (as already mentioned) is decreasing in duration. The meaning of the cluster is basically that both parties are 'recognizing what the other has gone through' (code I) with 'taking responsibility' (code H) for the daughter, a situation that is sometimes 'frustrating for the ex-husband' (code O), but overall 'his attitude is better' (code N). The varied pattern of durations is an indication that this, too, is a transient cluster of themes, limited to the middle portion of the interview.

Lag analysis revealed two other reliable clusters of two themes each, where both of the reciprocal pairs were statistically significant, indicating that it did not matter which theme came first in the interview. The AI cluster was comprised of two themes of increasing duration, indicating that 'mediation was especially helpful' (code A) in promoting 'appreciation of the other' (code I), and this thematic cluster receives increasing emphasis as the interview progresses. The other reciprocal set is the DG cluster, with code D an enduring theme and code G a decreasing theme. The meaning of this cluster is that the 'party's decision-making' (code D) is frequently tied to respecting the 'daughter's wishes' (code G). The duration designations indicate that this combination is likely an early concern, which is then sustained (with limited mention by the party) as a given.

To sum up these clusters of themes, there were four clusters that basically were not sustained as the interview progressed, and four clusters that did receive sustained or increasing attention. Among those not sustained, two clusters seemed to be early concerns that got resolved (or at least expressed to the party's satisfaction), with little
need to keep bringing them up again. One was the BGPQ cluster, indicating that if the party was sufficiently ‘convinced’ (code P), especially by the ‘counselor’ (code Q), then the ‘daughter’s wishes’ (code G) would determine ‘where she lived’ (code B). The other was the BPMK cluster, stating that a change in ‘custody’ (code B) would be all right if the party was ‘convinced’ (code P) she was ‘not abandoning’ (code M) her daughter, because ‘attorneys’ (code K) were saying otherwise.

There were also two unsustained clusters that appeared to be transient concerns dealt with in the middle portion of the interview. One was the HEFO cluster, suggesting the ‘ex-husband was upset’ (code O) about ‘bills’ (code E) that were now his ‘responsibility’ (code H), what with the medical establishment not recognizing their ‘written agreement’ (code F). The other was the NOHI cluster, asserting the ex-husband was willing to ‘apologize’ (code N) for ‘getting upset’ (code O), and both parties were ‘appreciating the other’ (code I) for ‘taking responsibility’ (code H).

The duration of four other clusters marked them as concerns of sustained or increasing emphasis and attention. The ACDL affirmed that ‘mediation was helpful’ (code A) in ‘dealing with emotions’ (code C), feeling ‘empowered’ (code D), and addressing issues of ‘trust’ (code L). The JEF cluster stated the parties ‘finished mediation on their own’ (code J) because of a need to have something ‘in writing’ (code F), especially due to worries over back ‘child support’ (code E). The AI pair asserted that ‘mediation helped’ (code A) the parties to ‘appreciate each other’ (code I) more. And the DG pair stated that the ‘party’s decision-making’ (code D) respected her ‘daughter’s wishes’ (code G).

Summary of Trends

The foregoing detailed treatment of interview SI02 is an attempt to specify how the narrative with its component themes was structured into adjoining, overlapping, and internested spheres of influence. This has been examined on the local scale of what a
listener could reasonably attend to, as well as the macro scale of what constellations of ideas were reflexively influencing the speaker. The local scale and the macro scale are actually distinct levels of discourse, meaning research findings drawn from the latter are not necessarily available to the former. Nevertheless, extrapolations about the speaker's goals and intentions—realized or in the process of fulfillment—are one way to fashion a bridge between these logical levels.

The section on narrative analysis above is an attempt to stay very close to the local scale of the listener, treating each series of responses in its own right. The section on temporal analysis of repetitive themes is the main way that I have tried to address the macro level. This entailed compiling a count and frequency distribution for themes that were repeated in the interview, and using the cumulative frequency by quarter to derive a measure of enduring, increasing, or decreasing duration for each theme. The section on lag analysis has utilized a macro method—that is, statistically significant co-occurrence of in vivo themes, as compared with their unconditional probabilities of occurrence—to derive stable and reliable clusters of themes, which were occurring in close proximity on the local scale. Such clusters can be thought of as instances of mutual contextualization.

Finally, the section on contextual framing has integrated the evidence of the preceding analyses, enumerating several kinds of structure within the text by means of contextual framing devices. These formed a lexicon of sorts for continuing to investigate the pattern which connects (or may connect) diverse types of contextualization in narrative accounts, such as those represented by these two interviews. The distinctive lexicon of interview SI02 included simple inclusio, tiers of chiastic structure, asymmetry in the brackets, context provided by adjacency, explicit contrasts, and story episodes. I argue that the seeming sophistication of several of these forms of structure is nonetheless attained by fairly simple procedures, available to most speakers in their narrative accounts.
Such constructs emerged from an intensive examination of over thirty distinct episodes, and clustering and repetition among seventeen themes repeated hundreds of times over the course of this interview. In moving forward now to continue the formation of potentially useful grounded theory out of these two interviews, with their rich intraconnections, it is important to realize that any grounded theory has to emerge from somewhere. Its validity is not based upon a mere counting of participants, but upon the entire iterative process of checking and cross-checking the linkages among multiple forms of triangulation. What is more, especially in a social constructionist study, the reader helps to determine the meaningfulness or lack thereof of the resultant pattern of connections. It is within such a context of meaning-making that I turn once again to the categories of temporality, which I believe are deeply grounded in how these participants have contextualized and enacted their own meaning-making.

**Grounded Theory Generation**

Some of the results of the analytical sections of interview SI02 offer support for the grounded theory that emerged from analyses of the previous interview. Other findings point to the need for an addition to that theory, while still others call for elaborating the basic schema to allow permutations of the constructs previously identified. The theory generated in this study has to do with temporality in narrative accounts. That core category can be subdivided into two prime categories, temporal progression and temporal duration, respectively. From the first interview (i.e., SI01), temporal progression was found to have two main forms of enactment, that of sequence, and that of episodic structure. One of the modifications coming out of the second interview (i.e., SI02) is to add co-occurrence as an additional enactment of the category of temporal progression. Temporal duration was found to have three main forms of enactment, listed as repetition, framing, and selection / deselection.
Support for the Theory

Temporal progression. Support for this schema, from analysis of interview SI02, consists of the following. The general category of temporal progression appears to fit the data of this interview, in that the party gives clear evidence of intentionality, by her manner of shaping and embedding illustrations and episodes so that she can go in certain directions and make certain points. There are pivotal episodes, such as the one where the party asserts that allowing the daughter to live with her father was not being an unfit mother. There are moral story lines, where the party contrasts her own responsible behavior with that of her ex-husband. There are consequences and ramifications, such as the disruption in her home environment that followed from the mere fact of being in mediation, with all its difficult emotions to process.

The specific enactments of temporal progression--that is, sequence and episodic structuring--also receive support, in this interview. To register as support here, the features listed as defining conditions in Table 4 must be bolstered by evidence from the analyses offered above. There are certainly sequences of material, whether chronological or causal. An instance of chronology is that of giving her ex-husband the medical bills, having him throw them at her and stomp out, and later his calling to apologize. Another example of chronological ordering is the opening sequence where the party was being pressured by her daughter to live elsewhere, the party wanted to understand why, she went along with the daughter to counseling sessions, and then consulted with several attorneys to check out the implications. A causal sequence appears in the claim about the benefits of mediation, that "it forced us to look at what is here and now" [SI02, li.820]. There are also instances of tension and resolution in the episodic structuring of the interview. For example, the tension over her concern with 'not abandoning' (code M) the daughter is resolved by being 'convinced and reassured' (code P) it was for the best.
Temporal duration. The general category of temporal duration likewise appears to fit the data of this interview. There are persisting themes that are sustained or augmented throughout the interview, such as the claim that ‘mediation helped’ (code A) the parties to ‘appreciate each other’ (code I). There are also transient concerns that only appear for a more limited portion, such as the HEFO cluster of the ‘ex-husband’s getting upset’ (code O) over ‘taking responsibility’ (code H) for certain ‘bills’ (code E), as per their ‘written agreement’ (code F). Whenever vignettes or episodes are embedded in more vivid and memorable story lines, to that extent the durations of those notions persisted or increased.

Support also arises for the specific enactments of temporal duration—that is, repetition, framing, and selection / deselection. Table 5 enumerates a great deal of repetition occurring in this interview, and this was happening both on the local scale of particular responses and on the global scale of repeated mentions in different portions of the interview. That same table lists not only the in vivo phrases that were copied, but also phrases that were deemed functional equivalents of the in vivo codes. Selection / deselection, as an enactment of duration, is bolstered by examples of explicit contrast that were examined in this interview. As was noted above, explicit contrast includes deselecting and thereby decreasing the duration of a given meaning, as well as selecting and increasing the duration of its polar opposite.

There is also clear evidence in this interview for the notion of framing as an enactment of temporal duration. There are numerous instances of prefaces or closing comments, which frame or contextualize the themes under discussion. In this particular interview, there is also extended use of complementing sets of bracketing comments, an elaboration of the theory that will be dealt with more below. Suffice it to say at this point, that ample evidence was provided in the analytical sections of this interview for the
notions of demarcating boundaries and internested comments, which were listed in Table 4 as defining conditions for framing to occur.

**Additions to the Theory**

**Co-occurrence.** The major addition to the theory coming out of analysis of this interview is to consider co-occurrence a form of temporal enactment in its own right. The previous interview certainly included instances of co-occurrence, with its reliable two-code combinations of themes. What was missing from the initial grounded theory analysis was to differentiate this phenomenon from the other forms of enactments, such as framing or selection.

It was initially thought that combining themes in the same locale was a type of contextualization, and therefore a type of framing. Framing, however, considers influences between different logical levels, which could be termed context and content, respectively. From such a vantage point, co-occurrence emerges as a deviant exemplar. Themes involved in co-occurrence, in contrast to the situation with framing, are happening side-by-side at the same logical level. They are simply being placed in conjunction with one another, with no necessary indication of one being subordinate or superordinate to the other.

This is a form of parallel processing of material. Thus, it is likewise distinct from the linear patterning of sequences, or the cyclical patterns of episodic structures. The co-occurring themes do not necessarily overlap in their content, and so, they are not a form of repetition. Nor is there necessarily a distinct shift of attention due to confirmed or disconfirmed expectations, typical of selection and deselection as an enactment. For all these reasons, it seems best to allow co-occurrence to be a separate form of enactment, specifically, a type of temporal progression.

Table 8 lays out the resulting additions (presented in portrait rather than landscape form) that should be made to Table 4. That table displayed my previous determinations
Table 8.

Supplementary Axial Coding of Categories of Temporality (Additions to Table 4).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Coding Paradigm</th>
<th>Addition</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Category</td>
<td>Temporal Progression</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Enactments</td>
<td>Co-Occurrence</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conditions</td>
<td>Simultaneity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Time Sharing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Environns</td>
<td>Parallel Processing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Consequences</td>
<td>Mutual Contextualization</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Exemplars</td>
<td>Thematic Clusters</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

about axial coding of the categories and subcategories of temporality. Table 8 adopts the same modified paradigm for axial coding specified before. Essentially, this is the extended question, how is this category being enacted, under what conditions, in which environs, with what consequences, as shown by what type of exemplars?

The first portion of the axial coding question has already been answered. Co-occurrence is form of enactment of the prime category of temporal progression. It is one way of presenting material along the temporal flow of a narrated account. The defining condition for co-occurrence to occur is for there to be some kind of simultaneous presentation of the material. One theme is tied to another, they come as a package (as measured by statistically reliable patterns of co-occurrence). Due to physical limitations on what a listener can pragmatically attend to, strict simultaneity of the sound waves involved is not a requirement here. It is sufficient for the simultaneous presentation to be
achieved by a time sharing arrangement, with themes occurring in close enough proximity for them to be appraised as a package by the listener.

The conceptual *environs* for co-occurrence to be used as a construct in this theory are considerations of parallel processing of information. In the information technology field, this is usually distinguished from serial processing, and that manner of information gathering has been addressed with the construct of sequence in this theory. Parallel processing is quite distinct, in that serial dependence—whether causal, logical, or merely chronological—is not required. People have the capacity to evaluate ideas in parallel, and then to construct whatever relationships between them seem warranted. Co-occurrence, as used in this theory, draws upon this capacity, by noting which themes are presented in tandem on a consistent basis, and what conclusions can be drawn about their interrelationship as a result.

The *consequences* of using such a form of presentation are for the themes paired together to mutually contextualize each other. Constellations of associations connected with either one of them are brought into a richer mixture, which comes to permeate and flavor the combination so produced. Neither side of the combination is necessarily given primacy; they simply occur together, and they both emerge with a richer constellation of meanings thereby. Those additional associations—some more tentative, some more formative—benefit themselves from being processed in parallel, as a wide range of meanings can be brought to bear for possible influence on the unfolding narrative. This is a sizeable benefit that is not easily achieved by the constraints of sequential presentation and serial processing of information.

*Exemplars* of this form of temporal enactment are the many thematic clusters that were examined in this interview. So as not to consider every concentration of ideas, however happenstance, as an important grouping, a macro method was used to sort out those combinations that occurred with statistically significant regularity, over and above
their unconditional probabilities of occurrence. When several reciprocal versions of the
two-code combinations were also statistically significant—that is, when the serial order of
presentation was not important—then various two-, three-, and even four-item clusters of
themes were isolated as reliable instances of co-occurrence.

Temporal scale. Another addition to the theory coming out of the analyses of
interview SI02 is an increased awareness and sensitivity to issues of temporal scale.
Slowing down the narrative by means of a detailed transcript analysis is an artificial
situation that is not available to the listener operating in real time. However, there is
legitimate meaning and structure created and known to the speaker, which is discernible
to analytical methods operating at the macro scale of patterns occurring across the entire
interview. For such meanings to be accessible to the listener, there must be ways of
bridging the macro and local scales, and bringing such material into the field of view of
the listener. The task becomes one of moving from what the speaker knows about her or
his larger fields of meaning to what the listener can legitimately attend to, in order to
build up mutual frames of reference for understanding the speaker's story. The constraints
imposed by this task, along with solutions provided by a variety of temporal devices, are
explored more in the Discussion of Chapter V below.

Permutations of the Theory

Adjacency. The main elaborations of the initial grounded theory of temporality in
narrative accounts are what might be called permutations of the constructs. It is possible
to combine two forms of enactment, with the resulting example having characteristics of
both of those constructs. In the analysis of interview SI02, adjacency was considered a
form of contextualization, with examples such as the piling up of morally tinged language
to make a concerted point. It seems best to call this a combination of repetition and the
newly added construct of co-occurrence. While there is not full repetition of particular in
vivo codes, there often is a form of repetition in the tone or construction of such
instances, and the effect is heightened by the close proximity of the phrases, in keeping with the construct of co-occurrence. I propose to call this type of permutation adjacency.

**Inclusio.** A more central permutation in analyzing interview SI02 was a combination of repetition and framing, which I called inclusio, borrowing the term from literary analysis. This in essence is repeating some kind of prefatory comment as a closing comment as well, at the end of a developed series of ideas. Such a procedure, in fact, creates blocks of material by grouping them together with identical opening and closing frames. This makes the frames easier to recognize by the listener, and the resulting contextualized narrative easier to follow. A variation of this procedure is to make the frames, not identical, but asymmetrical, and examples were provided from this interview of such asymmetry. In such cases, there is still a framing effect coming from clearly demarcated boundaries, but the form of repetition used is a systemic variant--such as a polar opposite--that is considered a functional equivalent of the opening frame, rather than an identical copy.

**Chiasm.** It is possible to combine the inclusio form of framing with aspects of selection / deselection, to fashion another permutation. If, after the opening frame of one block of material, another block is started with its own opening frame, and this second block is completed with its own closing frame before continuing with the first block, which then has a closing frame of its own, then a fairly simple ABB'A' structure is set up, which is easy to follow by a listener but also quite nuanced in its presentation of contextualizing information. This arrangement is called a chiasm in literary analysis. It arises from a simple process of nesting the bracketing devices of inclusio inside one another.

The reason it is a permutation of framing together with selection / deselection is that there is a temporary shift of attention from the original bracket, and that project is held in suspension while the inserted material makes its point, before the attention shifts
back to completing the original train of ideas. It is also possible to use more than one set of inserted comments, because the shifts between the layers of context are easily navigated by a listener, so that quite involved chiastic structures can be built up. Examples of these were provided in the analytical sections of this interview.

The foregoing concepts of adjacency, inclusio (with its sub-variant, asymmetry), and chiasm are important elaborations of the theory, coming from an analysis of interview SI02. However, these notions arose as permutations, by combining enactments already present in the theory. At the more abstract level of theory generation, they raise the whole idea of permutations, and thus we should look for other possible permutations. I believe they can be found in examples we have already considered.

Figure 2 presents a schematic representation of the grounded theory of temporal enactments in narrative accounts, generated by this study. It includes the main forms of enactments found in these interviews, as well as permutations between adjoining constructs. Those supplementary permutations are now described, before examining the figure in more detail.

**Transposition.** The notion of chiasm explored above included a feature of selection / deselection, specifically, a temporary suspension of expectations generated by the initial frame, and a shift of attention such that additional context can be inserted into the narrative by means of another set of brackets. This same feature shows up when selection / deselection is combined with sequence as an enactment of temporal progression. Here the shift of attention is from the serial order that is being pursued. When that regularity is briefly suspended so that a change in the expected order can occur, we call it transposition.

It is instructive to note that an example of transposition arose in the section of this interview dealing with contextual framing, in discussing the multiple tiers of a chiastic structure. It occurred at the beginning of the third and fourth series of responses by the
Figure 2. Grounded Theory of Temporal Enactment in Narrative Accounts.
party, dealing with the positive and negative aspects of mediation, respectively. The party had signaled her intention to pursue both aspects, by means of a clarifying metacomment. She then undertook to spell out the positive difference mediation made for her, in terms of her anger coming out and being able to sort out that she was not being an unfit mother.

The negative aspect of mediation was crystallized in terms of how difficult the emotions had been to deal with and the disruption caused in her home by going through the mediation. The transposition in this sequence occurred by way of a prefacing comment the party felt she needed to make, even before she elaborated the positive aspects. She began with saying, "Um, actually, even though it was very difficult and I didn't want to be there and I didn't want to give up custody..." [SI02, li.236-8]. In a sense, an allusion to the negative aspects is inserted out of place, in a transposed position.

This use of "even though" to signal prefatory material serves to augment her moral positioning and heighten the laudatory features of her decisions. In the larger scheme of theory generation for this study, it serves to fill an anticipated gap in the theory, by showing that transposition is a naturally occurring permutation, formed by combining features of selection / deselection with features of sequence.

Chained incidents. The situation is easier when considering permutations in combination with the episodic structuring of narrative accounts. It is patently obvious that episodes can be strung together and narrated in series. This would be a permutation generated by combining episodic structure with sequence. The resulting form of narration we could call chained incidents. It is important to remember that sequence, as used in this study, is not restricted to events occurring in chronological order. It is possible to have causal sequences or logical sequences as well. In the same way, episodes can be linked into a series of chained incidents by logical or causal connections, as well as according to their chronology.
Rival narratives. Another permutation arises when we consider episodic structure together with co-occurrence. This would be the notion of story lines existing side-by-side, without clear indications of priority or contextual framing. An example may be the notion of rival narratives, suggested with respect to interview SI01. In that case, there were certain disjunctions occurring for the party in how her dominant narrative was holding together, and the beginnings of a rival narrative started to emerge, making better sense of her situation. Before it gained full ascendancy, however, it proceeded side-by-side with continued efforts to make her dominant story work, before those themes were abandoned in favor of the new realizations of the rival narrative. This could be an instance of a permutation of the constructs of co-occurrence and episodic structure, in this theory. And as with transposition as a permutation, it would fill an anticipated gap in the theory, thereby strengthening the basic schema presented her.

Summary of the Theory

Returning to Figure 2, a visual presentation of these various constructs is provided, together with a sense of their interrelationships. The chief enactments of temporality are ranged around the points of a star, and grouped according to the prime categories of temporal duration and temporal progression. Enactments embodying temporal duration are repetition, framing, and selection / deselection. Enactments embodying temporal progression are sequence, episodic structure, and co-occurrence.

In the interior of the star are listed various permutations and exemplars. The exemplars occur near the points of their respective type of enactment. Thus, mantra and litany are instances of repetition; preface and summation are instances of framing; and contrast, correction and puzzle are instances of selection / deselection. In the same manner, chronology and event / consequence are instances of sequence; story line is an instance of episodic structure; and thematic clusters are instances of co-occurrence.
At the inner points of the star, as it were—that is, at the intersection of the lines from adjoining sets of main enactments—are listed permutations of those adjoining constructs. Thus, inclusio and asymmetry are permutations of repetition and framing; chiasm is a permutation of framing (technically, the inclusio manner of framing) and selection / deselection; and transposition is a permutation of selection / deselection and sequence. Continuing around the inner points of the star, chained incidents are a permutation of sequence and episodic structure; rival narratives are a permutation of episodic structure and co-occurrence; and adjacency is a permutation of co-occurrence and repetition.

The fact that permutations can arise, with examples found from the transcripts, helps to provide "warranted assertability" (Dewey, as cited in Cronen, 2000, p. 4) for the system of constructs that I call temporal enactments in this theory, along with their relative placement in Figure 2 as forms of temporal duration and progression. The outermost circle, labeled "Types of Influence," in the figure will be explained in the Discussion chapter below.

A different type of summary is provided with Table 9. This table is a conflation of the information previously presented in Tables 4 and 8, and it is included here for clarity and completeness. It shows the revised list of enactments for the grounded theory categories of temporality, along with their axial coding. As mentioned previously, such coding addressed the question, how was each category being enacted, under what conditions, in which environs, with what consequences, as shown by what type of exemplars? The column labeled "Conditions" essentially presents the defining feature of each type of enactment. The column labeled "Environs" is roughly akin to the "Types of Influence" on Figure 2, which are presented in more detail in the next chapter. Because the various components of Table 9 were discussed in detail in their respective sections alongside Tables 4 and 8 above, those discussions are not repeated here.
Table 9. Revised Axial Coding of Grounded Theory Categories of Temporal Enactment in Narrative Accounts.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Enactments</th>
<th>Conditions</th>
<th>Environ</th>
<th>Consequences</th>
<th>Exemplars</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Temporal</td>
<td>Repetition</td>
<td>Copy of Original</td>
<td>Recursive Beliefs</td>
<td>Add Emphasis</td>
<td>Mantra</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Duration</td>
<td></td>
<td>Functional Equivalent</td>
<td>a) what speaker produced</td>
<td>Provide Continuity</td>
<td>Litany</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Systemic Variant</td>
<td>b) what hearer heard</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>c) belief in mutuality</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Framing</td>
<td></td>
<td>Demarcating Boundary</td>
<td>Different Logical Levels</td>
<td>Contextualize</td>
<td>Brackets Comment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Internested Comments</td>
<td>Layers of Context</td>
<td>Orient</td>
<td>Preface</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Evaluate</td>
<td>Summation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Selection /</td>
<td>Shift of Attention</td>
<td>Expectations</td>
<td></td>
<td>Redirect / Provide Focus</td>
<td>Contrast</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Deselection</td>
<td>Dislocation / Surprise</td>
<td>a) confirming</td>
<td></td>
<td>Follow What's Effective</td>
<td>Correction</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>b) disconfirming</td>
<td></td>
<td>Economize Attention</td>
<td>Puzzle</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Temporal</td>
<td>Sequence</td>
<td>Serial Order</td>
<td>Linear Patterns</td>
<td>Give Directionality</td>
<td>Beginning/Middle/End</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Progression</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Ontological Shaping</td>
<td>Event/Consequence</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Episodic</td>
<td>Tension &amp; Resolution</td>
<td>Cyclical Patterns</td>
<td></td>
<td>Tell Events in a Setting</td>
<td>Story Line</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Structure</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Make a Story Point</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Offer Accounts</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Heighten Memorability</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Co-Occurrence</td>
<td>Simultaneity</td>
<td>Pa: 1 Processing</td>
<td></td>
<td>Mutual Contextualization</td>
<td>Thematic Cluster</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Time Sharing</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
CHAPTER V
DISCUSSION

What are we doing here, in winding down this project? This final chapter serves to recapitulate and expand the notions put forth in this manuscript. In keeping with other chapters, it too uses the recurrent series of five “Whats” to shape its presentation, and bring closure to the overall study. This section lays out the implications of the grounded theory generated in this study, as it uses the second of the five “What” questions (i.e., what is this about?) to address what is at stake with these ideas. In particular, it draws upon a distinction made by Bateson (1979) between a description and a tautology, to arrive at what is called explanation. This section also revisits the research questions of this study, and their particular casting as Hypotheses 1 and 2.

Following that, the third of the five “Whats” (i.e., what is important to self?) presents elaborations of the theory, in terms of buttressing ideas, and constraints requiring resolution for effective narration to take place. The fourth of the five “Whats” (i.e., what is important to other?) takes note of possible linkages to other theoretical ideas in the literature, drawn from the fields of sequential, conversational, and narrative analyses, respectively. Finally, the last of the five “Whats” (i.e., what do we do?) serves to qualify the claims made here and argue for restraint, in setting forth the need for future directions of study.

Mapping Onto a Tautology

What is this about? In the last book he completed before his death, Gregory Bateson (1979) outlined “a manner of search, . . . called the method of double or multiple comparison” (p. 87, emphasis in original). One such set of comparisons was contained in the words, description, tautology, and explanation. “Explanation consists in
supplementing the description of a process or a set of phenomena with an abstract tautology onto which the description could be mapped” (p. 189). He elaborated as follows: “The ‘mapping’ asserts implicitly that the links which hold the tautology together correspond to relations which obtain in the description” (p. 82). As examples of tautologies, Bateson cited Euclidian geometry, the theory of games developed by Von Neumann, and “the definitions and postulates of the tautology called algebra--that tautology whose subject matter is the expansion and analysis of the notion ‘any’ ” (p. 73, emphasis in original).

So then, explanation, according to Bateson (1979), is simply the mapping of a description onto a tautology, and by definition, consists of a double comparison, between the territory of a description and the map of a tautology. As with any instance of mapping, “the map is not the territory” (Korzybski, cited in Bateson, 1979, p. 110, emphasis omitted), but it can still be very helpful in understanding a territory or making some use of it. The tautology contains links, hopefully rigorous, between propositions. It is the logic of the links, not their reality, which counts in a tautology. Reality (whatever that may be) comes from the description mapped onto the tautology. The increment of understanding (if any) from this process of combining description with a tautology is what is called explanation.

It turns out that what this study has been about is the building of a tautology. It is a tautology about time, and I call it “temporal enactment.” Essentially, it can be boiled down to the phrase, “Time matters.” The elementary propositions that I think are part of that tautology are outlined below, in Table 10. I purposely use the indefinite term “things” in that table, to highlight the contentless character of this tautological map--that is, its uselessness without being filled with an appropriate descriptive territory. Specifying which “things” comes from the descriptive domain, not the tautological one.
Table 10.
Tautology of Temporal Enactment: Propositions Elaborating the Axiom, "Time Matters."

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Proposition</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Things take time.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. They either change or remain stable, relative to time.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. They can move through time (i.e., progression), or persist through time (i.e., duration), or both.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Measurement across time happens through a moving window, called &quot;now.&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. There are a limited number of ways to progress or endure through time.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Things can progress through time as follows:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a) one thing after another in a line (i.e., sequence),</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b) one thing after another in a circle (i.e., episodic structure),</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c) one thing beside another (i.e., co-occurrence).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Things can endure through time as follows:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a) by reappearing (i.e., repetition),</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b) by framing something that is currently ongoing (i.e., framing),</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c) for as long as they persist (i.e., selection / deselection).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. Things can share the features of more than one type of progression or duration (i.e. permutation).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. Arranging the types of progression and duration in a circle allows understandable permutations to be seen between adjacent types.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
I hope the propositions of this tautology will be viewed as rather “basic.” While they may not be rigorous enough to be seen as self-evident, I hope they are basic enough to be seen as plausible. I hope this map of temporal enactment that I have drawn is believable enough to be tested out to see whether it is useful. The usefulness that I think I detect is as follows: The increment of understanding that comes from mapping onto a tautology about temporal enactment is to realize, first of all, that *time matters*, and second of all, if a person’s discourse can be mapped onto such a tautology, it may be possible to get closer to *what issues matter* to the person. That is my sole object with this entire project.

It is worth noting that the method of multiple comparisons is also a useful guide simply for presentation of the tautology. I have tried to draw several complementing versions of the map I am calling temporal enactment. One appeared in Table 9 (and its predecessor Tables 4 and 8). This showed the links between categories and subcategories of the theory in tabular form. It was derived by axial coding of the prime constructs of temporal duration and temporal progression, answering the question: How was each construct enacted, under what conditions, in which environs, with what consequences, as shown by what kind of exemplars? Figure 2 was another type of map of the same territory, this time in pictorial form. It utilized geometric designs to convey the proposed relationships among the theory’s categories, with a particular strength in displaying the notion of permutation between adjoining enactments. In Table 10, the tautology has been laid out in propositional form, with an emphasis on the simplicity and hopefully apparent nature of the propositions.

By presenting multiple maps of the same system of constructs, I hope to improve the clarity and “instrumental utility” (Gale, 1993, p. 83) of the theory, so that descriptive data in their turn can be compared with at least one of the maps with a resultant increase in understanding. In the section on Buttressing Elaborations below, I present a couple of
supplementary maps of these maps, to give the reader further options for utilizing the concepts of this study.

Research Questions and Hypotheses

It is time to review the research questions and the specific hypotheses, which were laid out in Chapter II. A twofold research question was proposed there, coming out of the literatures of social constructionism and therapeutic change. Part (a) was, *can a measure of "duration" approximate a determination of perceived significance?* Part (b) was, *what temporal relations exist among layers of context?*

Starting with the first part, I believe the results of this study—in particular, those dealing with Hypothesis 1 that meanings of longer duration contextualize and lend their meaning to constructions of shorter duration—suggest a provisional “yes” to the question of whether duration can approximate significance. In constructing grounded theory categories of temporality, during the axial coding process, the prime category of temporal duration was parsed into three forms of “Enactment,” labeled repetition, framing, and selection/deselection, respectively (see Table 9). The varied “Consequences” of those three enactments included such aspects as adding emphasis, providing continuity, contextualizing (especially via orientations and evaluations), providing focus by redirecting, following effectiveness, and economizing attention. These would all seem to be valued activities, significant in themselves in shaping the party’s story, and serving an indexing function of pointing at meanings that frequently get picked up by the listener in the co-construction of meaning. Thus, providing background information or a broader context, returning to a previous theme, selecting some aspect and elaborating it into an episode or illustration, all of these are devices that tell a listener what to listen for and how to interpret what is heard. Significance, then, becomes a matter of co-constructions between a listener and speaker, which appear to be acceptable to the original speaker. So
by providing tautological linkages dealing with temporal duration, it would seem possible to increase one's understanding of what a party perceives as significant.

There is another aspect to this question--i.e., part (a) of the research question--lingering behind the reference to a "measure" of duration. Just because enactments of duration appear to have "Consequences" that usefully map part of the perception of significance, it remains to be seen whether such enactments could be reliably noticed and measured. This is where the "Conditions" come in, listed in Table 9. Each enactment of duration in that table is provided with defining conditions, which constitute it as that type of enactment and allow it to be recognized. In addition, various "Exemplars" are provided for each one, to aid in recognition. So, yes, some kind of measure of duration appears to be possible.

Turning to the second part of the twofold research question (i.e., what temporal relations exist among layers of context?), this is where the larger scheme of the tautology comes in. Duration is not the only form of temporality. While there were numerous concrete examples in the interviews of this study of what I called types of temporal duration--that is, among the descriptive territory I was seeking to map--there were just as many examples of a construct I came to call temporal progression. Enactments of progression, in this tautology, included sequence, episodic structure, and co-occurrence. The axial coding in Table 9 is a more extensive compilation of temporal relations, (with its inclusion of progression across time), than just looking at temporal duration.

Hypothesis 1

The lens of my twofold research question was given initial focus by means of two hypotheses. Hypothesis 1 was that narrative meanings of longer duration contextualize and thereby lend their meaning to constructions of shorter duration. Hypothesis 2 was that a party's selection of a meaning to increase in duration would correlate with an increase in its perceived significance.
It is important to remember that in the iterative style of qualitative and grounded theory research, hypotheses function more like temporary and transitional scaffolding (Cronen, 2000), providing useful access to the phenomena in question, until they are no longer needed once useful theory has been constructed. This is different from their role in quantitative research of the positivist tradition, where hypotheses that are confirmed—in the sense of ruling out the null hypothesis—are meant to become load-bearing walls, supporting the accumulating weight of scientifically valid and reliable findings.

The results of this study suggest provisional support for Hypothesis 1, in that it appears to be useful to construct a notion of relative durations, and to compare meanings using that scale. It further appears warranted (i.e., plausible and useful in a social constructionist sense) to rank meanings according to their time durations, with longer duration meanings lying deeper in a hierarchy of logical types. This appears to be a meaningful, if not comprehensive, way to map the descriptive territory known as “contextualization.”

Having said that, the grounded theory tautology about temporal enactment, which emerged from this study, displayed forms of temporal progression as well, not just temporal duration. This finding spoke to the question of what temporal relations exist among layers of context—i.e., part (b) of the twofold research question. This suggests that there may be other forms of context than simply that captured by a proposed hierarchy of logical types. This is considered in more detail below, as an elaboration of the theory, under the notion of “types of influence” that these various enactments display.

Hypothesis 2

With regard to Hypothesis 2, that essentially an increase in duration means an increase in perceived significance, it appears that is too simple an answer, and the situation is more complicated than that. In other words, Hypothesis 2 proved an inadequate support structure for constructing an adequate map. An important discovery
from the results of this study was that deselection can be quite a significant vehicle for therapeutic change. And the relationship between deselection and duration is complex.

Initially, deselection focuses more attention (and thus duration) on what is deselected, either by way of an explicit contrast, or by way of something that was expected being noted by its absence. Ultimately, however, the effect of deselection is to decrease the longevity and duration of a meaning. In either situation, what is important for the notion of perceived significance is not simply a unidirectional increase in duration, but rather a change in duration either way. It is worth noting, however, that Hypothesis 2 served a useful, albeit temporary, function in helping to call forth these distinctions. However, now that a broader tautology is provisionally in place, the overly simple relationship proposed by Hypothesis 2 can be dismantled, just as scaffolding is removed once renovations are complete.

It is also worth noting that the entire tautology of relationships as they now stand—whether displayed as a series of nine propositions (i.e., in Table 10), or as a chart of axial coding relationships (i.e., in Table 9), or as a schematized drawing of interrelated parts (i.e., in Figure 2)—fills a role similar to that previously filled by an inadequate Hypothesis 2. It is meant to be scaffolding, no more. It is only a map, certainly not the real territory. It is only useful to the extent that it helps one get around an actual territory. I believe that this tautology about temporal enactment does indeed offer an evocative set of frame-works, for broadening one’s understanding of context and significance. But the important word here is evocative. It is a source for hypotheses—i.e., working hunches—about what fits where and what may really be going on in a territory. That is the substantive answer for what is at stake with this study.

Buttressing Elaborations

I turn now to the third of the five “Whats” for this chapter, *what is important to self?* Answers to this question take the form of elaborations of the grounded theory
presented in this study, which have arisen from my own immersion in the process of
theory generation. These are admittedly provisional and even tentative, awaiting
determinations from the reader as to whether these additional notions are useful
refinements or superfluous accretions. I view these not as maps of the territory of the data
on narrative accounts, but as maps of the maps, supplementing the theory of temporal
enactment.

Types of Influence

When presenting Figure 2 near the end of the previous chapter, there was an
aspect left out of that discussion, because it did not properly arise out of the interviews of
this study. Its grounding was elsewhere, not in firsthand data gathered for this project, but
among theoretical ideas--i.e., experiential data, to use Strauss's (1987) term--from the
realm of cognitive science. That aspect is presented here as an extension of the theory, to
suggest possible linkages with other domains.

The outermost circle in Figure 2 is an attempt to specify the type of influence that
may be involved with each type of enactment in the theory. I conceive of these as
corresponding to basic cognitive abilities that speakers and listeners have, and thus, to
basic tools that they can utilize to arrive at mutual or compatible frames of reference (see
Minsky, 1985). This portion of the grounded theory is somewhat more speculative and
tentative. However, there is again a certain warranted assertability provided to the theory
by the fact that it is possible to derive six distinct types of cognitive processing, and link
them with the six types of enactment generated in this theory. Starting with the segments
of the circle associated with temporal progression, these cognitive types of processing are
listed as linear, cyclical, parallel, proportionate, hierarchical, and differential.

The reasons for these labels are as follows. This portion of the theory roughly
corresponds to the column labeled "Environs" in Table 9. The conceptual locale for
sequence to operate as an enactment of temporal progression is an environment filled
with linear patterns. And one way to address that linearity is step-by-step, in sequence. This kind of serial processing has been capitalized on in the design and use of computers, and it is certainly one method that speakers and listeners have for processing information (e.g., Churchland & Sejnowski, 1996; Klahr, Chase, & Lovelace, 1983; Restle, 1970).

Another method is to attend to cyclical patterns of tension and resolution. This is the form of processing associated with episodic structuring of narratives (e.g., Rabinowitz & Mandler, 1983; Schank & Abelson, 1977; Tulving, 1972). It is a recursive realm, where new constructions can have a reflexive influence on what gets remembered and subsequently retold. There is also a cyclical pattern to the actual construction of episodes, working from the end back to the beginning. The telling itself normally unfolds from beginning to end, but with further possibilities of looping back to include flashbacks or other supplementary aspects of tension and resolution.

In the other form of enactment of temporal progression, that of co-occurrence, the cognitive type and environs are that of parallel processing of information (e.g., McClelland & Rumelhart, 1988; Puff, 1970; Puff, Murphy, & Ferrara, 1977). Themes presented in tandem through co-occurrence are evaluated in parallel at the same logical level of discourse. This makes possible the co-mingling of a broader associative net, with which to draw conclusions and implications for the co-occurring themes.

With regard to enactments of temporal duration, there seem to be other types of processing and influence at work. When it comes to repetition, the most parsimonious assumption is that same means the same, unless there are indications to the contrary. The influence of subsequent repetitions of a theme is thus equivalent, or at least proportionate, to its original mention. This is a form of processing that classes events together as essentially equivalent, whether they are exactly identical in all respects or not (e.g., Churchland & Sejnowski, 1996; Rosch & Mervis, 1975).
Framing is a form of processing that specifically deals with *hierarchical* influences between themes (e.g., Bower, Clark, Winzenz, & Leisgold, 1969; Johnson, 1967; Markman, Horton, & McLanahan, 1980). This is the conceptual locale within which it operates. Framing deals with relationships between premises occurring at different logical levels of discourse. That is the primary meaning of what is meant by the term contextualization. Hierarchical influences between superordinate and subordinate statements can thus be conveyed, to construct multiple tiers or layers of context.

Finally, the enactment I am calling selection / deselection is precisely the one dealing with distinctions, that is, what is not classed as the same. The ability to state what something is not, can be as useful as stating what it is. Such is the conceptual locale specifically for the deselection side of selection / deselection. The type of influence thereby conveyed I am calling *differential*, which is to say, those cognitive abilities that create and deal with the fact of difference (e.g., Graesser, Gordon, & Sawyer, 1979; Gregg, Montgomery, & Castano, 1980; Smith, 1973).

As stated above, this portion of the grounded theory is more speculative in its linkage of the main constructs with broader cognitive abilities. The theory does not stand or fall according to the strength of these linkages. They simply offer additional support for the usefulness and plausibility of the constructs here presented. The main body of the theory is carried by what I am calling the enactments of temporal duration and temporal progression. Instances of each type of enactment have been presented in earlier portions of this manuscript.

I believe it is useful in a heuristic sense to arrange the six enactments in the manner represented by the central star of Figure 2. When thus arranged, certain permutations seem to emerge, as combinations of adjoining enactments. And instances of each of these permutations have also been presented in the previous chapter. Finally—and admittedly as something of an add-on, although providing its own buttressing weight—the
notion of distinct cognitive processing abilities has been added to the generated theory. This is the sphere that I call in the figure, types of influence, with a different type associated with each enactment in the theory.

**Narrating Under Temporal Constraints**

Arranging certain basic cognitive processing abilities in conjunction with the six types of temporal enactment in the theory is one way of suggesting a certain “necessity” to the main constructs of this theory. It bolsters the logic of the theory by implying a degree of fitness with elemental types of thinking. It is important to remember that any such argument is still within the domain of the tautology. In other words, this deals with the internal consistency and rigor of the proposed linkages, not their so-called reality. The key question with any tautology is simply, “Is it useful?” There are other ways to strengthen the logic of the tautology—its seeming necessity—so as to improve its usefulness.

One way is to consider the constraints imposed on any speaker or listener, by the linear nature of the flow of time. To illustrate and expound on this idea, I use the pictorial analogy of Figure 3, shaped (appropriately enough) like an hourglass. Here, the entire hourglass represents temporality, which is set upon an interactional or communicational base called social constructionism. The upper chamber of the hourglass contains the speaker’s preferred accounts, comprised of notions having various spheres of influence. Those spheres of influence are represented by the horizontal lines of varying lengths, with length corresponding to duration or degree of influence in the speaker’s mind. The difficulty--i.e., the communication task--is to get those horizontal lines down through the narrow neck of the hourglass.

The neck of the hourglass stands for the limited attentional focus of the listener, with the sand pouring through that bottleneck representing the narrative flow of the speaker’s communications. The overall narrowing of the upper chamber consists of
Figure 3. Narrative Accounts and Temporal Flow.
various constraints on the listener’s memory and attention. Anything passing through the middle along the narrative stream must contend with those constraints. The lower chamber of the hourglass represents what can be done together by the speaker and listener with anything that gets through the narrow window above it. A stylized picture is given, inside the lower chamber, of co-constructed frames of reference, which become possible only if the participants solve the communication task.

On the right side of the diagram are a few additional concepts, which perhaps relate to discussions earlier in the manuscript about different logical levels of discourse. The area labeled, “macro scale,” roughly corresponds to intentions and other aspects of the speaker’s frames of reference, which have not yet been adequately communicated. This is backgrounding information, relative to communicative events within the narrative stream. The only access the listener has to this macro scale is by way of extrapolations and inferences about “what the speaker must mean,” based on what has already been said. The area labeled, “local scale,” is in the foreground of the communication, with whatever is immediately available in real time to the listener. As such, it is constrained by the limitations on attention and memory that exist for the listener.

The area labeled, “freedom to change magnifying power,” picks up on the co-constructed nature of the lower section of the hourglass. If the communicative events are successful, then various common frames of reference are built up between the speaker and listener. These allow the listener to see a piece of the world somewhat the way the speaker does. And with that similar vantage point, the listener can then zoom in and out, in meaningful ways, on portions of what has been communicated. Such shifts of vantage point can often be negotiated (i.e., co-constructed) between listener and speaker, because they are built out of what the speaker originally communicated and take their initial point of reference from there.
This whole discussion of the visual allegory presented in Figure 3 is a somewhat imprecise attempt to picture in broad terms how the social constructionist enterprise might be working itself out, relative to temporal constraints imposed on both speaker and listener. Again, it is not a "real" description of actual phenomena, but only a potentially useful analogy (within the tautology), upon which to map the phenomena and see if an increment of understanding results from that double comparison.

A companion piece to Figure 3 is Figure 4, showing schematized pictures of what may be getting down through the bottleneck of the temporal hourglass. In a sense it can be viewed as an inset map on Figure 3, enlarging the portion of the map dealing with the listener's attentional focus.

In Figure 4, the limited attentional window of the listener poses a challenge to joint understanding and co-construction of meaning. The communicative task for the speaker becomes that of segmenting the narration, yet still getting across issues of concern to him or her. Pictorially, this is represented in the same way as in the previous figure, with horizontal lines--where the length corresponds to the importance and influence (i.e., duration) of a given concern--needing to get through a narrow section of the hourglass by way of the narrative flow of the speaker's communication.

Various solutions to the speaker's dilemma are presented in the lower portion of Figure 4, labeled "temporal devices" and displayed with a schematized diagram for each one. So then, a linear sequence is represented by a horizontal line being tipped on end (Solution 1), to go through the attentional bottleneck in a vertical direction. A circular or recursive episode is represented by a spiraling or curly-cue line (Solution 2), which can also make it through the bottleneck. Co-occurrence is represented by parallel lines (Solution 3) moving through the bottleneck more or less together. These first three solutions are the enactments of temporal progression, encountered previously in the grounded theory of this study.
Task
Speaker:
Duration (length) = Importance & Influence

Listener:
Bottleneck --
I.e., Limited
Attentional Window

Solutions
1) Sequence
2) Episodes
3) Co-Occurrence
4) Selection
5) a) Deselection
   b) & Replacement
6) Repetition
7) Framing

Segmenting the Narration
Issues of Concern to Speaker

Figure 4. Attentional Focus and Temporal Devices in Narrative Accounts.
The enactments of temporal duration can also be represented schematically, in Figure 4. Selection is sort of like an area of increased focal attention, displayed by curling up an issue of concern into a more concentrated area (Solution 4). Deselection is sort of like compressing a line (Solution 5a), decreasing its overall duration, so that it gets some attention from the listener as it passes through the hourglass window, but with its sphere of influence diminished once it is through. It is sometimes the case that a given issue is deselected, for instance by an explicit contrast, only to be reframed or replaced by a different issue, and this is represented by the expanded set of lines (Solution 5b), which take on increased duration in modified form once they emerge from the bottleneck.

Repetition is like hearing the same brief segment over and over again (Solution 6), each one of which is small enough to get through the attentional bottleneck, but forming a virtual line of longer duration in the lower section of the hourglass. Finally, framing is a special way of sending concerns through the window together (Solution 7), using a bracketing structure to decrease the width of any given segment, while still showing its relationship to related issues of concern.

Figures 3 and 4 together are simply abstract ways to envision some of the temporal relations and potential dynamics of the constructs presented in this study, comprising the grounded theory tautology about temporal enactment. While such analogies are not the same as demonstrating a rigorous logic behind the links and propositions of the theory, they nonetheless provide some buttressing support for the concepts, and hopefully improve their usefulness.

Linkages to Companion Literatures

The categories and links of this theory bear some similarity to constructs that have appeared elsewhere in the literature. This is the realm of the fourth of the five “What” questions, what is important to other? Have others developed tautological maps that overlap with the maps presented in this study? And does my tautology provide a useful
mapping of any descriptive data in the literature? While the latter question is largely up to
the reader to determine, in deciding whether to apply these maps to his or her own
domain, an illustration of the mapping process may be helpful at this point.

**Sequential Analysis of Temporal Form**

In his studies of marital interactions, Gottman (1979, 1982) investigated
differentiating relationships on the basis of their “temporal forms of behavior” (1982, p.
951), noting that satisfied versus dissatisfied marital couples generated different temporal
forms. For instance, metacommunication played a differential role for these two types of
couples, as evidenced by statistically significant differences in their interactive
sequences. An extended quotation from Gottman (1982) provides descriptive data for
mapping onto the tautology about temporal enactment in the present study:

For satisfied couples metacommunicative chains are brief and contain agreements
that lead rapidly to other codes. An example of these metacommunicative
sequences for satisfied couples is:

1. You’re interrupting me.
2. Sorry, what were you saying?
3. I was saying we should take a vacation alone.

An example of these metacommunicative sequences for dissatisfied couples is:

1. You’re interrupting me.
2. I wouldn’t have to if I could get a word in edgewise.
1. Oh, now I talk too much. Maybe you’d like me never to say anything.
2. Be nice for a change.
1. Then you’d never have to listen to me, which you never do anyway.
2. If you’d say something instead of jibber jabbering all the time, maybe I’d
 listen. (p. 957)
Mapping such dynamics onto the tautology of temporal enactment suggests the following. For satisfied couples, it seems the use of metacomments—i.e., comments about the ongoing communication itself—is of relatively brief duration. They are passing comments clarifying preferred or actual orientations to what is being said, as shown by the first two comments in the first example above: "You’re interrupting me" and "Sorry, what were you saying?" Both these comments deselect (and thereby decrease the duration) of an intervening concern by the second party, and select for increased attention (and duration) a previously stated concern of the first party—i.e., "I was saying we should take a vacation alone."

The situation appears quite different for dissatisfied couples such as in the second example. By chaining out a series of metacomments, such couples are extending the duration of what are usually short-lived events—e.g., the clarifying micro-episode of the first couple’s use of metacommunication—and thereby investing the metacommments with additional (i.e., longer duration) meaning. The interacting parties are left with needing to extrapolate a context that would make sense of these extended durations. If the content of the comments in the second example is at all representative, it seems they settle on some kind of relational message; namely, that what the other party must be saying with their repeated metacomments is broader than the immediate context of the preceding message, and pertaining instead to a longstanding dissatisfaction with the relationship itself. This has the effect of turning a collaborative episode (e.g., using brief reorienting metacommments to work together toward mutual problem-resolution), into an escalating accusatory episode.

The temporal devices for enacting this (according to my tautology) are as follows. In terms of temporal progression, there are sequences of implied causality for the second party’s interrupting and not listening, attributing blame onto the first party’s talking on and on. This is quite a different locus of responsibility than shown in the first example.
(where the second party acknowledged fault with saying "sorry"), leading to an escalating sequence of negative affect between the two parties of the second example. The interactive sequence is comprised of a series of cross-complaints or counter-assertions, making up competing story lines (i.e., episodic structure), which could be approximated as "you never listen" versus "you jibber jabber all the time."

In terms of temporal duration, there is repetition across time of metacomments used as complaint speech acts, as well as of words such as "never." This kind of global language is an instance of selection--including such phrases as "you never do," "for a change," and "all the time"--which alters the focus of a metacomment off of the immediately preceding comment, and onto multiple comments extended across time. This is shifting to a different logical level of discourse, and thus an instance of framing, by treating the immediate remarks as instances of a larger pattern. In the process the problem between the parties grows in size and duration. It is not simply a problem of dispreferred feedback in the immediate context, but of the other party's whole way of calibrating their responses across multiple contexts.

I believe the increment of understanding that comes with using this additional map for data from Gottman's (1982) study is to notice the extra shift of logical typing that occurs for how dissatisfied couples often use metacommunication. Any metacomment is already a shift of logical type, from speaking within a perspective to speaking about a perspective. Here, however, the stakes are raised even more, by making global metacommments about the other party's whole manner of interacting. The selection, framing, and repetition involved all act to increase the duration of the issues of concern, and thus make it less likely that any subsequent reply will be of sufficient scope to remedy the problem being raised. Instead of serving a brief function of reorienting the discussion so the parties can usefully move on, the metacommuncations in these situations compound the problem and serve to get the parties stuck in it.
Conversational Devices and Principles

The field of conversational analysis in communication studies has generated a couple of tautological maps bearing striking resemblance to the theory of temporal enactment presented in this study. Planalp, Graham, and Paulson (1987) investigated coherent versus incoherent conversational turns, to determine what type of devices carried the information about coherence. Their coding scheme (i.e., their potential map of the territory) included different types of coherence cues (pp. 336-337).

Syntactic cues were grammatical and conditional, such as using pronouns, conjunctions, substitutions, and ellipsis. Pragmatic cues included typical discourse forms, such as question-answer, question-question, and statement-reaction. Lexical cues dealt with relationships of meaning, including the following five instances: repetition, synonyms, antonyms, classification, and co-occurrence. While syntactic and pragmatic cues also appeared in conversational pairs judged to be incoherent, “only lexical devices were found significantly more often in coherent than incoherent pairs” (Planalp, et al., 1987, p. 325). In other words, only the lexical devices provided an effective mapping for the notion of coherence in conversations.

What is impressive is the degree of similarity between such a map and the tautology of the present study. For instance, repetition and co-occurrence appear verbatim in both tautologies, with the device of synonyms forming a variant of the enactment of repetition, by providing functional equivalents. The device of antonyms, with its use of comparisons and contrasts, is similar to what I call deselection in the enactment of selection / deselection. In addition, the hierarchical relationship between class and subclass in the device of classification is akin to the enactment of framing. In other words, four of the six enactments in my tautology appear in the map of coherence offered by Planalp, et al. (1987). What is more, a fifth type of enactment may also be present.
Some of the discourse forms among the pragmatic devices of their coding scheme display a sequential character similar to the enactment of sequence in the present study.

The upshot of this comparison is as follows. The enactments of temporal duration and temporal progression in my tautology are intended as a way of mapping perceived significance in narrative accounts. Planalp and her colleagues have found that similar constructs--especially among lexical devices used in conversations--can differentiate coherent as opposed to incoherent pairs of conversational statements. The close similarity between the two kinds of maps suggests it is worth paying attention to such constructs, to help determine what is important to a given speaker.

One of the classic microanalytic studies of language is the comprehensive discourse analysis of Labov and Fanshel (1977). Building on earlier work by Pittenger, et al. (1960), they articulated “Nine Principles of Conversational Analysis” (cited in Pea & Russell, 1987, pp. 316-317). Among these are several that appear to overlap with types of temporal enactment in my theory.

For instance, one of their principles is that of recurrence, that important information will reoccur over and over again. This is very similar to how repetition is used as an enactment (and indicator of significance, having ongoing duration) in my tautology. Another of their principles is that of contrast, that is, the importance of recognizing what something is not, as well as what it is. This is quite similar to the differential influence of the enactment of selection / deselection in my theory. Another of their principles is that of reinforcement through packaging multiple contributing factors together in any given communication. This bears resemblance to the clustering effect of co-occurrence as an enactment in my theory. They also note a principle of adjustment and continuous recalibration of the conversational flow, operative in communication. This raises the issue of operating on more than one logical level of discourse, which is characteristic of framing as a temporal enactment.
So here again, within the domain of conversational analysis, there is a mapping of interpersonal communication onto a series of conversational principles, presented as a useful explanatory tautology (Labov & Fanshel, 1977). And this particular map overlaps with four key constructs that appear in my tautological mapping of narrative accounts. What is more, they are the same four enactments that appear as lexical devices in the mapping of cohesive conversational devices, offered by Planalp, et al. (1987). Such convergence--i.e., multiple comparison--between the maps devised in three quite different studies argues for some plausibility for the constructs involved.

Schemas and Types of Mental Structure

A slightly different kind of overlap between maps occurs when comparing the present theory with a survey of cognitive structures conducted by Mandler (1984). Here the comparison is not only with the types of enactment, but also with the types of influence, which I presented as buttressing support for my tautology of temporal enactment. In other words, my central map, as well as one of the maps of that map, can be usefully compared with a mapping of mental structures, found in Mandler’s book about story grammars. She outlined the key features of several alternate mental structures, to set off her presentation of story schemas in bolder relief. What is striking is that all six of the enactments with their types of influence appearing in my tautology find counterparts among basic cognitive processes described by her.

Mandler (1984) first took note of “Aristotle’s two associative principles” (p. 5), namely, similarity and contiguity. Both of these are found in the tautology of the present study, as repetition and co-occurrence, respectively. These two types of enactment would seem to be on firm ground in the history of thinking about mental faculties. Mandler discussed serial structure, which has a clear counterpart in the enactment of sequence in my theory. She also discussed segmentation or chunking, which embeds specific instances on hierarchical arms, “allowing more entry points to the structure” (p. 12) than
simply a sequential search from the beginning. This, too, has a clear parallel in the hierarchical influence of framing, as an enactment of temporal duration.

Mandler (1984) also called attention to “the von Restorff effect (von Restorff, 1933), in which any item set off in distinctive ways from the other members of a set will attract attention” (p. 13). This is comparable to the shift of attention and differential influence of selection / deselection as an enactment, to deal with distinctions between items that are not classed as the same. The main focus of Mandler’s book was given over to schematic structures, such as temporal event schemas, spatial scene schemas, and especially recursive story schemas (p. 19). These are clearly parallel to what I call episodic structure in my tautology, with its cyclical processing of recursive patterns of tension and resolution.

There is a final cognitive structure that Mandler (1984) mentioned in passing, which may also be represented in the tautology of temporal enactment in this manuscript. She stated, “When we wish to consider several independent criteria at once, . . . we move to a matrix structure, which is characterized by class-intersection, rather than class-inclusion” (p. 5; see also Broadbent, Cooper, & Broadbent, 1978). It is notable that an important elaboration of the theory of temporal enactment, coming out of the second interview that was analyzed, was the notion of permutations between existing types of enactment. Incorporating this feature of class-intersection clearly extended the potential applicability of the theory, with definite examples of expected permutations being found in the interview transcripts.

In sum, here is another set of overlapping constructs between features of the theory of temporal enactment and notions appearing elsewhere in the communication literature. In Mandler’s (1984) case, the parallel comes from the field of narrative analysis, in particular the subdomain dealing with story grammars. This combines with the examples noted previously, which utilized methodologies of sequential analysis.
(Gottman, 1982) and conversational analysis (Planalp, Graham, & Paulson, 1987), respectively, to derive their tautological maps. Because of the degree of convergence and overlap between all these maps, including that of the present study, greater confidence can be placed in the constructs described in this manuscript, that they might afford potential usefulness in understanding narrative accounts.

Conclusions

I come at last to the fifth of the five “What” questions—both for this chapter and for the entire project—namely, what do we do? Part of the answer is to summarize the terrain I have covered. Part of the answer is to emphasize the limitations of the present endeavor, and to qualify its applicability until others can test out whether the tautology presented here is useful. Another part is to point in the most promising directions for further work.

Reflexive Summary

One way to summarize the theory of temporal enactment, as it has emerged in this study, is to reflexively apply the theory to itself. Reflexivity implies that this theory about narrative accounts is itself an account, subject to the same potential mapping as that to which it was originally applied (see Pollner, 1991). It ought to be able, therefore, to give an accounting of itself. Thus, the generation of the theory becomes an opportunity to assess its instrumental utility as a map, and—to change the image to a metallurgy metaphor—to “assay the interpretations and decisions of researchers” (p. 372) and hopefully burn off some of the dross. This summary thus mines key formulations and decision points from throughout the study, to test their metal, so to speak, with reference to the six enactments of temporality in this theory. In the process, my own engagement in the process is likewise open for appraisal.
Repetitive Mantras

There were a number of predominant concerns for me that kept reappearing, to guide this project from beginning to end. One was an ongoing interest in therapeutic change, in particular, those changes that participants or clients might deem most significant. Another ongoing commitment was to the paradigm of social constructionism --the notion that meanings are co-constructed by speaker and listener (and reader) in and through the process of communication.

There were also several phrases that functioned almost like mantras for me, especially in the early stages of the project as I intuited my way forward. One was the evocative phrase cited in the first chapter (Potter, 1995): “it is turtles all the way down” (p. 753). This phrase kept prodding me to continually challenge whatever I might construct as bedrock presuppositions. That image captured in poetic form my longstanding concern for “layers of context and meaning,” and how the process of contextualization was accomplished. In pursuing this concern, I have kept coming back to Bateson’s writings, especially his warnings about “errors . . . in logical typing” (1979, p. 109). And in trying to avoid such errors, the cybernetic insight to “include time in the equations” has kept resonating with me. In the context of this study, the latter point has distilled into the pervasive belief that “time matters.” As an aside, it is important to acknowledge that the concept of time is itself a social construction (Hall, 1984; McGrath & Kelly, 1986), which in Western culture may have developed as a way to create meaning from prior instances of “now” and anticipate future ones. In any event, these are some of the enduring repetitive themes, which have shaped this project.

Co-Occurring Descriptions

I have long viewed myself as an integrative thinker, which has found expression in drawing from diverse theoretical and methodological approaches. Relevant literatures for this study--co-existing in parallel to inform its design and relevance--include those of
mediation, psychotherapy, and communication. A formative expression of co-occurrence has been the use of triangulation and constant comparison, or as Bateson (1979) called it, the method of "double description" (p. 212). A prime way this was carried out was to use qualitative, narrative methods at a local level of discourse, in combination with quantitative, temporal and lag analytic procedures drawn from a macro level of discourse. The methodology of this study included numerous other forms of double description as well (see Table 1).

An example of co-occurrence in the results of the study was to notice and make use of the notion of permutation, which by definition meant the intersection of existing enactments in the theory. Indeed, co-occurrence even exemplified itself, with its parallel and mutual contextualization, an enactment that arose as a deviant exemplar from the hierarchical form of contextualization characteristic of framing.

Selected Decision Points

Selection, as a way of extending the duration of certain research decisions, arose at numerous points in the study. An early instance was to select mediation as a familiar and delimited communicational domain to investigate. Similarly, a number of concepts drawn from the field of communication studies were gathered along the way, and utilized particularly in the narrative analysis portions of the study. A pivotal decision came out of the realization that the specific meanings of any given mediation participant would not necessarily generalize to anyone else. Therefore, a deliberate decision was made to investigate meaning-making itself, and see if any "pattern which connects" (Bateson, 1979, p. 68) would emerge.

Methodological selections included the choice of units of analysis, which primarily took the form of episodes, repetitive themes, thematic clusters, and instances of contextual framing. The implications of my social constructionist choice of paradigm gave rise to a non-apologetic admission of researcher as co-constructor, which led to
many substantive effects on which meanings were selected to endure among the results of the study. There was certainly an important selection of initial hypotheses, which helped to shape the direction of the study. This was matched with selections of provisional and enduring categories in the theory-generation stage, which certainly shaped the outcome of the study. Examples of this included the particular temporal devices (or enactments), which found their way into the final theory as it now stands.

**Strategic Deselection**

Deselection is really the flipside of selection as an enactment, but it is worth noting particular instances that had formative effects on the study’s design and outcome. An early example of deselection was to not use the assumptions of a positivist/ objectivist paradigm, as I thought they were poorly suited to an investigation of meaning-making. That made possible an instance of deselection that emerged later, namely, rejecting the necessity of numerous cases in the design, in favor of the intensive analysis of a few case studies. Certain promising methods from the communication literature had to be deselected, specifically, speech act analysis (e.g., the “Verbal Response Modes” of Stiles, 1987) due to unavailability of the requisite data, and Coordinated Management of Meaning analysis (e.g., Pearce & Cronen, 1980) due to using self-report narratives rather than interactive data in the study.

Inherent in grounded theory studies is a recursive form of deselection, as previous categories are repeatedly fractured into new groupings, in the search for more robust categories and linkages. A key shift of this sort was the move away from the specific content categories of a given interview—i.e., the particular themes and clusters—and toward generating process categories about how the narrative was being enacted. With each interview in the manuscript, this shift was quite palpable—almost as a figure-ground reversal—as the quotations and thick description from the transcript gave way to summarization and generating abstract categories dealing with temporality. A more
limited instance of deselection was the inadequacy of Hypothesis 2—that increased duration means increased significance—as an enduring frame for construing the results. The relationship between duration and significance did not seem to be unidirectional, in that longer duration simply meant more significant. Rather, the deselection of a previously adequate meaning could be highly significant indeed, leading to important changes. Here, deselection itself formed part of the evidence against Hypothesis 2, which was then reflexively subjected to the very process of deselection it helped to uncover.

Sequential Order

A few examples should suffice to demonstrate the working of sequence in this study. The concept is quite straightforward and self-evident, in my opinion. The manuscript itself had to be ordered in some kind of sequence, since not everything could be presented simultaneously. Sequence would thus seem to be one way of addressing limitations of bandwidth. The overall sequence of chapters has followed the order suggested by the American Psychological Association, in presenting research studies. Another, more idiosyncratic use of sequence was also utilized, however. It was frequently the case that the order of presentation within chapters followed that of the five “What” questions, generated by Antes, et al. (1999). This occasionally led to certain issues being addressed out-of-turn from more conventional presentations. However, the five “Whats,” I believe, have provided a logical and consistent progression of ideas, for whatever field of view they were invoked.

Hierarchical Frame-Works

Instances of framing consisted of hierarchical distinctions among various potential layers of context. One example could have been an instance of sequence, but I believe it more properly exemplified framing. At the core of this study was one of the notions emphasized by Bateson (1972), namely, the distinction between a territory and a map. When considered from the perspective of encoding a representation, the distinction
could be viewed as a sequential move from a descriptive territory to a tautological map, with the proviso that a map is not the same as a territory. However, once in place, a map can easily become a prime (and hard to dislodge) context for understanding a territory.

Indeed, one of the prime outcomes of this study has been the emergence of a set of tautological maps dealing with temporality, and meant to help navigate narrative accounts and perceived significance. These were instances of contextual framing, intended to have some kind of enduring influence and instrumental utility to the reader. Construction of such frame-works for adding increments of understanding to the process of meaning-making was a clear (although far from guaranteed) goal of the study. My hope has been that these frame-works may at least be useful external scaffolding, if not an actual internal support structure—somewhat like the unseen ironworks inside the Statue of Liberty?—for reconstructing meaning-making as an endeavor.

Another central example of contextual framing in the results of this study was the delineation of categories and sub-categories of temporality, through the method of axial coding (see Table 9). This specified enactments, conditions, environs, consequences, and exemplars, for each of the two prime categories of temporal duration and temporal progression. A further example of framing by hierarchical class-inclusion was the process of incorporating permutations into the developing theory, together with representative exemplars from the interviews, instead of treating such instances as separate types of temporal enactment. The prediction of additional types of permutation, which were subsequently found in the initial transcript, was an instance of generating a class at one logical level, and filling it with specific instantiations at another logical level of discourse.

Episodic Story Lines

The last type of enactment to be summarized here, and applied reflexively as a map to the very process that generated it, is that of episodic structure. In a certain sense,
the five “What” questions functioned like a predictable and recurring story plot--i.e.,
What are we doing here? What is this about? What is important to self? What is
important to other? What do we do?--regardless of the scale of the particular episode. In
other words, these questions were used like plot conventions, to tell the story of the entire
project, the literature review, the methodology, and the substantive results and
implications.

This would suggest that it could be valid to view everything as embedded in story.
Everyone has her or his own answers to the five “What” questions, because each person
operates from his or her own history and own points of view. This would include the
reader, and it certainly includes the researcher. In some ways, the project can be seen as
replaying and revising stories from my own history. A couple of examples should suffice.

The origin of the five “What” questions themselves was from a research project in
which I participated as co-author (Antes, et al., 1999), dealing with building a new
training model for mediation. Those questions have taken on new life by becoming
embedded in a new story, that of this dissertation project, in a variety of recursive part-
whole formats. Another story from my history that has been living itself out through this
project was a reengagement with Gregory Bateson. I have long viewed him as an
intellectual mentor, and I have been pleased to hear his voice appearing in formative
ways in the story of this manuscript.

Limitations and Future Directions

Possible Confounding Effects of Methodology

There were several ways that the methodology of the study could have
confounded the results. One potential avenue was by the structured nature of the
interview. A structured interview, by definition and design, asks certain questions in a
certain order. And the possibility was thereby raised that the order might have imposed a
temporal ordering on the data. The order of my interview format was as follows:
background questions, global assessments, localizing where and how changes occurred, comparing across settings, and wind-down opportunities (see Table 11 in the Appendix). Essentially, the order of my questions was from the more global to the more specific.

That in itself did not convey a temporal logic, although it must be said that the first two substantive questions of the interview did employ such a logic. Both Question 1 (starting with “Before the mediation began...”) and Question 2 (starting with “By the end of the mediation sessions...”) were about the progression of events, and thus introduced a before-and-after preparatory set in asking about change (see Table 11 below). However, it is not obvious to me why such a limited version of temporal logic should inevitably lead to such a rich texturing of temporal devices, including selected and deselected themes, different logical levels of context, and utilizing an episodic structure, in responding to not just these two but all of the questions.

Another potential avenue by which the methodology might have confounded the results was the impact of the very notion of change itself. Questions about “change” are implicitly temporal, just as questions about “movement” are implicitly spatial. So one possible challenge to the results of this study was that temporality may be present in the results because change was present in the eliciting questions. This is a fair critique to raise, but the issue is far from self-evident.

For one thing, in most instances questions about “change” did not evoke answers about “time.” With interview SI01, for example, only six out of seventeen in vivo codes arguably contained an explicit reference to time (see Table 2). Two codes spoke of something that was “still” the case, another spoke of what “could be” the case, while a fourth referred to something that had “already” happened. A fifth code may have used a temporally-shaped idiom with the image of “follow through,” while a sixth code raised a metacomment about the “original question” of the interviewer. These were not strong
indications that time was much on the mind of this participant, in terms of the content of her answers.

The case was even stronger with regard to interview SI02. There, only two out of seventeen in vivo codes contained a temporal referent (see Table 5). One spoke of the need to “complete” the mediation agreement on their own, while a variant of another code raised a “time constraint” for making it legal. Here again, temporality was not the main issue of concern, despite the interview questions asking about different aspects of change.

Nor was the theory that emerged from these interviews about temporal changes occurring for the parties. It was about meaning-making being enacted through temporal devices, whether changes occurred for them or not. Temporality was simply the vehicle, regardless of what specific content was being carried in the passenger compartment (to continue the metaphor). The project began by asking about the so-called passengers—that is, what specific change events occurred. But it ended up examining the vehicle itself (i.e., the temporal devices), used to encode the parties’ meanings.

Temporality was simply how they shaped their accounts. They selected themes, contextualized them, repeated them, grouped them with other themes, arranged them in order, and wove them into stories. I merely tried to specify the dynamics of such temporal devices. Similar tasks would presumably be involved—although it would be up to theoretical sampling to investigate this—whether the topic of conversation were art appreciation (consider “Sister Wendy” on PBS television), how to garden (consider presentations such as Raymond’s, 1982, Joy of Gardening), or changes coming from mediation (as in this study). There was no necessary connection, in my mind, between asking about change and having temporality be, not just the content, but the very form of the reply. The reason for this, I believe, was because form and content operated at distinct
logical levels of discourse, and the shape of the one did not necessarily dictate the shape of the other.

The more specific challenge was whether the notion of change inevitably implied a certain type of temporality, namely, that of progression. In asking about change arising from mediation sessions, I was essentially using questions to frame and operationalize Bateson’s (1972) notion of a difference that makes a difference. “Difference” was being used in two senses here, which could be called D1 and D2, respectively. The issue was twofold: what differences occurred? (i.e., D1 difference), and what difference did that make? (i.e., D2 difference). Granted, there was some before-and-after quality to the initial difference (D1) that Bateson noted. It could be argued, however, that such before-and-after contrasts might register essentially together, as an attentional event called a difference. It did not necessarily imply an extended progressive sequence, nor any kind of drawn-out episodic structure.

The more crucial part of Bateson’s formulation was that the event “make a difference.” By itself, this need not imply that the difference (D2) be one of temporal progression for the parties. However, it could well have given rise to a progressive account—whether sequential or episodic—as the parties tried to elaborate and convey the import of the difference (D2) that was made. I was certainly surprised by the predominant ‘storiness’ of the interviews. In responding to the questions about significant change, the parties provided not just answers but stories. And my construction and/or realization of that fact made a pivotal impact on the type of analysis I subsequently employed, and probably on the shape of some of the final categories.

Here is where the “experiential data” (Strauss, 1987, p. 29) of the researcher’s literature review may have had equal weight with the specific research data of these interviews. Once “narrative” became one of the key lenses for viewing the data, then certain temporal aspects became candidates for additional focus and elaboration. Ewick
and Silbey's (1995) definition of narrative, cited earlier, proposed some of the likely contenders: “selective appropriation of past events . . . temporally ordered . . . often in the context of an opposition or struggle” (p. 200). The broader question was whether such influences arose from the participants casting their answers as genuine narratives, or from the researcher employing that filter for making sense of their accounts. Here the most fitting answer is simply, “yes,” in the same way as a social constructionist approach to reality gives full and unapologetic weight to a joint co-creation of meaning.

There were other ways that the choice of analytical methods may have influenced the eventual shape of the theory that emerged. Grounded theory analysis included a procedure known as axial coding, part of which was specifying the conditions and consequences for enactments of given categories. Consequences are clearly thought of as subsequent effects, while conditions can imply the preexisting state of affairs. These clearly had a temporal component to them, although I believe that the term conditions can also refer to defining features, whether those actually existed prior to the enactment or not.

It was also the case that I employed two forms of data reduction that I admittedly grouped together as “temporal analyses.” One was a temporal analysis (through frequency and distribution information) of repetitive themes. The other was a lag analysis of thematic clusters. It is not surprising that examining repetitive themes should disclose the use of repetition. Yet, such repetitions of phrases and themes can also be clearly seen in the interview data itself. So, was repetition: a function of the participant’s usage or the researcher’s method? Here again the answer is simply, “yes,” through the co-construction of common frames of meaning.

With regard to lag analysis, this procedure for measuring thematic clusters made use of sequence in defining the co-occurring events. The way that clusters of themes were detected (i.e., constructed) was by noting which lag codes reliably followed which
criterion codes, within a window of five subsequent lag places. Thus, sequential progression was in a sense built into the very measurement process itself. The impact of this conclusion is mitigated somewhat by noting that the progression did not have to occur in only one direction. For instance, combinations were examined with each code in turn serving as the criterion. And when reciprocal combinations of two codes (e.g., Bg and Gb in interview SI02) both occurred with greater than expected probability, statistically speaking, the reliability of that co-occurrence was increased, but its sequential nature actually decreased. That is to say, in such a case, there was mutual proximity, regardless of the order of occurrence of the two codes.

What was more interesting from a grounded theory perspective was that co-occurrence did not automatically become part of the theory of temporal enactment initially formulated in this study (following the analysis of interview SI01). Despite being one of the main forms of analysis employed, co-occurrence, as a distinct form of temporal enactment, had to "earn" its way (Glaser, cited in Strauss, 1987, p.32) back into the theory. It was only as interview SI02 helped to distinguish co-occurrence from framing (with its hierarchical form of contextualization), and from selection (with its distinctive shifts of attention), that co-occurrence was considered a type of temporality in its own right.

Another issue of potential concern was whether the order in which the two cases were examined had an impact on the theory that eventually emerged. This is a difficult question to address, because it was not possible to undo the analysis and take it down a different trajectory. It was certainly the case that the methods of this study employed a great deal of recursive and reiterative analysis, so that what emerged from one interview was cross-checked with what emerged from the other. But one cannot go backwards and discount all influences from prior constructions. Time matters. And that was as true for the researcher as it was for the participants. What can be said is that taking up the
interviews in a different order would have led to a somewhat different “story line” for the research project itself. Whether it would have led to dramatically different ending points cannot be ascertained.

It is important to emphasize, however, that qualitative inquiry does not insist on this kind of equifinality, in that all paths must end up at the same place. As I understand qualitative inquiry, it is enough if it can uncover equipotentiality, in the sense that many different paths through the data can still come up with “useful” ways to cast the results. The researcher (without apology) is a prime instrument of analysis, in a qualitative study, not detached and insulated from the materials being examined. Social constructionism legitimately gives place to the co-construction of meaning, so that it belongs neither to the participant nor to the researcher in any exclusive sense. Indeed, the reader is another co-constructor, and thus each person who examines the study may differentially weigh the criterion of usefulness.

For all of these reasons, the actual notion of “confounding” effects must itself be challenged, or at least deconstructed. It is a notion imported from a different paradigm, the “Newtonian discourse” (Cobb, 1991, p. 90) of the positivist tradition. As such, it is an artificial distinction, foreign to the premises of a social constructionist inquiry. Influences cannot be neatly separated out in that way. Methodology affects what is seen, inevitably and by definition. That is why certain methods are chosen in the first place, and why it is important to choose multiple methods to get triangulated views on the data. Are certain views more “true” than others? The social constructionist paradigm answers, “No, only more (or less) useful.”

Directions for Future Study

I believe the Reflexive Summary section above, which applies the tautological results of the study to the very generation of the tautology itself, begins to demonstrate the potential usefulness of having this kind of tautological map. An unfinished project is
to designate the descriptive territories, for which this kind of mapping might be appropriate. A beginning would be to look at more narrative accounts of mediation. The untapped structured interviews, gathered, transcribed, and initially analyzed for this study, form one potential data set for that purpose. Another would be the Interpersonal Process Recall interviews—likewise transcribed and initially analyzed for this study. This latter collection of data, because it was gathered under more immediate conditions of remembrance and proximity to the mediations sessions, could even be considered a form of “theoretical sampling” (Strauss, 1984, p. 34), to expand the variability and applicability of these grounded theory categories.

With any of these additional data, the possibility of revising (i.e., deselecting and replacing) categories and linkages within the theory would and should arise. While the interviews of the current study arguably included over sixty episodes and incidents for enacting meaning, it remains true that they only came from two participants. Even though the unit of analysis was not the subject, per se, the categories should definitely be challenged with fresh data from other participants. The aim would be to actively search for variation, in order to render whatever categories eventually emerge from the process conceptually dense. A further aim would be to reveal gaps in the theory, leading to deselection, fracturing, reconstruction, and verification of more robust categories.

Once a certain measure of saturation of the theory has occurred with mediation data, the realm should be expanded to include accounts of significant meaning-making within psychotherapy and other therapeutic settings. These would be other sources of theoretical sampling. This kind of iterative process of data gathering and theory generation/revision should continue until “nothing new is happening” (Strauss, 1984, p. 27).

Another unfinished project—of necessity—is the assessment of “coherence, consensus, and instrumental utility” (Gale, 1993, p. 83) by the reader. Coherence is the
degree to which the resulting theory rings true. Consensus is whether readers or other investigators believe the findings are consistent with the evidence reported in the study, and consistent with their own experience in their own domains. Instrumental utility is how useful this tautological map is. Usefulness can be assessed along several scales: “it can help us understand a situation better, find new directions to explore, and anticipate possible new situations” (p. 83). I encourage the reader to test out the value of this study in any or all of these ways.

I believe one of the more promising linkages of this theory for future examination is the mapping between therapeutic shifts (as the descriptive territory) and changes in temporal duration of the associated meanings (as the tautological map). I believe Hypothesis 1 was essentially borne out by this study—that it seems useful to rank meanings according to their time durations, with longer duration meanings lying deeper in a hierarchy of logical types. Nonetheless, it appears, from the offshoots of Hypothesis 2, that therapeutically significant changes can be related to (a) increases or decreases in the relative durations themselves, and/or (b) shifts in logical typing.

Another promising venue, I believe, is to investigate more fully the role of deselection, in bringing about therapeutic change. The key variable to examine, I believe, is not so much what to deselect or how much, but when to deselect. Deselection (on whatever scale it operates) may have the potential to connect with the great evolutionary engine of charge, by conferring selective advantage (however slight) on whatever is left. Thus, the key (therapeutically) may simply be to get it underway; errors in choosing what to deselect can be cleaned up—or even reversed—by further acts of deselection. That, at least, would be one prediction of this tautology.

The main contribution that I believe this manuscript can make to the study of meaning-making is the simple observation that time matters. Time is crucial for delineating differences of logical type. It is pivotal for incorporating the benefits of
cybernetic thinking, with its analysis of circular causation, into the mainstream of psychological thought. And as this study starts to suggest, it may be instrumental in how perceived significance and meaning is enacted and co-constructed. Perhaps it is turtles of temporality all the way down.
Table 11.
Questions and Format for Structured Interview Session.

Coded number for transcript: _______

BACKGROUND / DEMOGRAPHIC INFORMATION
Age:  Sex:  Ethnicity:  
How many mediation sessions did you have?
What were the approximate dates?
What was your relationship to the other party?
What was your primary reason for coming to mediation?

INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

[Optional Prompt 1:] These first few questions are sort of your
global impressions, and then I'll be following them up with more
specific questions as we go along.

1) Before the mediation began, what were your hopes and expectations
for change?

2) By the end of the mediation sessions, what changes had occurred due
to the mediation?

[Optional Prompt 2:] Now before we continue, I'd like you to
just take a moment to imagine yourself back in the mediation
sessions, and remember what was going on for you then.

3) What part of the mediation process made a particular difference to you?

4) What changes occurred in your interaction with the other party because
of the mediation?

5) What changes occurred in your thinking because of the mediation?
Table 11 cont.

6) If you are able to say, what changes seemed to occur for the other party because of the mediation?
   (e.g., changes in what the other party said or did)

7) Speaking of these changes in thinking and interacting, can you identify how those changes came about?
   [Follow-up probes encouraged]

SUPPLEMENTAL / CONCLUDING QUESTIONS

8) How was the mediation process different from how you were discussing and trying to resolve problems by yourselves?

9) [If applicable] How was the mediation process different from working with attorneys and the courts?

10) If you had to identify why mediation worked or did not work for you, what would you say?

11) What other reflections would you add about what changed or did not change as a result of mediation?
INSTRUCTIONS

[please read aloud to participant]

This is the tape of your recent mediation session. As we watch the video together, I’ll ask you to stop the tape (by pressing the pause button) at any point where there was a significant change for you, or anything that was of special significance to you. You can include anything that you might call a “significant change event.”

Describe what was going on for you beforehand, what the change was, and what the effect of it was on you.

You may find numerous things or you may find virtually nothing, so feel free to stop the tape as often or as seldom as you like. Each time you stop I’ll simply mention aloud the position on the counter, and ask you to describe what was going on for you at that point in the mediation session.

Try to stick with your impressions and experiences at the time, as best you remember them, rather than any new realizations you’re just making now. Are there any questions about the procedure?
REFERENCES


Kressel, et al. (1994). The settlement-orientation vs. the problem-solving style in custody mediation. *Journal of Social Issues, 50*(1), 67-84. (Special Issue: Constructive conflict management: An answer to critical social problems?).


