

Contents

Copyright © 1997 by Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, Inc.
All rights reserved. No part of this book may be reproduced in any form, by photostat, microform, retrieval system, or any other means, without the prior permission of the publisher.

Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, Inc., Publishers
10 Industrial Avenue
Mahwah, New Jersey 07430

Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data

Narrative development : Six Approaches / edited by Michael Bamberg.
p. cm.
Includes bibliographical references and index.
ISBN 0-8058-2057-4 (cloth : alk. paper). —
ISBN 0-8058-2058-2 (pbk : alk. paper)
1. Language acquisition. 2. Discourse analysis, Narrative. I. Bamberg, Michael G. W., 1947–
P118.N368 1997
401'.93—dc21 97-2352
CIP

Books published by Lawrence Erlbaum Associates are printed on acid-free paper, and their bindings are chosen for strength and durability.

Printed in the United States of America
10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2 1

Introduction <i>Michael Bamberg</i>	vii
Introduction to Chapter 1 <i>Michael Bamberg</i>	1
1 Building Complexity and Coherence: Children's Use of Goal-Structured Knowledge in Telling Stories <i>Nancy L. Stein and Elizabeth R. Albro</i>	5
Introduction to Chapter 2 <i>Michael Bamberg</i>	45
2 An Interactive Approach to Narrative Development <i>Uta M. Quasthoff</i>	51
Introduction to Chapter 3 <i>Michael Bamberg</i>	85
3 A Constructivist Approach to Narrative Development <i>Michael Bamberg</i>	89

Introduction to Chapter 4 <i>Michael Bamberg</i>	133
4 Developmental and Cross-Cultural Aspects of Children's Narration <i>Allyssa McCabe</i>	137
Introduction to Chapter 5 <i>Michael Bamberg</i>	175
5 Children and Narratives: Toward an Interpretive and Sociocultural Approach <i>Ageliki Nicolopoulou</i>	179
Introduction to Chapter 6 <i>Michael Bamberg</i>	217
6 Self-Narrative in the Life Course: A Contextual Approach <i>Hubert J.M. Hermans</i>	223
Author Index	265
Subject Index	271

INTRODUCTION

Research publications are usually judged on the basis of their findings or results. The process that leads to the findings—to those, at least, who have sufficient training and share the background assumptions—is revealed in the methods that are described. However, to those who do not share the same presuppositions, the Method section does not necessarily contribute to a better understanding; rather, it is perceived as hiding more than it reveals. In the introductory sections of research publications, space limitations often allow authors only to touch on the relevant literature and state where and how they deviate from it, leaving the wider audience or readership to look up those references to see how the original assumptions that led to this research were formulated. In brief, authors rarely have the opportunity to spell out the basic assumptions that led them to do what they are doing, and readers find themselves too often and too quickly pulled into an approach or into a set of theoretical assumptions that is hard to question because it is not spelled out. Still worse, authors themselves have become so absorbed by the genre of research reporting that even they are no longer aware of why they are doing whatever it is that they are doing.

In order to break out of this potentially hampering treadmill, a number of the contributors to this volume met in the format of a symposium at the International Society of the Study of Behavioural Development meetings in 1991 in Minneapolis to present and discuss the basic assumptions that led us to do research in the domain of “narrative development.” We were all aware that we were working in different frameworks, but our respect for each other, as well as our shared goal of finding out how children learn to tell stories and how these stories change over the life

course, spurred enough interest that we all followed through with an experiment in communication between these different frameworks and disciplines. We hoped that the 20-minute presentation format of the symposium in 1991 would provide a platform for going back home, reconsidering our basic assumptions, and then reconnecting them in more detail to our previous and ongoing projects, as well as to our future research plans. The aim was to collect these research reflections in a collection of chapters to give a wider readership insights regarding the varying assumptions of different approaches to narrative and its development. In addition, and probably more important, the methodologies were chosen and the findings were reported with a goal beyond their being shared with an audience or readership. Rather, we have tried to ground each approach and highlight the motives for each. Thus, the research reported in the following chapters spells out some of the basic motivating assumptions of each approach and provides insight into what holds each set of assumptions together, potentially transforming them into actions.

The questions that functioned as formatting devices to give shape to our original symposium contributions in Minneapolis turned out to be very good guiding principles, at least for most of us, to motivate a reconsideration of the approaches we had adopted. Speaking for myself, being forced to spell out some of the more basic assumptions that have guided my research (i.e., viewing more closely both the enabling potential of my own approach and its constraints and limitations) made me much more cautious in my concluding remarks. To better understand what the authors of the subsequent chapters were struggling with, the *hexad* of six original questions is briefly described here (for further details as to how the hexad originated and how it has been used as a key to unlock other developmental approaches, see Bamberg, Ammirati, & Shea, 1995; Bamberg & Budwig, 1989; Bamberg, Budwig, & Kaplan, 1991; Budwig, 1993, 1995).

Specification of the Domain. Any developmental investigation should specify the domain to be investigated. It was clear that in our joint enterprise this was "narrative." However, narratives take different shapes, and they can be defined in terms of textual structures, knowledge thereof, interactive moves, sociocultural conventions, and the like. None of these definitions encompasses all aspects of narrative, whereas each of them, in one way or another, enables the investigator to ask specific questions and then follow up on the questions in terms of an empirical investigation. Simultaneously, all these definitions constrain the domain and, in one way or another, reduce it to what one considers relevant. In this sense, then, the specification of the domain builds on values and preferences that are extremely difficult to spell out. Thus, we did not expect every contributor to be able to lay out and justify this relationship. Just becoming sensitive to the inherent relationships seemed to be a good enough starting point.

The Individual's Involvement in the Developmental Process. Any developmental investigation brings to its domain assumptions about the *organism* or *person* who is involved in whatever it is that develops. Simultaneously, there are assumptions about the organism's or person's involvement in the developmental process. For instance, the person/organism can be viewed as being actively involved or as simply reacting to forces, depending to a large degree on what he/she/it brings to the process of development. Social learning, maturation, constructionism, and contextualism are common metaphors that reflect ways of construing the relationship between some internal or external forces and the organism's active participation in the developmental process.

The Course of Development. Three of the more salient issues here are questions about whether the course of development is continuous or discontinuous; whether it proceeds in an additive fashion or whether there are regressive phases; and most importantly what the changes at different points in the developmental process signify. Even the assignment of "stage" or "phase" to a particular performance type carries assumptions about the developmental course that might require further specifications. The lining up of a series of continuities and discontinuities over a particular period of time requires not only justifications as to why this particular time period was chosen but simultaneously where and how the seriation in terms of a course originated and to what it is oriented.

The Goal of Development. Assigning the notion of a "course" to changes over time requires some notion of where development is ultimately headed. In other words, any notion of development and course of development carries with it an implicit notion of a *telos*, a target or endpoint. Any attempt to remain purely descriptive and "just" to describe changes is bound to borrow its descriptive terms from a framework. Changes are given order from an implicit notion of an end state, and whatever is considered to be the end state is highly charged due to the implicit value dimension in terms of what is good and ideal. A theory or framework that tries to remain neutral with regard to these value dimensions carries the extra burden of justifying how this neutrality can be attained.

Mechanisms of Development. Considering which forces or conditions instigate the developmental process and keep it moving toward its *telos* relates closely to the assumptions that go into the notion of the organism or person. These forces or conditions are often referred to as mechanisms of development. The assumption of development as a maturational process, for instance, builds on a biological base that is built into the organism, whereas the more active notions of knowledge builders or hypothesis

testers must rely on already-developed cognitive capacities. Another way to view the mechanisms that produce changes over time in a particular orientation or shape is in terms of particular social interactions or interaction formats. Whether the same mechanisms operate continuously with the same force or whether a variety of mechanisms function at different times and places and influence developmental changes differently is another matter that needs clarification.

Methodology. This is probably what needs to be given the most space and consideration in the establishment of a developmental framework: where and how to look. What can count as data that can speak to the questions asked by the investigation? How can these data be identified and analyzed? What is the role of the investigator in this process? It was in relation to the issue of methodology that most of the symposium participants realized the impact of different frameworks and the possibility that a different language might be required for them to break free from the fetters of their routines and rituals.

Taking the concern about methodological issues as a starting point, let me use two aspects to illustrate how choices in methods are as indicative of other underlying assumptions. First, I briefly consider how different so-called data elicitation techniques are not *just* innocent tools but warrant consequences for other dimensions considered in the hexad. Thereafter, I address the issue of transcribing verbal data, yet another seemingly innocent tool that turns out to be highly indicative with regard to the position taken in the business of approaching narrative and narrative development.

In the strict sense, each contribution to this volume relies on data resulting from the same elicitation technique. All narrators, children and adults, were asked to share a story. Stein and Albro (chap. 1) asked children to complete story stems, Quasthof (chap. 2) asked them to report what had happened during a staged incident, Bamberg (chap. 3) asked the children to tell the same kind of event sequences from different perspectives, McCabe (chap. 4) asked them to tell what once happened to them, and in Nicolopoulou's contribution (chap. 5), they were asked to dictate a story to an adult and then to act it out with their peers. Finally, Hermans (chap. 6), asked adults to share events they considered important in their life and then confronted them with their own valuations of these events. Thus, none of the contributors might want to claim that the interview responses from children or adults that formed the database were totally spontaneous, naturalistic, or even authentic. Interviews are never neutral tools. Rather, they produce situated understandings of interactions. However, in terms of what counts as good data, the different contributions to this volume reflect different stances on how such interviews are to be conducted, by whom, in what kinds of (social) situations,

and how such data may have to be supplemented with other forms of data or observational tools.

When it comes to transforming the narratives that were collected either from children or from adults, any researcher faces a choice between two basic but distinct ways of dealing with this transformation process. The realistic way to treat verbal data hopes to preserve in the transcript parts of what really happened, not only what was said but also—to a degree—how it was said. The criterion, then, for what is a good transcript lies in which aspects of what was said and how it was said are considered relevant for what will be analyzed and for that purpose need to be preserved. Other components of the data are reduced to the background in this transformation process so that only the relevant aspects can stand out and become scrutinized in full detail.

A second, rather different way to deal with the process of transcribing verbal data is to take the transformation process more literally. In this approach, we are less interested in preserving than in changing the data into a format that creates (potentially) new insights. Thus, it is not the data themselves, nor our analysis of what the data seem to reveal, but the act of transforming the data, taking them out of the realm of the immediate and familiar into the realm of the unfamiliar and strange. Just as the techniques of slowing motions down or speeding them up allow us to transcend our usual and familiar images when viewing running pictures, different techniques of transcribing verbal data enable us to ask new questions and discover new facts.

Although none of the authors of the six chapters explicitly choose between these two options, the transcription format and the use of particular units that were analyzed indicate an orientation with regard to what narratives are, what they reveal, or how they are made—mentally, interactively, and developmentally. Privileging intonation units, clauses, or interactive moves as basic and therefore as central units for the production and analysis of narratives is equally indicative with regard to the approach to narrative and narrative development as the choice of elicitation technique, to name just two components of traditional methods.

In summary, asking the contributors of the original symposium to reflect on these six concerns was basically a request that each contributor present a coherent narrative that would bring the six concerns to bear onto his or her own interest and involvement in narrative development and present the data or findings as corollary. It was not a request for the contributors to tell a personal narrative of how they "made it" in the world of academia and what their research means to them personally, though at times individuals' reflections brought them close to this genre. In those situations, however, we quickly found refuge in the more detached genre of research reports, the very thing we all thought we needed to overcome.

Thus, the following chapters are *attempts* to present, as coherently as possible, six different approaches to narrative development and to spell

out as many basic assumptions as possible. All six contributions were very successful insofar as they helped each writer to find a new degree of clarity for himself or herself. They were also successful because they helped us to understand each other better, thereby gaining more respect for one another's works. However, all chapters remain attempts, inasmuch as we tried to adopt a more detached perspective with regard to "truths" that we always took for granted. In such attempts, one can only go so far.

The contributions to this volume approach narrative development from six different angles: cognitive (chap. 1), interactionist (chap. 2), linguistic/constructivist (chap. 3), crosslinguistic (chap. 4), sociocultural/interpretive (chap. 5), and life-span (chap. 6). Certainly, there are many other ways that approaches to narrative development could be differentiated, perhaps as many as there are individuals who claim that their research falls within the domain with this label. However, the six presented in this volume sample the research traditions widely and have extracted individual aspects that are claimed to be central to the topics of narrative and development.

Stein and Albro focus their investigations on children's knowledge of what is basic to stories and storytelling: goal-directed actions. For Quasthoff, cognitive representations of stories or story structures, and how these are linguistically linearized, are a product of interactive parameters; the domain of empirical analysis shifts from what tellers know to what they do in conversations. In chapter 3 I take the actual wording of what narrators say as the starting point for my investigations, taking no clear stance with regard to the controversy between narrative-as-knowledge and narrative-as-interactive moves. In her chapter, McCabe starts from the premise of narrative structure, which to her is a construct that is less cognitive and more language-specific. This starting point enables her to employ multiple systems of analysis and to apply these successfully to a variety of narrative structures that differ according to the parameters of normal versus atypical development, parental influence, gender, and culture. Nicolopoulou's contribution proposes a more interpretive (hermeneutic) and sociocultural approach to narrative. In her analyses of children's play activities, she underscores what is common to play and narrative as symbolic activities. Thus, her contribution presents an attempt to integrate the controversies over knowledge, language, action, and interaction as the centers of gravity for analysis. Finally, with Hermans' chapter, one is reminded of the fact that narratives (and possibly also narrative knowledge, structures, and interaction formats) do not stagnate at a certain age but are constantly changing. His focus is on how selves (or multiple selves) orchestrate narratives to contextualize the self and others in changing times and places.

The contributors were encouraged to bring in any of their previously held assumptions and any of their previous works that might be relevant for a broader and better understanding of their current positions. Obvi-

ously, this resulted in a rather large list of references to their own published and not-yet-published books and articles. However, for the purpose of a critical self-presentation and self-evaluation, these seemed to be justified. Further, the contributors were encouraged to display their narrative material. All too often, the inclusion of actual narrative data is limited due to space considerations. We wanted to provide space here for the authors' as well as for the subjects' voices because only in concert are they recognizable as engaged and authentic. This resulted in chapters that are more voluminous than usual journal articles. Again, this was one of our purposes in writing the chapters and collecting them for this volume. In addition, although our main interest was to bring together these approaches to enable better differentiations between them, there is a good degree of overlap. However, these overlaps were not taken to represent tendencies toward some overarching integrative telos. Rather, they were stated at times but generally they remained in the background. With this, I hope that the current volume enlarges the scope of theorizing in narrative development and contributes to a better understanding of the enabling powers of the approaches presented, helping us to focus with more clarity on our constraints and shortcomings.

In order to assist the reader to move between the general questions laid out in the hexad and each author's chapter, I have written an introduction to each individual chapter. These are not meant to critically summarize and evaluate the authors' assumptions. Rather, they are attempts to apply the hexad to each individual contribution in a more systematic fashion, from a sympathetic but somewhat detached position. For this purpose I pulled out the relevant passages from the texts and engaged each of the authors (including myself) in a dialogue regarding the six issues stated in the hexad. The outcomes of these dialogues resulted in the six individual introductory remarks. They are meant to reestablish for the reader, at the juncture of each chapter, the vantage point from which one can begin to compare the six approaches. It should go without saying that these introductory remarks still bear on my interpretive abilities and restrictions.

REFERENCES

- Bamberg, M., Ammirati, D. L., & Shea, S. (1995). What constitutes "good" data for the study of language development? In P. W. Davis (Ed.), *Descriptive and theoretical modes in the alternative linguistics* (pp. 1-43). Amsterdam: John Benjamins.
- Bamberg, M., & Budwig, N. (1989). Entwicklungstheoretische Überlegungen zum Spracherwerb [Developmental-theoretical reflections on language acquisition]. *Linguistik und Literaturwissenschaft*, 73, 33-52.
- Bamberg, M., Budwig, N., & Kaplan, B. (1991). A developmental approach to language acquisition. *First Language*, 11, 121-141.

- Budwig, N. (1993). Perspectives on the form–function relationship across 25 years of the SCLRF meetings. In E. Clark (Ed.), *Proceedings of the twenty-fifth annual Child Language Research Forum* (pp. 297–306). Stanford, CA: Center for the Study of Language and Information.
- Budwig, N. (1995). *A developmental–functionalist approach to child language*. Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.

Introduction to Chapter 1

Stein and Albro approach *narrative* as part of a larger cognitive domain. In their chapter they clearly define the domain of narrative as well as the telos for narrative development, resulting in relatively clear statements with regard to the early unfoldings of narrative development and the course it takes. Methodologically, their approach operates within the well-established cognitivist paradigm, following traditional quantitative methods that attempt to map the course of the narrative schema over the age range from early to late childhood. Their chapter is an exemplary attempt—documenting and lending support to some of their basic assumptions with findings from their own studies that have been carried out for more than a decade. In the following, I first summarize some aspects of their approach regarding the domain of narrative and the telos of its development. This enables me in the latter part of these introductory comments to speculate about some implicit assumptions regarding the mechanisms of development as well as the implicit assumptions about the child.

The Domain of Inquiry and Telos of Development

Stein and Albro clearly state that narrating rests on the cognitive abilities to organize content (i.e., the relation between goals, actions, and outcomes) and structure (i.e., episodes) into a coherent whole (i.e., connecting the episodes). Stories are causally organized, goal-directed texts. As such, the ability to tell stories presupposes a theory of human intentionality and action. Consequently, Stein and Albro's definition of a story

presupposes a goal-directed action sequence as the minimal, basic criterion. In addition, adults also have at their disposal the ability to judge what counts as a good story, a competence that supposedly is equally influential when it comes to the behavioral domains of storytelling and story understanding. And stories that are told with their words, clauses, pauses, and gestures, performed by real people for others, in real places and time, can be considered surface realizations of some underlying forms of narrative knowledge, although they would not (and could not) exist without the human mind that does the basic organization of narrative and narrating. Equally irrelevant are the overt language forms used to realize the goal–outcome relationships and their episodic connection. Whereas the approach presented in chapter 3 of this book explicitly focuses on the formal linguistic devices used in storytelling performances, the cognitive approach focuses on the conceptual underpinnings of such surface realizations. It is the basic organization process that forms the domain of inquiry within the framework of this approach, and along the same lines, the achievements of this organization process form the telos of the developmental process. However, it should be clearly stated that this telos is an ability, and, therefore, it has to be viewed as a mental construct and as an ideal. This ideal, which cannot be accessed directly, can empirically be approached in different forms by investigating the comprehension or production of narratives as well as in different (experimental) contexts and conditions.

Methodology

Whereas the cognitive approach traditionally privileges comprehension data, Stein and Albro draw on a wealth of production data as well. The use of story stems (with familiar characters), given to children in the study that is reported in detail in their chapter, strikes as a methodologically ideal exemplar to bring out children's optimal narrative abilities.¹ It documents clearly that children's (or adults' for that matter) narrative production data are never taken to speak for themselves. They always are considered, in one way or another, to reveal some form of competence. Relating findings from this study to a range of other studies that use other methodological tools, Stein and Albro outline a rather robust picture of when children are first able to make systematic use of the different knowledge components that define this approach.

¹The use of story stems resembles in many ways Vygotsky's zone of proximal development, inasmuch as it represents a condition that assists children in coming to grips with certain aspects of storytelling ability, such as creating connections between episodes.

The Course of Development

In terms of the onset of narrative competence, children as young as 3 years can be credited with the rudimentary knowledge relevant for storytelling abilities. The origin of the different knowledges is not further explored in Stein and Albro's chapter. However, from these early narrative abilities, young children's subsequent developmental course is one of refinement, integrating the more complex aspects of narratives. Thus, developmental changes in the story concept are not of a qualitative nature. The only difference is the emergence of the "goodness judgment", which seems to develop relatively late, in early adulthood. Obviously, narrative abilities as part of other cognitive achievements develop in parallel with achievements in other cognitive domains, such as memory, language, and (logical) reasoning abilities. However, these achievements are necessarily outside the scope of the chapter. Of possible interest here could be Stein and Albro's assumption that some base of memory and narrative abilities needs to be in place for children to construct hypothetical narratives, because Nicolopoulou (chap. 5) places a quite different developmental emphasis on the ability to produce hypothetical and fantasy narratives.

Mechanisms of Development

Turning next to the examination of the developmental mechanisms are at work in the cognitive approach as represented by Stein and Albro, we find no mention of any behavioral reinforcements, nor of any interactive parental support, the way it is highlighted for instance by McCabe (chap. 4). Although not elaborated in their chapter, Stein and Albro refer repeatedly to other cognitive domains (e.g., the development of theories of human intentionality and goal-directed actions) that have an impact on the emergence of narrative development. These knowledge domains, however, seem to unfold somewhat naturally rather than being shaped by actions of others and conditions of use. Thus, it may be argued that within this approach learning to tell stories is more like acquiring the knowledge of rules to be followed so that narratives, and later good narratives, can be understood, produced, and appreciated.

The Concept of Person

The child who acquires the knowledge domain necessary to understand and produce narratives is traditionally viewed as an active seeker and organizer of information, an organizer, however, who is universally endowed with the cognitive equipment that sorts of incoming information into the relevant schemata that organize and categorize so that decisions can be made in the behavioral domain. In line with the overall cognitive orientation that led to the stipulations regarding the domain of narrative

and the telos of narrative development, human activities such as storytelling are generally understood as resulting from the flow of information and the way it has been sorted into relevant schemata. It should be clear that this approach is governed by the basic assumption that the person (here, the child) is basically rational and logical and that this is a feature that holds universally, before it becomes specified culturally and socially in particular historical contexts.

1

*Building Complexity
and Coherence: Children's Use
of Goal-Structured Knowledge
in Telling Stories*

Nancy L. Stein
Elizabeth R. Albro
University of Chicago

This chapter focuses on children's understanding of human intentionality and goal-directed action and the ways in which children use this knowledge to regulate the content, structure, and coherence of the stories they generate. We examine three aspects of children's knowledge about goal-directed action. First we discuss children's concept of a good story. Exactly what aspects of a theory of human intentionality and action do children use to formulate their concept of a good story, and does this concept change as a function of development?

We then focus on those dimensions of goal-directed action children use in telling a story with more than one episode. Adult storytellers typically design their narratives so that the first episode ends with an outcome that either blocks the attainment of important goals (Botvin & Sutton-Smith, 1977; Propp, 1958; Stein, 1988; Stein & Goldman, 1981) or results in the presence of unexpected circumstances. Few adults leave their protagonists in this initial set of negative circumstances. Rather, they add two or more episodes to their story (Stein, 1988), either enabling their protagonist to attain an important goal (Stein & Policastro, 1984) or explaining why their protagonist failed in the given set of circumstances.

- Stein, N. L., & Liwag, M. D. (1994). *Parents' and children's understanding of emotional events*. Unpublished manuscript, University of Chicago.
- Stein, N. L., Liwag, M. D., & Wade, E. (1994). A goal-based approach to memory for emotional events: Implications for theories of understanding and socialization. In R. D. Kavanaugh, B. Z. Glick, & S. Fein (Eds.), *Emotion: The G. Stanley Hall Symposium*. Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.
- Stein, N. L., & Nezworski, T. (1978). The effects of organization and instructional set on story memory. *Discourse Processes, 1*, 177-193.
- Stein, N. L., & Policastro, M. (1984). The concept of a story: A comparison between children's and teachers' perspectives. In H. Mandl, N. L. Stein, & T. Trabasso (Eds.), *Learning and comprehension of text* (pp. 113-155). Hillsdale, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.
- Stein, N. L., & Trabasso, T. (1982). Children's understanding of stories: A basis for moral judgment and dilemma resolution. In C. J. Brainerd & M. Pressley (Eds.), *Verbal processes in children* (Vol. 2, pp. 161-188). New York: Springer-Verlag.
- Stein, N. L., & Trabasso, T. (1989). Children's understanding of changing emotional states. In C. Saarni & P. Harris (Eds.), *The development of emotional understanding* (pp. 50-77). New York: Cambridge University Press.
- Stein, N. L., Trabasso, T., & Liwag, M. D. (1993). The representation and organization of emotional experience: Unfolding the emotional episode. In M. Lewis & J. Haviland (Eds.), *Handbook of emotion* (pp. 279-300). New York: Guilford.
- Stein, N. L., Trabasso, T., & Liwag, M. D. (1994). The Rashomon phenomenon: Personal frames and future-oriented appraisals in memory for emotional events. In M. M. Haith, J. B. Benson, R. J. Roberts Jr., & B. F. Pennington (Eds.), *The development of future oriented processes* (pp. 409-436). Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- Sutton-Smith, B. (1981). *The folkstories of children*. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press.
- Trabasso, T., & Nickels, M. (1992). The development of goal plans of action in the narration of picture stories. *Discourse Processes, 15*, 249-275.
- Trabasso, T., Secco, T., & van den Broek, P. (1984). Causal cohesion and story coherence. In H. Mandl, N. L. Stein, & T. Trabasso (Eds.), *Learning and comprehension of text* (pp. 83-111). Hillsdale, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.
- Trabasso, T., & Stein, N. L. (1994). Using goal-plan knowledge to merge the past with the present and the future in narrating on-line events. In M. Maith, J. B. Benson, R. J. Roberts, & B. F. Pennington (Eds.), *The development of future oriented processes* (pp. 323-349). Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- Trabasso, T., Stein, N. L., & Johnson, L. R. (1981). Children's knowledge of events: A causal analysis of story structure. In G. H. Bower & A. R. Lang (Eds.), *The psychology of learning and motivation* (Vol. 15, pp. 237-282). New York: Academic Press.
- Trabasso, T., Stein, N. L., Rodkin, P., Munger, M. P., & Baughn, C. R. (1992). Knowledge of goals and plans in the on-line narration of events. *Cognitive Development, 7*, 133-170.
- Trabasso, T., & Suh, S. (1993). Understanding text: Achieving explanatory coherence through on-line inferences and mental operations in working memory. *Discourse Processes, 16*, 3-34.
- Trabasso, T., Suh, S., & Payton, P. (1994). Explanatory coherence in communication about narrative understanding of events. In M. Gernsbacher & T. Givon (Eds.), *Coherence in conversational interaction* (pp. 189-214). Hillsdale, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.
- Trabasso, T., & van den Broek, P. (1985). Causal thinking and the representation of narrative events. *Journal of Memory and Language, 24*, 612-630.
- Wade, E., & Stein, N. L. (1994). *Children's understanding about real and hypothetical experience*. Unpublished manuscript, University of Chicago.
- Willatts, P. (1990). The development of problem solving strategies in infancy. In D. F. Bjorklund (Ed.), *Children's strategies: Contemporary views of cognitive development* (pp. 23-66). Hillsdale, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.

Introduction to Chapter 2

The Domain of Inquiry

Chapter 2 by Uta Quasthoff ties the narrative as a product closely to the activity of narrating. This activity is discursively achieved as an interactive process, within which the narrator has been granted the floor to narrate, and the comments and interjections of the listener are in the service of the constitution of the narrative product. Taking this perspective on the domain of inquiry, the interactive moves of participants become highly relevant for the investigation of how a narrative comes to existence in an interaction, how it is maintained, and how it is terminated. Thus, this approach centers the investigation on how coparticipants attend to the activity of narrating, or "do" narrating. The form of the product and its contents are derived from this activity and therefore cannot be the starting points of investigation, as is typical for structuralist approaches.

Starting from these premises, Quasthoff's approach fits into the general framework of conversation analysis. However, in her attempts to integrate cognitive and linguistic aspects into this predominantly conversationally defined framework, she leaves the territory of strict conversation analysis and makes claims with regard to a broader territory. People have narrative competencies, that is, knowledge of plans and what typically interrupts plans, which in turn makes these incidents tellable. Particularly adults show such competence when they, with their children, jointly attend to the activity of narrating. In addition, they employ linguistic forms that orient the listener toward the activity; in this respect, they seem to document or display the (cognitive) competence of narrating. Thus, although narrating entails a cognitive and a linguistic domain, Quasthoff's

interactive approach views these as subdomains that find their particular organizational structure in how the activity of narrating is interactively organized.

In order to focus on the process of the establishment of coordinated narrating activities in naturally occurring speech, research in the domain of narrative activities needs to capture and preserve the relevant aspects of the sequential arrangements of interactions. This framework attempts to avoid loaded preconceptions about the setting, the intention of the speaker, or the topic of the conversation. If at all, these terms only surface as outcomes of micro- and macro analytic procedures toward the end of the analysis.

The Concept of Person

The idea of isolating the person, particularly the child, and decontextualizing him or her as a "unit" sounds somewhat foreign to the interactive approach. Because narrating is the central instance, achieved by at least two participants attending to this activity, both people are equally important. This becomes especially relevant for the explanation of how the initially incompetent (or, at least, the less competent) child becomes more competent due to the assistance of the (more) competent adult. Thus, it can be held that the concept of the individual person in this approach is backgrounded in favor of the concept of an interactive situation, of which "the person" becomes an integrated part.

Although the interactive situation in early parent-child interactions is characterized as unbalanced (due to the two different communicative competencies), with development this imbalance is gradually leveled. Thus, it seems as if there are factors and components in the interactive situation that strive for balance and consensus, resembling Habermas's (1970, 1996) "ideal speech situation," in which all participants have equal control and attempt to reach understanding.

Telos of Development

In light of its unique focus on the situation of the interaction, the interactive approach is somewhat at odds with the other approaches collected in this volume, inasmuch as there are no changes within a person that press toward higher or more integrated forms of development. However, as mentioned in the preceding section, the unit as a whole is teleologically defined as the ideal system. Within this system, the different factors (i.e., participants) are oriented toward balance and consensus, not necessarily intentionally but due to the very nature of the communicative

situation and the nature of understanding, toward which communication is oriented.¹

With regard to the cognitive and linguistic subdomains of the overarching interactive whole, both participants act in the form of subsystems, contributing differentially to the establishment of the whole. Although the contributions of both participants change over time, only the child can be viewed as a developing unit, increasing his or her communicative competence. This development can empirically be described as taking place within the child with its developmental telos of communicative competence, but, as mentioned earlier, it only functions as one component of the integrated whole that is the interactive situation.

Course of Development

Again, with its ultimate focus on what coparticipants in interactions do when narrating, the questions of where development starts and how it is achieved are empirical questions. They can only be answered by closely following how participants attend to each other when narrating, and any changes over time, particularly between younger and older children's contributions, cannot simply be stated as due to the age but rather need to be traced back to the situational demands.

Due to her microanalytic treatment of interactive patterns, Quasthoff is able to describe in detail the changes that occur over time. These are changes both in terms of linguistic forms as well as in terms of the interactive functions that these forms serve. The use of forms and their functions is microanalytically scrutinized for both subunits, parents and children, according to age changes and different situational demands, leading to a fine-grained developmental map. It nevertheless must be stated again that these changes, although they can be described as changes within the child and the adult, do not have their causes within these units but are first understood as changes of the dyad as the primary unit of analysis. Therefore, the images of the child as developmentally progressing in terms of contributing "better" or "more" over time to the constitution of narrating, and of the adult as regressing (although the changes in the use of adult forms and functions are not necessarily less but different, and as such more adequate), are only developmental changes in light of the discourse structural requirements of storytelling in conversation and not changes that are due to changes within the organism or the person.

¹This does not imply that people do not disagree, argue, fight, or, metaphorically speaking, engage in battles. Rather, the meanings of these particular activities are ultimately reducible to the ideal speech situation in the same way as communicative acts that result in understanding.

Mechanisms for Development

In light of the intriguing assumptions made by the interactive approach with regard to how the course of developmental change is outlined, the determination of the factors that cause and control these changes becomes one of the most interesting challenges to most current approaches to narrative development. Quasthoff incorporates achievements that can be ascribed to the child and made sense of as the child's progress to the dyad's joint accomplishment. In doing so, she successfully changes the focus from the child's achievements to the adult's activities that facilitate the child's narrative activities and competencies. Although this seems to imply that the search for developmental mechanisms has to start with the analysis of the adult's directing activities, Quasthoff points simultaneously to the requirements that hold generally for narrating as an interactive situation, that is, the umbrella under which the adult functions interactively when narrating. Thus, this approach culminates in the developmental claim that the same mechanisms that are constitutive of the situational achievement of narrating also hold as developmental mechanisms. Although this may at first glance negate any development in the person, at least to traditional developmentalist approaches that focus on the internalization of strategies, skills, and knowledge domains, the approach presented in this chapter squares well with a notion of development that starts from a more holistic, Wernerian perspective (cf. Werner, 1933, 1957; Werner & Kaplan, 1963).

Methodology

In terms of its overarching methodological goals, the interactive approach aims at the unification of three units of analysis that usually are differentiated and subordinated to one another. The first unification attempt starts with a discourse-oriented model of pragmatic functions and views linguistic forms as serving those functions. The second unification attempt again starts from the same model of pragmatic functioning and ties linguistic surface forms to cognitive aspects of the generation process of narrating. In both attempts, the situational demands define the interactive necessities, and microanalytic analyses of surface forms lead to how these demands are instantiated. As such, the analysis is thoroughly empirical, emphasizing the functions of local linguistic forms in generating global structures of narrating.

REFERENCES

- Habermas, J. (1970). *Zur Logik der Sozialwissenschaften*. Frankfurt am Main, Germany: Suhrkamp Verlag.
- Habermas, J. (1996). *Between facts and norms. Contributions to a discourse theory of law and democracy*. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press.
- Werner, H. (1933). *Einführung in die Entwicklungspsychologie*. 2nd edition. Leipzig, Germany: Barth.
- Werner, H. (1957). The concept of development from a comparative and organismic point of view. In D.B. Harris (Ed.), *The concept of development: An issue in the study of human behavior* (pp. 125–148). Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press.
- Werner, H., & Kaplan, B. (1963). *Symbol formation*. New York: Wiley.

Introduction to Chapter 3

The Domain of Inquiry

The constructivist approach presented in chapter 3 is strictly speaking a linguistic, though a functional linguistic, approach. However, the term *linguistic* connotes a highly formalistic orientation (see also Nicolopoulou, Chap. 5), and because linguistics as a discipline is commonly understood as part of a larger cognitive discipline, *constructivism* was chosen as a signpost to orient toward the relevance of language in the construction of texts. These texts can be quite literally stories, written or told, and they can be about events or experiences, those in which the narrator him- or herself figured as an actor or in which others figured as actors or undergoers. These stories can be fictitious or can entail claims to real experiences or events. In all these texts, the events, the characters, the experiences, as well as self and others who figure in the texts are constructions for the discursive function to become understood. Linguistic forms (construction types) are the building blocks out of which these texts are made. As such, the domain is morphosyntactically defined as *grammar for discourse*.

Thus, narrative, although apparently a somewhat privileged discourse format, is part of the domain of language use, and narrative development is a subcomponent of language development. Constructivism resembles Piaget's proposal for cognitive development, where the child's mind builds knowledge through the functions of adaptation and organization (Piaget, 1985), with the major difference that what is built is not knowledge or information but experience and self. And experience and self are not built in the mind but in (cultural) practices. In this sense, then, the construc-

tivist approach presented here offers an expansion of what is commonly known as social constructionism (Gergen, 1995; Harré & Gillett, 1994), historically preformed with language delivering the building blocks and narrating as one of the central activities in which these blocks are put together so that experiences and selves can come to existence.

It should be stressed that this definition of narrative is somewhat broader than in most other approaches presented in this volume, and it is also somewhat underspecified. The author claims to give third-person and first-person narratives equal weight, and even explanatory accounts are subsumed to be narratives, as long as generalized actors (e.g., *one, you, they*) act and position themselves in their actions vis-à-vis others, which seems to relinquish Labov and Waletzky's (1967) definition of a minimal narrative consisting of two events happening sequentially. With this broad notion of narrating, the issue of tellability (see Quasthoff, chap. 2) seems to be put in the background, whereas the discursive purpose for which something is being told is brought to the foreground.

The Concept of Person

As in cognitive constructivism, the child is viewed as intensely active, learning to put linguistic construction types to use for interpersonal, social purposes. Although the linguistic constructions are socially (and historically) preformed and therefore to a degree determining their purposes, the child's participation in linguistic practices enables him or her to appropriate language forms for the construction of agency and perspective taking, which form the presuppositions to order characters in space and time and to relate them to one another in the form of a moral order. Thus, implicit in the constructivist approach to narrative development is the idea that the person is actively involved in the construction of his or her own life and that meanings are inserted into life through participation in linguistic practices. As such, the person is constrained by the linguistic habits and practices in which he or she participates, and is not able to create life individually.

Telos of Development

The ability to narrate is viewed as part of a larger whole, best summarized as the creation of order. This order is one of linguistic forms and functions; in their coordination, self and others are created in terms of good and bad, just and unjust. This order is always a moral or ethical order. However, this creation is not individually achieved, as if it could take place in the head, or in the psyche. It is first of all locally achieved in a communicative setting. Because this order is continually changed and reconstituted, there is no a priori, universal principle behind the communicative acts that

holds them together. Rather, the practices themselves constitute somewhat of a continuity, and because language is the only constant in this process, language forms the telos of development in the constructivist approach.

The focus here is not on language as a formal system, and to a much lesser degree the referential function of language is highlighted. Although the developmental process consists of an increase in language forms and language functions, the creative and organizing power of language lies in (or, better, stems from) the telic orientation toward which language always is applied—which is the ability to construct a moral order within which self and others are situated.

Course of Development

The changes across childhood and across different social situations need to be described in terms of changes in linguistic construction types and how they are put to use for different discursive functions. This process of increasing coordinations can consist of the descriptions of changes in forms for the seemingly more mundane purposes of referring to time and space and characters. These aspects of language development are equally important as coordinations of forms and functions for the expression of perspective and agency, which seem to be more directly linked to the construction of subjectivity and intersubjectivity. Chapter 3 presents an attempt to link developmentally early referential expressions to the larger project of how self and other emerge in an agentive, moral relationship.

Mechanisms for Development

Turning to the question of what pushes developmentally for narrating narratives¹ (as part of the domain of language development), the constructivist approach presented in this chapter appears to be circular. Although the child actively puts together a grammar for discourse purposes and in this process constructs self(hood) and other(ness), language as a quasi-deterministic force pushes toward the telos of self-construction and moral order. This seeming circularity can only be productively disentangled if the symbolic force of language and the contents that come to existence in language use do not have their own history and existence; rather, they depend on the grammar of language, particularly if grammar is defined not in abstract, structural terms of an independent system but as historically and interactionally tied to discursive purposes. This back-

¹The phrase *narrating narratives* is intentionally chosen to stress both the *activity* of narrating as well as the product of the narrative, without privileging the structure of the product over the activity of producing or vice versa.

ground leads to a notion of language as mechanisms that does not require particular scaffolding techniques for the child to appropriate language. Rather, any participation in culturally accepted language practices will orient the child toward the telos of narrating narratives. It should go without saying that these practices are not achieved only by verbal means.

Methodology

In line with the relatively broadly defined domain of narrating or narrative and in order not to privilege a priori any particular discourse mode, the constructivist approach approves of almost any verbal data as good data for analysis, as for instance explanatory discourse data and even one-clause answers to questions that ask for happenings or events. Consequently, this approach cannot properly address issues of when (i.e., at what age) and under what conditions children typically perform particular narrative tasks. Rather, although different genres and age are systematically varied in the studies presented in this chapter, the analyses map the process of how linguistic forms are appropriated for discursive functions and within this process reveal the emergence of a moral self.

The analysis itself is situated within what is commonly called variation analysis (Schiffrin, 1994). This particular discourse analytic procedure starts from the assumption that speakers have choices in construction types and that their actual choices are signposts with regard to how they want to be understood. Thus, this approach clearly privileges linguistic constructions (i.e., lexical and grammatical) as the starting points for narrative analysis, without adopting the underlying assumptions of most linguistic approaches that these formal devices follow organizational principles independent of their use.

REFERENCES

- Gergen, K. J. (1995). *Construction, critique, and community*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.
- Harré, R., & Gillett, G. (1994). *The discursive mind*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Labov, W., & Waletzky, J. (1967). Narrative analysis: Oral versions of personal experience. In J. Helm (Ed.), *Essays on the verbal and visual arts* (pp. 12-44). Seattle: University of Washington Press.
- Piaget, J. (1985). *The equilibration of cognitive structures: The central problem of intellectual development*. Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press.
- Schiffrin, D. (1994). *Approaches to discourse*. Oxford, England: Blackwell.

3

A Constructivist Approach to Narrative Development

Michael Bamberg
Clark University

NARRATIVE, DISCOURSE, AND LANGUAGE: TOWARD A CONSTRUCTIVIST APPROACH TO NARRATIVE

Many factors can be said to have contributed to the current awakening of interest in narrative and narratology (e.g., Bruner, 1990, 1992; Kerby, 1991; Polkinghorne, 1988, 1991; Robbins, 1992). One factor that has not received much attention thus far is the fact that narratives and the analysis of narratives enable the bridging of two distinct orientations, orientations that originally resulted in competing methodologies and the demarcation between two disciplines, one that emphasizes what is considered to be individual or unique in human lives, and one that emphasizes what is considered to be social.

In the first area, narrative analysis is interested in the study of the lives and lived experiences of individual people. Persons tell their lives, or they report particular experiences that only they have access to. The stories they tell belong to them and are shared with an audience in particular situations. Sharing an account presupposes that the teller wants to share the experience and that there is a personal purpose for sharing it. This may hold for writing one's autobiography and relating the account to one's self in the process, or for sharing it with an interviewer. The story

- Robbins, B. (1992). Death and vocation: Narrativizing narrative theory. *Publications of the Modern Language Association*, 107, 38–50.
- Rosaldo, R. (1989). *Culture and truth: The remaking of social analysis*. Boston: Beacon.
- Schank, R. C., & Abelson, R. (1977). *Scripts, plans, goals, and understanding*. Hillsdale, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.
- Schiffrin, D. (1994). *Approaches to discourse*. Oxford, England: Blackwell.
- Slobin, D. I. (1990). The development from child speaker to native speaker. In J. W. Stigler, G. Herdt, & R. A. Shweder (Eds.), *Cultural psychology: Essays on comparative human development* (pp. 233–256). Cambridge, England: Cambridge University Press.
- Stein, N. L. (1988). The development of children's storytelling skill. In M. B. Franklin & S. S. Barten (Eds.), *Child language: A reader* (pp. 282–279). New York, NY: Oxford University Press.
- Weinrich, H. (1977). *Tempus: Besprochene und erzählte Welt* [Tense: described and narrated world] (3rd edition). Stuttgart, Germany: Kohlhammer.
- Wetherell, M., & Potter, J. (1988). Discourse analysis and the identification of interpretive repertoires. In C. Antaki (Ed.), *Analysing everyday explanation* (pp. 168–183). London: Sage.
- Wigglesworth, G. (1992). *Investigating children's cognitive and linguistic development through narrative*. Unpublished doctoral dissertation, La Trobe University, Bandoora, Victoria, Australia.
- Wolf, D., Moreton, J., & Camp, L. (1994). Children's acquisition of different kinds of narrative discourse: Genres and lines of talk. In J. L. Sokolov & C. E. Snow (Eds.), *Handbook of research in language development using CHILDES* (pp. 286–323). Hillsdale, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.

Introduction to Chapter 4

Although all components of the hexad are addressed in the form of summary statements in McCabe's concluding remarks (p. 169), I will try to briefly review and to tie them into the larger network of propositions that are characteristic for her overall approach to narrative and narrative development. I start with the more general tenets that differentiate this approach from the others in this volume. First, McCabe's approach is possibly the most encompassing of the six represented in this volume. It embraces aspects that are typical of the cognitive approach (chap. 1), the interactionist approach (chap. 2), and the constructionist approach (chap. 3). In addition, because this approach addresses issues of relevance for crosscultural comparisons, including the cultural models and goals that go into children's developing narrative skills, it covers to a large extent aspects that are addressed in chapter 5, the sociocultural approach to narrative development. In this sense, McCabe's chapter is one that is truly interdisciplinary, if the different approaches represented in this volume stand for disciplinary positions. In general terms, her approach is the most open to the varying demands to theorizing about narrative development and, in addition, enables practical applications in the educational and clinical realms.

The Domain of Inquiry

McCabe's broad definition of narrative as "a linguistic crossroads of culture, cognition, and emotion" that "serves the dual functions of sense making and self-representation" (p. 137) forms the backdrop against which personal narratives, that is, narratives that are performed in the

first person (singular) voice, referring to some past personal experience, are privileged. Defining the domain along these parameters values the narrator as the representative of a cultural tradition, although as the person who voices this tradition through his or her own subjectivity. Consequently, the domain of narrative development incorporates how the expression of subjectivity in narrating is practiced, particularly in the family setting, from very early on, and how the child develops into the individual who can present and represent his or her own subjective voice. The privileging of personal, factual stories sets this chapter clearly apart from the first chapter of this volume (by Stein & Albro) and the third (by Bamberg), which attempt to strike a balance between the different voices of first person, third person, and even generalized people. It also contrasts in an interesting way with the chapter by Nicolopoulou, who privileges fictional narrative, by highlighting factual personal stories as more original. However, in contrast to a cognitive approach, this chapter focuses more strongly on what children do when they narrate a personal experience, trading the issue of narrative knowledge for one of cultural conventions that are employed productively rather than blindly followed in the production of narratives. The notion of narrative is defined in terms of different structures (i.e., forms), in Labovian terms (i.e., high-point analysis), in story grammatical terms, and in terms of dependency relationships. All three definitions gravitate around the issue of a coherent whole that is linguistically achieved.

Telos of Development

If there is one endpoint toward which all narrative development is oriented, it is becoming a novelist, that is, giving value to the creative, innovative aspects that come to existence in the acts of narrating. However, McCabe explicitly states that narrative development also has to be viewed as resulting in a variety of telea. She stresses that there are differing cultural conventions and values that pull for different developmental pathways. For instance, the value of personal (particularly family) relationships in Latino traditions clashes to a degree with the way the individual actor as an intentional, willful person is valued in the White, middle-class European tradition. Within the approach presented in this chapter, these aspects are built into the narrative conventions that orient the narrator toward the telea of narrative development.

In addition to these clear statements regarding the developmental endpoint of narrative development, there seems to be another important aspect in McCabe's approach, but it is not elaborated in more detail here. This aspect is that children in the process of coming to grips with telling stories not only work on coherence for the sake of storytelling. They also work toward the production of a coherent life history. Although this

component of producing stories for the function of identity formation is not further elaborated, it resembles to a degree the (social) constructionist orientations stressed in chapters 3, 5, and 6 of the volume.

The Course of Development

In light of the fact that there are different telea for narrative development, this approach sketches different courses of narrative development that lead to their respective telea. Toward the middle of her chapter, McCabe summarizes her earlier work with White, mainstream American children, outlining their developmental route in great detail. The developmental pathways that have emerged from working with Latino, African American, and Japanese children come from recent projects with her coworkers and are summarized toward the end of the chapter. The general picture of narrative development that emerges from these differing developmental contours seems to point toward a major breakthrough around the age of 6 years. At that time the major narrative structures are in place, and the subsequent changes seem to be more quantitative changes such as the length of the narrative or its better linguistic performance.

Mechanisms of Development

Although the child is viewed as a highly active participant in the development of narrative, when it comes to the delineation of the mechanisms that produce little novelists or, better, that turn the inexperienced novice into an innovative, productive novelist, major emphasis is placed on the cultural conventions within which narratives are routinely practiced. Of particular interest here are the roles of parental inputs. A great chunk of the chapter deals with how parents model narratives for children in order to scaffold them into what is culturally valued about the characters within the narrative and, simultaneously, what is valued with regard to the acts of storytelling in general. The research presented in this chapter documents how parental models can be broken down into discursive routines such as elaborating on topics, evaluating particular aspects of storied information, stressing causal connections between happenings or episodes, focusing on the ability to decontextualize storied information and relate it back to previously experienced or heard story events, or relating aspects of the story world to the world of personal relationships, all of them serving the function of acculturating children. Again, these mechanisms of socialization tie the child not only into becoming a culturally accepted storyteller but simultaneously into a culturally accepted and valued sense of identity.

The Concept of the Child

Although socializing agents, particularly the family, play a dominant role in children's narrative development, McCabe grants children an active role in contributing their own contents and their own evaluations to storytelling, thereby creating their own senses of identity. This highly productive and creative contribution of the child to the process of storytelling and its development is, she hopes, captured in the metaphor that demarcates the telos for narrative development, namely the child as novelist. Although I do not want to push this issue further here, it remains an interesting question whether this ability is grounded in cultural, historical traditions, in social, interactive relationships, in language, or in the individual organism.

Methodology

In order to capture the interplay of (family) routines and children's productive, innovative abilities, the approach favors semi-naturalistic data: The children are engaged in an interactive conversational situation, where stories are being shared. When children are asked to share their own experiences, the interactional scaffold is reduced to a minimum in order to test children's optimal storytelling abilities. Of their several attempts, only the most elaborated tellings are used for a number of different types of analyses. In a number of studies reported in this chapter, McCabe used clause-structure-based as well as stanza-based transcription formats to perform three different types of analysis: a Labovian highpoint analysis, a story grammarian analysis, and a dependency analysis. Again, the contribution of this approach is possibly best captured in terms of its openness and willingness to cross boundaries and to compare children's different abilities in different cultures, at different ages, and in different situations and contexts.

4

Developmental and Cross-Cultural Aspects of Children's Narration

Allyssa McCabe
University of Massachusetts-Lowell

PERSONAL NARRATIVES OF PAST EXPERIENCES

In examining development over a range of ages and ethnicities, one should not restrict the definition of narrative too quickly to what may be a culturally biased norm or to one that would preclude early productions. Thus, narrative is defined quite broadly in this approach. Narratives usually concern real or pretend memories of something that happened and therefore are often largely in the past tense. However, there are also hypothetical, future-tense narratives and others given in present tense. Narratives often contain a chronological sequence of events, but one can also find narratives that contain only a single event or those that skip around in time. Narrative usually refers to a kind of language, although there are musical, pictorial, and silently dramatic narratives (McCabe, 1991a). Narrative is a linguistic crossroads of culture, cognition, and emotion and serves the dual functions of sense making and self-presentation (McCabe, 1991a, 1996a). In addition, because narrative forms dominate in elementary school reading and writing assignments, children's expertise in oral narrative helps them make the transition from oral to written language (Dickinson & McCabe, 1991, 1993).

- Peterson, C., & McCabe, A. (1991b). On the threshold of the storyrealm: Semantic versus pragmatic use of connectives in narratives. *Merrill-Palmer Quarterly*, 37, 445–464.
- Peterson, C., & McCabe, A. (1991a). Linking children's connective use and narrative macrostructure. In A. McCabe & C. Peterson (Eds.), *Developing narrative structure* (pp. 29–53). Hillsdale, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.
- Peterson, C., & McCabe, A. (1988). The connective "and" as discourse glue. *First Language*, 8, 22–28.
- Peterson, C., & McCabe, A. (1987). The structure of *and* coordinations in children's narratives. *Journal of Psycholinguistic Research*, 16, 467–490.
- Peterson, C., & McCabe, A. (1987b). The connective "and": Do older children use it less as they learn other connectives? *Journal of Child Language*, 14, 375–382.
- Peterson, C., & McCabe, A. (1985). Understanding "because": How important is the task? *Journal of Psycholinguistic Research*, 14, 199–218.
- Peterson, C., & McCabe, A. (1983). *Developmental psycholinguistics: Three ways of looking at a child's narrative*. New York: Plenum.
- Piaget, J. (1972b). *Judgement and reasoning in the child*. NJ: Littlefield, Adams, & Co. (Original work published 1928)
- Piaget, J. (1972a). *The child's conception of physical causality*. NJ: Littlefield, Adams, & Co. [Trans. by M. Gabain.] (Original work published 1930)
- Pitcher, E. G., & Prelinger, E. (1963). *Children tell stories*. New York: International Universities Press.
- Polkinghorne, D. E. (1991). Narrative and self-concept. *Journal of Narrative and Life History*, 1, 135–154.
- Pritchard, R. (1990). The effects of cultural schemata on reading processing strategies. *Reading Research Quarterly*, 25, 273–295.
- Propp, W. (1968). *Morphology of the folktale*. Austin, TX: University of Texas Press. (Originally published 1928)
- Rodino, A., Gimbort, C., Perez, C., Craddock-Willis, K., & McCabe, A. (1991, October). "Getting your point across": Contrastive sequencing in low-income African-American and Latino children's personal narrative. Paper presented at the 16th annual conference on Language Development, Boston University, Boston, MA.
- Rondal, J. A., Ghiotto, M., Bredart, S., & Bachelet, J. F. (1987). Age-relation, reliability and grammatical validity of measures of utterance length. *Journal of Child Language*, 14, 433–446.
- Sachs, J. (1979). Topic selection in parent-child discourse. *Discourse Processes*, 2, 145–153.
- Schieffelin, B. B., & Eisenberg, A. R. (1984). Cultural variation in children's conversations. In R. L. Schiefelbusch & J. Pickar (Eds.), *The acquisition of communicative competence* (pp. 378–420). Baltimore: University Park Press.
- Stein, N., & Glenn, C. (1979). An analysis of story comprehension in elementary school children. In R. O. Freedle (Ed.), *New directions in discourse processing* (pp. 53–120). Norwood, NJ: Ablex.
- Winner, K., McCabe, A., Rothbaum, F., & Schneider-Rosen, K. (1993, March). *A bridge over separation: Parent-child narrative exchange during reunion episodes*. Paper presented at the biennial meeting of the Society for Research in Child Development, New Orleans, LA.
- Xu, X. (1993). *Familiar and strange: A comparison of children's literature in four cultures*. Unpublished master's thesis. Tufts University, Medford, MA.

Introduction to Chapter 5

The Domain of Inquiry

Nicolopoulou's discussion of what she calls formalist approaches to narrative and narrative analysis reveals the following three claims as central to the sociocultural approach presented in her chapter. First, in its focus on narrative as a type of symbolic form, the domain of inquiry is redefined as symbolic action, and the significance of narrative and play surface in the developmental process of meaning making in general, as central to the development of the person. Narrative, just like play, confers meaning onto social activities and experiences, which otherwise would remain uncultivated. Second, narrative as a domain is not formally defined in terms of particular linguistic or cognitive activities but rather constitutes a means-end relationship for the achievement of a person's overall development. Third, underscoring the commonalities between narrative and play in early childhood, this approach shifts from language or cognition as the sole and central focus of narrative and narrative analysis to the cultural dimensions and the aesthetics involved in play and narrating.

As illustrations, the chapter focuses on children's pretense, as fantasy play, and how boys and girls differently structure their verbal accounts according to two gendered systems. Both examples document how the depicted activities play an important role in the development of the person and the role of the child's involvement in symbolic activities (as constitutive for narrating) in identity formation.

The Concept of Person

The child is viewed to a large degree as self-constructing, but at the same time constructed by forces that come from outside, with narrative as the connective tissue. Because narrative, as symbolic activity, operates as the conferral of meaning onto reality, the child constructs his or her own personhood by participating in narrating. Simultaneously, narrative forms and narrative contents that are used in this construction process are preformed, in that they preexist as images, models, and meanings in the larger context of the culture, where these forms and contents have their history (see chapter 3 of this volume for a similar point). Thus, in spite of the existence of symbolic meanings at the social plane, children are not passively absorbing such meanings. In narrating and play children are in between their own individual and a preexisting cultural world. Narrating and play constitute a zone of proximal development (Vygotsky, 1962), imposing the frame and the rules for how to conduct these activities, and at the same time constitute the products of activities that are orchestrated and organized by the child. Narrating and play are two textual tools to grasp an intertextual reality and to confer meaning onto experience, and in this process experience and reality come to existence.

Telos and Course of Development

Although narrative and play skills develop toward more complexity with children's increasing age, they do not press toward a telos. Rather, in their functioning as tools, they contribute to the general development of identity formation, and in their functions as collective rituals they assist in maintaining and changing the identities of self and of social groups. With regard to outlining a rigid course of developmental changes in children's narrative organizations, Nicolopoulou points to the role of the variety of contexts that impinge on this kind of project.

Her approach is oriented toward capturing the stories and play activities of children on their own terms, that is, from the child's perspective, resulting in some fascinating insights in the differences between girls' and boys' narrative organizations. Her description of these two different mini-cultures in terms of two different narrative styles orients toward two symbolic worlds that are deeply gendered. Thus, these two world makings stand for two different developmental courses of identity development, one more typical for the construction of a female identity, the other one for a male identity. Although both take place in the same overarching sociohistorical situation and in the same context of (the same) preschool setting, the two developmental contours point toward two rather different cultural models.

Because the domain of inquiry is rather broadly defined as the development of the person's identity, with narrative and play as illustrations,

this approach does not require a domain-specific teleological explanation. Thus, it seems that person and telos are collapsed into some ideal telos for a holistic development, which is not further specified in this chapter.

Mechanisms for Development

The sociocultural approach to the person's identity development, as presented by Nicolopoulou, resembles in a variety of ways the social constructivist orientation presented in chapter 3 of this volume. In both approaches the child is free to constitute for him- or herself a reality that is functional. However, the function that was served by language in chapter 3 is achieved in the sociocultural framework through symbolic action. Language, although in general not irrelevant for symbolic activities and practices as one form of symbolic action among others, is not treated as privileged and further analyzed. The symbolic order that, for instance, girls give to their storytellings and story actions (in contrast to the order boys give) is vicariously received and not individually invented. It seems as if participation in gendered activities, such as in storytelling and play, in and of itself constitutes a zone of proximal development; that is, participation enforces its own social (i.e., gendered) rules, within which the person and simultaneously development can constitute themselves.

What is interesting in this approach is the fact that participation and the learning of social rules are not necessarily tied to the physical presence and participation of the more experienced expert, usually an adult. It further presupposes, as Nicolopoulou points out, that these practices are always dyadic and social in nature, even when children play or talk to themselves. In addition, specific space is given to the aesthetic dimension of play and narrating. Thus, the role of cultural processes in the appropriation of particular skills and abilities that are most relevant for the formation of a social and individual identity constitutes the major mechanism for the child's development within this theory.

Methodology

Although the data used to exemplify Nicolopoulou's developmental approach are highly comparable to those in other interview situations (i.e., an adult requests that preschoolers dictate a story, which the children later are asked to act out), there is a special flavor to these data inasmuch as the children use this opportunity to invent, create, imagine—in short, to set free potentials that most other storytelling activities inhibit. It is the imaginary situation of play that calls for the aesthetic analysis and the interpretive framework that are espoused in this chapter. Simultaneously, the adopted approach intends to integrate the cognitive efforts and the emotional life that children bring to storytelling and play activities.

Nicolopoulou's description of her approach as interpretive underscores that behavior is not viewed as determined by empirical laws, rational principles, or environmental causes, which operate independent of the person. Instead, humans are functioning (i.e., acting) in relation to one another and in their historically situated world. Consequently, the units that are analyzed are social relationships, contextually rich and complex situations. Interpretive analysis, in spite of its clear antimodernist orientation, seems to follow more of a hermeneutic slant in terms of its dominant mode of engagement (see Slife & Williams, 1995). As such, it seems to be less influenced by the type of social constructionism as illustrated in chapter 3 of this volume but worthy of consideration on its own terms.

REFERENCES

- Slife, B. D., & Williams, R. N. (1995). *What's behind the research? Discovering hidden assumptions in the behavioral sciences*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Vygotsky, L.S. (1962). *Thought and language*. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press.

5

Children and Narratives: Toward an Interpretive and Sociocultural Approach

Ageliki Nicolopoulou
Lehigh University

This chapter offers a critical overview of current theoretical and empirical work in the area of children and narratives and a proposal for a more interpretive and sociocultural approach. I use the phrase "children and narratives" advisedly to capture the range of the subject, which includes narratives written *for* children, told *to* children, constructed by adults *with* children, and composed and told *by* children. (As I emphasize, it also properly includes narratives *enacted* by children in fantasy play.) This field of investigation is obviously too vast to be reviewed comprehensively here, but I think it is possible to delineate the main research traditions that now dominate it and to elucidate the theoretical and methodological orientations that inform them.

Despite the bewildering variety of research programs in this field, the striking fact is that since the 1970s the great bulk of this work has been dominated by various strategies of what I will call *formalist* analysis. That is, it tends to focus more or less exclusively on the formal structure of narratives and to neglect both their symbolic content and the ways that children *use* narrative for diverse modes of symbolic action. I think it is not coincidental that, despite the enormous volume of such research being carried out in the overlapping disciplines of psychology and linguistics, studies of spontaneous stories or other narratives composed by children themselves—particularly preschool children—are relatively rare. Most studies focus on children's comprehension of stories they read or are told;

Introduction to Chapter 6

The Domain of Inquiry

The approach presented in chapter 6 centers on a particular type of narrative, self-narratives. According to Hermans, self-narratives are central to the human existence because they represent human attempts of ordering their experiences. Thus, they form basic perspectives for studying the self.

In terms of what changes over time, Hermans' focus rests on how people order experiences across space and time frames. Because the self is the domain to be investigated and self-narratives form the tools in this investigation process to get at the self, formal or structural characteristics of narrating (or of the narrative product) are backgrounded, and functional aspects of how narratives serve the process of self-formation are foregrounded.

In comparison to the approaches presented in the previous chapters, Hermans does not take a position as to whether the cognitive or the linguistic organization of narrative is to be privileged, nor does he address how both are supposed to be distinguished or how they could be integrated. Although narratives present "a basic form of thought," more weight is placed on the process of how it comes to existence. First, an *I* (functioning as author and narrator) orchestrates the *me* (i.e., the actor). This orchestration can take place from different perspectives, that is, there is not necessarily one authorized position, but multiple potential voices according to place, time, audience, and experiences are woven into one or more themes. Furthermore, the *me* can be composed along different thematic lines, such as in regressive narratives versus stability narratives.

In summary, the process of how self-organization is achieved constitutes the developmental domain. This process is to be studied in the form of a multiplicity of authors (voices) construing themes: different authors engaging in a dialogue, thematically plotting experiences into a self.

It is my understanding that there is a need for more than one author engaging in the dialogue to integrate and resolve unexpected life events. The multiplicity of voices serves the *developmental* function to posit an ideal telos toward which the dialogue of the voices is oriented: the understanding or resolution of incoherent and conflicting experiences. The themes that are deployed in this process (which can be seen to form basic *mechanisms*¹ of self-organization as far as they keep the process going) stem from two basic origins: self-enhancement on one hand and contact + union with others on the other.

That the process of self-organization is not restricted to childhood but extends across the life span nevertheless opens up interesting questions for child development, such as what kinds of themes children in different cultures employ for self-enhancement as well as for seeking contact and union with others, how different narrators become differentiated, and how different narrators enter the dialogue in early child narratives. In addition, the process of how author and narrator become differentiated developmentally could be pursued. The previous chapters in this volume can be seen as beginning to address these questions. One of Hermans' contributions to *narrative development* lies in reminding us that there are changes in self-organization that are not resolved at a certain point in life or at a particular age but rather are life-long, ongoing processes of integration (and probably also of differentiation).

The Concept of Person

A major basic tenet of the approach presented is that the person is the central actor and organizer in the organization process of the self. The process of constructing meaning in self-narratives is most definitely an active process, that is, the person is not simply responding to changes in the environment or affordances that new and unexpected experiences may pose. The only other factors he or she can rely on are the two motives that are said to be driving this process: self-enhancement and contact + union. Apart from one's active involvement, the person is not a stable unit who runs the self-organization process from a solid position. Rather, he or she is said to be "in a continuous process of meaning construction." Thus, across the life span, different selves feed back into this self-constructing process.

¹In light of Hermans' explicit anti-mechanistic orientation, it might be more appropriate to replace the notion of mechanisms that tie the organism or person into some developmental frame with the term *dynamics*.

In addition, framing the person as consisting of multiple authors further differentiates and weakens a firm position from which the organizing process is orchestrated. The position from which the different voices can be said to be governed and coordinated is solely the developmental ideal (i.e., the telos) of aiming for understanding or resolution of conflict between the different voices and for agreement on one theme (which serves to be most promising for self-enhancement, and contact + union).

The Course of Development

In contrast to most other chapters in this volume that focus on children's development, the process of self-organization is said to be a life-long process—there is no endpoint. Furthermore, there is no ordered sequence or course of development in the unfoldings of self-organizing processes.

However, the developmental course can be explored in two ways, the first more of interest for child psychologists and, the second for cultural and sociohistorical purposes. With regard to the former, the question is whether there is an ordered acquisition sequence for children in the establishment of multiple voices. Furthermore, we can study the themes that are employed early on and how these themes are expanded and complemented by other culturally available themes in preschool and school years. In brief, child psychologists could dig deeper into what Hermans takes as the domain of self-organization and explore how this domain is ontogenetically constituted.

In a second line of inquiry, Hermans' tenets of positing the ideal telos of self-enhancement on one hand and contact + union on the other, could be followed and crosschecked culturally as well as sociohistorically. Of particular interest are the questions of whether the availability of themes in the cultural repertoire affects the process of self-organization and how the culturally available themes may favor self-enhancement over contact + union, or vice versa. In sum, the cultural and sociohistorical origins of the themes and their availability in the early socialization process may serve as possible routes to follow Hermans' proposal with further research in the domain of child research.

Telos of Development

The approach offered here, like most other life-span approaches to development, does not offer a concrete endpoint. Because self-organization is a lifelong process, terminated by the death of the organism, the ideal *telos* is introduced by way of motives for the assumption that people have a self that is organized by way of self-narratives. Although Hermans does not explicitly address the ideal that is guiding the developmental changes in one's narratives over the course of one's life—only in passing

is it mentioned to result in a more complex organization of the self—I wonder whether his developmental theory could be tied closer to what Werner and Kaplan (1984) called a *process of increasing differentiation and integration* (see also Bamberg & Budwig, 1989; Bamberg, Budwig, & Kaplan, 1991). This is precisely what Hermans and Hermans (1995) did in their exposition of their theoretical thinking.

Mechanisms for Development

In terms of what keeps the process of self-organization up and running, we have to look in two directions: life's affordances in terms of new and unexpected events and the need to integrate these into one's story.

With regard to the first, Hermans anchors the person and his or her experiences—and I assume this accounts also for what can be experienced by the person—firmly into history and context. These external factors of one's life, which must to be integrated into one's life's story, can be further pursued developmentally in terms of what challenges particular experiences pose with regard to existent themes (e.g., the experience of death or parental divorce in light of a typically regressive narrative theme vis-à-vis a typically stabilizing theme). Naturally, these questions are out of the scope of Hermans' considerations in this chapter.

With regard to the second mechanism that keeps the developmental process intact and can be argued to be behind the need to integrate new experiences into one's life story, we see the two themes of self-enhancement and contact + union. They function as the constant motives for self-enhancement as well as for contact and union with others. In this capacity, they can ultimately organize the process of self-organization.

Methodology

In illustrating how this approach methodologically operates, Hermans relies on a specific technique of conducting a somewhat structured interview on relevant life events in the subjects' past, present, and future, resulting in a number of valuations vis-à-vis these events. The aim of this procedure is to bring the different voices of the self into the open so that they can become subjected to an empirical investigation in the dialogical engagement.

Although not specified in Hermans' chapter, this highly elaborate data-gathering technique is interesting for two distinct reasons. First, it should be noted that it does not follow the typical ethnographic form of interviewing, letting the subject determine the topic and the course of the interview. Rather, it intervenes with subjects' tendencies to wash out the conflicts between voices and forces them to create a space within the interview context, where subjects can openly admit to and discuss different

positions on particular experiences. Thus, the type of interview chosen in this approach, opens up opportunities for a subject to voice conflicts that often, in naturally occurring discourse, would have remained hidden.

Another interesting aspect of the approach presented by Hermans relates back to the tensions that were expressed in other chapters in this volume (chap.3; chap. 5) with the traditional distinction between evaluative and reportative purposes in narrating activities (cf. Labov & Waletzky, 1967). Hermans elaborates on this distinction and in a way transforms it into the amalgamated activity of different voices engaged in a dialogue from two differing evaluative standpoints. The purpose then of the analysis of the interview data becomes the teasing apart of the different valuations that the narrating subjects bring to what they encounter as new experiences.

REFERENCES

- Bamberg, M., & Budwig, N. (1989). Entwicklungstheoretische Überlegungen zum Spracherwerb [Developmental-theoretical reflection on language acquisition]. *Linguistik und Literaturwissenschaft*, 73, 33–52.
- Bamberg, M., & Budwig, N., & Kaplan, B. (1991). A developmental approach to language acquisition: Two case studies. *First Language*, 11, 121–141.
- Hermans, H. Y. M. E., & Hermans-Yansen, E. (1995). *Self-narratives: The construction of meaning in psychotherapy*. New York: Guilford Press.
- Labov, W., & Waletzky, J. (1967). Narrative analysis: Oral versions of personal experience. In J. Helms (Ed.), *Essays on the verbal and visual arts* (pp. 12–44). Seattle: University of Washington Press.
- Werner, H., & Kaplan, B. (1984). *Symbol formation*. Hillsdale, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates. (Original work published 1963)