

SOCIAL LIFE AND SOCIAL KNOWLEDGE

Toward a Process Account of Development

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Selves and Identities in the Making

The Study of Microgenetic Processes in Interactive Practices

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CONSTANCY, CHANGE, AND DEVELOPMENT

Current developmental theorizing faces a number of dilemmas, if not aporias. The three most relevant ones that provide offspring for different approaches within developmental psychology are (1) the "identity dilemma," posing the question: how it is possible to consider oneself as the same in the face of constant change; (2) the "uniqueness dilemma": whether it is possible to consider oneself as unique in the face of being the same as everyone else (and vice versa); and (3) the "construction" or "who-is-in-charge dilemma": asking whether it is the person who constructs the world the way it is, or whether the person is constructed by the way the world is. Answers that view these dilemmas in terms of the dialectics between (1) constancy and change; (2) uniqueness/specificity and generality/universality; and (3) two directions of fit, the person-to-world and world-to-person direction of fit, point out correctly that one is not thinkable without the other. Of course, these three dilemmas are highly interwoven. It could be argued that the construal of sameness and difference across time forms a presupposition for constructing others and self as same and different, which in turn can be said to be a basic building block for constructing and changing the world in a productive way. However, when it comes to doing developmental inquiry, that is, exploring how actual changes and constancies play each other out and are made sense of in the actual lives of human beings, in particular from the perspective of those who

live these lives, we are confronted with the additional dilemma that we can't take the perspective of both of the opposing principles simultaneously, but rather seem to be forced to choose.

In the following, since I will centrally be concerned with identity and the analysis of emergent identity, I will focus mainly on the identity dilemma and begin by an analysis of how it surfaces in developmental inquiry. I will first work across current theorizing in developmental inquiry in order to lay the groundwork for a microgenetic approach to identity analysis, one that is grounded in the traditions of Wernerian *Aktualgenese* but also enriched by current work in discourse analysis and microethnography. Let me start out with some rather simple reflections on time and what we consider the same across the weathers of time and what we consider change.

In principle, it seems that our developmental theorizing about constancies and change in time are very much in line with the way we make sense of them in our everyday talk as recurrent phenomena. Time seems to be stoppable in the form of "moments." When we look from an angle that spans across these moments and takes these moments as boundaries, imagining one at the left and the other at the right, we can see what has changed and what has remained the same. Thus, it seems, constancy and change only and always occur across a certain time span. The moments that seem to hold and constrain this time span can bind together for longer or shorter durations. They can construe periods of global or more local time (such as the history of the human species, i.e., phylogenesis), the evolution of communities (such as small groups like families or friendship networks), or larger cultures and societies as in "histories of civilization" (sociogenesis), or changes in the history of an individual organism from embryo to adulthood/maturity (ontogenesis). Moments as "substantial" points in time help to tie events into a particular sequential structure and at the same time serve to differentiate the structure under consideration from previous and subsequent event structures. In principle, the span of interest can also consist of a series of very brief snapshots of moment-to-moment, such as what happens between stimuli and reactions, the way Sander (1930) and Werner (1926/1959, 1948) attempted to capture the processes of the genesis of a percept or a thought (microgenesis).

Underlying these apparently *natural* constructs of the relation between continuity and change seem to be, nevertheless, a number of metaphors that allow us to think and talk about time as stoppable, that is, as viewing the flow of time as consisting of a series of (underlying) moments. Bickhard (this volume) characterizes this view as an outcome of the longstanding tradition of a "substance metaphysics" by use of which we attribute "substance" to how time "moves on" in the form of "substantial" continuous moments, as if one moment follows another moment, ultimately adding up to what is perceived as the flow of moments into "time." According to this view, "stasis...is the explanatory default, and any purported change requires explanation" (Bickhard, this volume). It is interesting to note that according to this view the substance or meaningfulness of moments comes to existence only as the result of its history—the previous moments that

happened before. Bickhard's alternative, to take continuous change as the underlying principle for the possibility to abstract stasis from it, is very much in line with Bergson's approach to "reality as a process" (Bergson, 1913/2001). According to this process-orientation, "the real" exists only as a constant and undivided flux; only by adopting a perspective that is equivalent with the substance view can we arrest time and take a perspective that moves us "above" and "out of" the flux of time so that time becomes available and disposable.

A way to better understand the difference between these two very different approaches to constancy, change, and development is by a closer consideration of how events and states, as two oppositional time frames, are differentiated. Events are constructs that emerge by perspectivizing temporal contours by the attribution of temporal boundaries (cf. Verkuyf, 1972; Weinrich, 1964). More specifically, events of differing duration such as a dropping needle, traffic accidents, weddings, or someone's adolescence come to existence by way of establishing a boundary to the left (the beginning of the event) and a boundary to the right (its ending). What is happening in the middle is held together by these two boundaries, giving it focus and current relevance. Simultaneously, it demarcates this event from previous and subsequent events. Similarly, states are also constructs; however, they emerge by taking a perspective that opens up, or better yet does *not* tie a happening to a particular temporal contour. Following such construction procedures, states such as being asleep, being alive, and the earth rotating around the sun can be created. Note that I am presenting both binding and unfolding procedures as constructions rather than representations of the way the world is. This is not to say that these events or states do not exist or are only fictional products of some individual or cultural, unwanted or agreed upon—binding and unfolding processes; not at all. Rather, the binding and unfolding activities are constitutive as perspectives from which events and states, constancies and change, and ultimately time and space *are constructively made use of*. They require identifying a figure and ground from the perspective of an agent who actively takes part in communal and individual meaning making processes.

The way substance and process views of constancy and change (as well as event and state) can be brought into a relationship is by way of using the visualization of figure and ground in the common representations of a vase or jar versus the mirror image of the silhouette of a human face (see Figure 10.1). Whereas the left pictorial representation is more likely to be "recognized" (interpreted) as an image of two faces, the pictorial representation to the right is immediately recognizable as a vase. However, with a certain amount of effort, it is possible to reverse these interpretations and see the mirror image of two faces in the right picture and the contours of a vase in the left. And while one can say, at some more abstract level, that both pictures lend themselves to both interpretations, it is not possible to see both images at the same time. The reason is that what provides the ground for the figure is reversed in the two interpretive acts; figuring and grounding, the way they result in one or the other interpretation in this particular example, are mutually exclusive.



Figure 10.1 Figuring and grounding as mutually exclusive acts. (Courtesy of Kaiser Porcelain, LTD and the IIS Division of Clark University)

In our efforts to make sense of constancy and change, I am arguing, we are in a similar situation. While the substance-perspective attempts to focus and foreground aspects of change, using moments of substance as the basis, the process-perspective yields change to do the grounding work in order to highlight the emergence of moments. Whereas the act of grounding and figuring orients toward one such interpretation, the other is necessarily inaccessible. Only with a total reorientation of what was formerly the ground and now is turned into the figure can we move from one interpretive orientation to the other. To argue to access or engage orienting toward both at the same time is impossible and resembles the act of "Mambo #5."¹ Beginning to attend to the identity dilemma along those lines, and in similar ways to the "uniqueness" and "construction dilemma," clarifies that there is no resolution to these dilemmas, especially no simple resolution. Rather, both sides of the dilemmas can be viewed as two different kinds of approaches that sharpen the focus of a lens and concentrate on different aspects of the overall constellation. And although a sharper focus is beneficial for what is considered relevant, it loses sight of what becomes viewed to be peripheral.

Taking these insights back to our engagement with developmental inquiry, we are now in a better position to clarify that development does not exist in the form of changes out there, the way they seem to occur in "real time." Rather, and here I am taking up on Kaplan's (1983a, 1983b) clarification, it is not possible to read off development from people's actions and behaviors. Instead, development is a (value—and often valuable) perspective used to make sense of changes (in the light of constancies) and constancies (in the light of changes). It always presupposes a value-orientation from where changes and constancies are made sense of in an overall move toward a meaningful and as such positive telos. In light of the above discussion then, it should be obvious that seemingly neutral changes and constancies cannot be read off from individuals' isolated actions and behaviors, either. What we, as humans, consider stable and what we consider mutable requires a position from where we bring figure and a ground into a relationship. If constant temporal flux is the ground, then we bring out constancies as figures that can stand off against this ground. However, if we take constancies as the ground,

we are figuring, so to speak, and highlighting what we consider to be relevant changes. Consequently, the perspective from where figure and ground are brought into a relationship can rarely be claimed to be neutral—but will turn out to be, in all likelihood, “developmentally colored” toward a telic orientation.

MICROGENESIS, MICROANALYSIS, AND POSITIONING

As mentioned in the opening section of this chapter, microgenesis has been part of a longstanding tradition of doing developmental inquiry (cf. Sander, 1930; Werner, 1948; and for overviews Lavelli, Pancoja, Hsu, Messinger, & Fogel, 2005; Siegler, 2006), although the U.S.–European tradition, with its focus on children growing up and becoming adults, has neither particularly welcomed nor embraced this way of developmental theorizing. Its roots in Friedrich Sander’s and Heinz Werner’s original notion of *Aktualgenese* (which is probably best translated as “actual becoming” or “occasioning”—later termed by Werner in his English writings *microgenesis*), this notion was designed to open up the exploration of changes in percept or thought formation in very brief sequences of moments. For instance, the process of visual recognition was broken down experimentally in order to gain insight into the processes that then were taken to underlie how perceptual images were slowly being grasped and transformed into full consciousness (Werner, 1948, p. 348f.).

While still anchored firmly in the substance perspective of relating permanence and change, *Aktualgenese*/microgenesis nevertheless has opened up methods of inquiry that supposedly could arrest microgenetic processes of development by minimizing the temporal distance between moments—with the tendency of moving closer, if not “inside” the origins of the moment itself. In other words, while more macrodevelopmental processes were more clearly driven by the final outcome of developmental changes, the study of microdevelopmental processes not only credited the local contexts within which changes take place, but also simultaneously repositioned the moment itself with a potential genesis of its own. Naturally, this would imply a considerable weakening of the substance perspective and constitute a move in the direction of a process-orientation. At the same time, the procedures to investigate how moments become interpreted as meaningful by humans in concrete contexts would open up the terrain to qualitative methods such as closer (participant) observations, interviewing or projective testing, and microanalytic analyses of social interactions.

To put this differently, crediting the moment of an experience as the cornerstone for learning or other developmental transformations meant that it would be possible to integrate such moments into developmental theorizing and developmental inquiry. Transformational experiences that seemed to be tied up in moments abound in accounts of how we have learned to ride a bike, tie our shoes, or in other situations in which the kind of a-ha experience represented the breakthrough into a new and transformative practice or repertoire of performances.² However, although abundant in everyday accounts of how we experience

development, such transformative breakthrough moments have been notoriously absent in developmental theorizing and empirical inquiry. This may have been partly due to the fact that in traditional developmental theorizing moments by themselves cannot be scrutinized for changes (and therefore become tucked away into the realm of personal anecdotes) and partly because the technology to capture such moments and prepare them for microscopic analysis has only recently progressed to a point where this seems to be possible.

While most microgenetic research has been accomplished in the field of cognitive development (summarized in Siegler, 2006), some more recent work has attempted to apply microgenetic methodology in the field of brain processes (Brown, 2002) and social development (c.f., Fogel, 1995; Fogel, de Koejer, Bellagamba, & Bell, 2002; Lavelli et al., 2005.) With the exception of Brown's (2002) theory, which is explicitly grounded in the process orientation of Bergson, almost all microgenetic research is anchored in the substance approach to change and constancy. Nevertheless, there have been a number of interesting innovations that provide a good platform for further developmental theorizing and applications in developmental inquiry.

Let me start out with Siegler's (2006) three main properties that he holds as central for the application of microgenetic methods, which are:

1. Observations span the period of rapidly changing competence.
2. Within each period, the density of observations is high, relative to the rate of change.
3. Observations are analyzed intensively, with the goal of inferring the representations and processes that gave rise to them. (Siegler, 2006, p. 469)

While the first two properties are relevant, it is the third that has become the center of innovative research strategies, marrying the method of doing microgenesis with the Wernerian focus on microcontext and Vygotskian focus on socio-cultural macrocontexts. As an attempt to better understand the processes that give rise to novel representations and competencies at more "developed" levels of differentiation and integration, Saxe's (1988, 1998, 2002) analysis of the microcultures of math practices (inside and outside of classroom interactions) presents illuminating examples of how developmental inquiry has become invigorated by microgenetic approaches. In a nutshell, Saxe argues:

In collective practices, joint tasks are accomplished...through the interrelated activities of individuals. In such joint accomplishments, individual and collective activities are reciprocally related. Individual activities are constitutive of collective practices. At the same time, the joint activity of the collective gives shape and purpose to individuals' goal-directed activities. (pp. 276-277)

Consequently, the study of the emergence of mathematical knowledge starts with minute descriptions of concrete interactional practices, within which the

knowledge originally is "housed." From here, by engaging in these practices (here as "doing" mathematics), particulars of these practices become routinized and transformed over time into competencies and representational capacities that may reach deeply into the representations of beliefs and values.³ The focus on the situated and local management of context—managed by individuals in interaction—was a central characteristic of what emerged as a new wave in the analytic inquiry of microgenetic development.

Microgenetic processes have been at the heart of some functionalist approaches to children's language development where processes have been examined in mother-child interaction (Budwig, 1995, 2000, 2003) and early book-reading activities (Bamberg, 1987, 1997a, in press) in order to show how developmental changes occur in concrete action contexts under highly specific conditions. Using video- and audiorecorded data of coconstructed activities between children and more capable others, we were able to show how local accomplishments at the level of joint actions could function as resources for differentiations that appeared later on the plane of individual functioning. Building on Werner and Kaplan's (1963/1984) *orthogenetic principle*, according to which development is defined in terms of increasing differentiation and hierarchic integration in human functioning, we developed and presented techniques that document microgenetic changes as changing qualities in children's form-function coordination (Bamberg, Budwig, & Kaplan, 1991). In recent years I have systematically extended this approach to a more fine-grained analysis of how identities and a sense of self first become differentiated at the level of interactions in order to become consequently integrated into repertoires that can productively be employed in new interactions in new situations. Notably, in these types of analyses, I have continually tried to refine our descriptions of face-to-face interactions in moment-to-moment situations in order to better understand how participants work out issues of sameness and difference in real time and contribute as active agents to differentiations and higher levels of sophistication of their own individual competencies and social-relational work with one another (Bamberg, 2004a, 2004b; Bamberg & Georgakopoulou, in press).

In the process of developing and refining microanalysis as the proper means to deal with the process of microgenesis, it became clear that we were not dealing with the development of relational or dialogic *knowledge* at the intrapsychological level.⁴ Rather, we were dealing with the construction of actual relations and dialogues in real-world time and situations. Our endeavors of developing microscopic descriptions of human activities in interactions became spurred by recent advances in the work of Garfinkel (1967), Goffman (1981), Kendon (1990), and Schefflen (1974), resulting in what is probably best characterized as a turn to microethnography (see Streeck & Mehus, 2005, for an excellent overview of the emergence of this field). Central to microethnography are (1) the level of microscopic attention to situated local contexts as being under construction and constantly changing through the activities performed by the interactants (as "in the making"), (2) the central role of language as constitutive of these contexts, though

in concert with other multimodal actions (such as postural configurations, gaze, prosodic delivery, and suprasegmentation); and (3) the analysis of the sequential performance and online negotiation of moment-to-moment interactions. Thus, a microethnographically informed analysis of the sequential arrangement of interaction is the most constructive way, within a process-oriented framework, to guide inquiry into the genesis of how people *make*⁵ sense of themselves and others, ultimately linking up the micro with the macro.

In recent articles, we have tried to promote and apply this type of micro-ethnographic analysis to psychology under the heading of *positioning analysis* (Bamberg, 1997b, 2003; Bamberg & Georgakopoulou, in press). The term *positioning* has been contrastively refined and redefined with reference to earlier forms of positioning analysis (Davies & Harré, 1990; Harré & van Langenhove, 1999; Hollway, 1989). The purpose of this redefinition has been to focus more effectively on the construction of who-is-in-charge dilemma; that is, the apparent contradiction between the agentive organism as positioning him- or herself, and the societal, sociocultural constraints seemingly "always and already" at work positioning "the subject." Positioning analysis along these newly defined lines studies how people as agentive actors position themselves—and in doing so become positioned.

To clarify, it is important to note that, for microanalytic purposes, it is the subject's actions that form the starting point of the analysis. From there, the next step is the sequential arrangement between interactants that ties actions into configurations within which these individual acts become recognizable as actions and meaningful interactive encounters.⁶ Obviously, this type of functional analysis is reminiscent of the analysis of brief moments as moment-to-moment processes in which meaningful events emerge—though note that this analysis explicitly makes the agentive role of the person central for the genesis of meaningful interactions. This is not to deny the existence of social constraints that "allow" for certain actions (and interactions), disallowing others. However, rather than taking these kinds of constraints as preexisting macrostructures to form the starting point for our analytic inquiry, we view them as *products* or *outcomes* of individual actions in interactions. While a macroanalytic approach would start with a concept of the subject as primarily socially constructed by outside, societal forces resulting in actions and activities that somehow reflect these constraints, we propose a different route. Taking off from micro- and sociogenesis as the local and situated formation sites of identity and otherness, the particular focus here is on practices in which subjects evoke (or position themselves vis-à-vis) dominant discourses or master narratives (Bamberg, 2004b), thereby effectively linking up to the macro of our social world. Positioning a sense of self in interactive practices opens the door to analyzing empirically how interactants make locally relevant whether and how they want to be understood in alignment with such dominant discourses or in opposition to and subverting them.

This model of positioning proposed in previous works (Bamberg, 1997b, 2004a; Bamberg & Georgakopoulou, in press) affords us the possibility of viewing identity constructions as twofold: We are able to analyze the way the referen-

tial world is constructed, with characters (such as self and others) in time (then) and space (there). Simultaneously, we are able to show how the referential world is constructed as a function of the interactive engagement, where the way the referential world is constructed points to how the teller "wants to be understood"; or more appropriately, to how tellers index a sense of self. It is precisely this groundedness of self and identity in sequential, moment-to-moment interactive engagements that is at best undertheorized and at worst dismissed in traditional developmental inquiry.

In the following, I will illustrate identity work through positioning in brief moments of interactions by turning the tables on a typical interview elicitation scenario (in which the researcher elicits monologic answers to explore aspects of the researched participant) to see what happens when the researched participants (in this case, a group of 10-year-old boys in a working-class East Coast American elementary school talking to one another in the presence of the moderator) engage in identity work that attends to peer group roles, dynamics, and shared interactional history on the one hand, and to the interview situation (including the moderator) on the other hand. I am consciously choosing to work with a brief segment that occurred in an interview situation to make tangible the point about the necessity of including moment-to-moment interactions in the main agenda of identity analysis as a form of developmental inquiry that is apt to be linked to the construction of more macroaspects of the social world we live in.

The sequence of discourse activities that I will analyze next routinely gets dismissed by developmental researchers since it does not seem to represent any developmental points worthy of study. However, I hope to be able to show that the microanalysis of a particular interaction segment is more than just the exemplification or illustration of a theoretical entry and methodological inclination. The functionalist orientation vis-à-vis talk in interaction as tools to constitute worlds, and in these worlds a sense of self, captures aspects of how this sense of self is manufactured in this particular site of engagement. As such, this reveals the processes within which selves are under construction. Entering the microgenesis of identity from this perspective, I propose to look into *one* concrete site of engagement in which senses of self are tried out and negotiated. What follows is an empirical analysis of the procedures (repertoires) used by speakers in order to establish a particular sense of self in and through their talk. The analysis will pay particular attention to the formation of a sense of self in the face of seemingly different discursive pulls: one toward a sense of (unrelational) masculinity according to which it is uncool to invest in relationships with girls and the other pulling toward a seemingly more relational stance, according to which it is okay, if not cool, to "be involved" or "have a girl friend."

"No One Ever Liked That Girl": Identity Formation as Process—Selves in the Making

The excerpt I will analyze at the microlevel stems from a group discussion session in which four 10-year-old boys and an adult (male) moderator are sitting around a table and talk about—broadly speaking—what it means to be a 10 year old. This

was the topic under which the participants had been recruited, and this phrase had been used as the opener for the discussion session. The excerpt comes from a time well into the discussion and reflects to a large extent the way the interaction was structured by the interactants. The interactions were video- and audiotaped and transcribed by using a simplified transcription that presents each turn as a unit—the length of pauses marked by dots (.) or giving the full length (1 sec), and overlaps marked by square brackets by], and latching-on by //. Contextual remarks such as gestures and gaze directions are in triangular brackets <>. I will abstain from giving more information such as the socioeconomic background of the participants, their standing in school, their relational histories, and what we learned about the boys' families and the boys' private lives in the course of our study, since this type of information may call for interpretive categories that may or may not be relevant for a better understanding of the participants' interactions in this particular situation. In essence, we are attempting to bring as little preformed knowledge as possible to the work with this excerpt in order to see what categories they actually make relevant (in the sense of interactively attending to) in their talk.

Analyzing the excerpt microethnographically means that we attempt to follow the five interactants in their mutual constructions of each other and themselves in their moment-by-moment interaction. This way, we assume, we will be able to “lay open” the *how* of the genesis of identities and selves in *this* piece of interaction; that is, we will scrutinize how the interactants position themselves using macrocategories and recreating them in their business of making sense of each other. Through these activities they form a sense of who they are. “Analyzing” here will consist of determining the acts in their sequence that led to some understanding of the overall structure of the interaction at the microlevel; the analysis thus is meant to be quite different from simply paraphrasing what the interactants are saying. It also attempts to avoid bringing outside categories prematurely to the interpretive business at hand.

Topical flow

The topic that was in the process of being negotiated at the onset of the excerpt, mainly between Martin and the moderator, was on Kimberly, a female character in the TV series *The Power Rangers*. This is a topic that the moderator (in turn 2: “*what about that?*”) seemingly attempts to make relevant for the other participants by eliciting others' responses. Victor, in turn 3, responds by initiating his own question, picking up and repeating the moderator's exact lexical phrase to introduce his question (“*what about?*”), and keeps one aspect of the topic the same (“*Kimberly*”). However, in what follows, it becomes clear that he changes the topic to another character, Kimberly Spears, and continues by reformulating his “*what about Kimberly Spears?*” question, seemingly making it more precise, by asking whether anyone *ever liked that girl*. The phrasing suggests a *dispreferred* answer. Martin's request (turn 4) for clarification of the initial question is followed by the repetition of the name (turn 5), suggesting that Martin's question was heard by

Table 10.1 Transcript of the whole interaction (Lines 1-40)

Participants:		Mod—Moderator; Martin; Victor; Wally; Stanton
1	Martin	...I'd say like (.) Kimberly I (.) the Power Ranger I
2	Mod	what about that I
3	Victor	d'know Kimberly Spears I (1 sec) did anyone ever like that girl I
4	Martin	who
5	Victor	Kimberly Spears I
6	Mod	who [is that
7	Victor	[I think Stanton did
8	Mod	who is Kimberly Spears
9	Wally	I do [not know I
10	Mod	[is she (.) is she a (.)
11	Victor	it was a girl who used to uh go to our school (.) she she moved um
12	Wally	who liked Britney that was in Mrs. [Petrie's class
13	Victor	[no Britney Longlander that was Louis (.) that was Louis Martinez//
14	Stanton	//fine I kind of liked her(1 sec)
15	Wally	ha:a[<high pitch> <gaze toward Stanton; pointing with left hand at Stanton; briefly shifting gaze to Victor, then back to Stanton>
16	Victor	[I knew it I knew [it I knew it (.) that girl used to always have like a fruit punch thing around her mouth=
17	Stanton	[a little bit =I know (.) no chapped lips
18	Victor	yeah, chapped lips (.) like she had like this big thing that used to go eeuw// <encircles his mouth with both hands - with high pitch noise]
19	Stanton	//no it was like over here <motions just a little under and around his left edge of his mouth>
20	Mod	and you you think it was from [fruit punch?
21	Wally	[there was this one girl (.) there was this one girl
22	Victor	<gazing at and nodding in response to Moderator's question> she must have gone] <lifting up a pretend cup and pretending to drink with a slurping noise>
23	Stanton	[there's two other people I like that aren't in the school anymore I
24	Martin	who
25	Stanton	no one
26	Martin	you can't tell them
27	Victor	Brittany [Long
28	Wally	[Britney =Long
29	Victor	=I know that I you used to always hang around Britney Long (.) Britney Long (.) Britney Longlander I//
30	Stanton	//Britney Britney
31	Martin	I think James Mason likes Christine Janson
32	Wally	Christine liked James uh [James Heisen before
33	Stanton	[Stephanie (.) not Stephanie [that's in school now (.) Stephanie//
34	Wally	[at the beginning of the year yeah she told us (continued)

Table 10.1 Continued

35	Victor	//Gonsalves1//
36	Stanton	//no1 she's not in school anymore (.) and (1 sec) Shannon <smiling and coming up from resting-on-table position>
37	Victor	eoh and you liked Shannon she was so ugly I hate her <moves both hands up to his head – covers his eyes pulls his hat down>
38	Stanton	yeah she's annoying but
39	Mod	(1 sec) alright see....
40	Victor	she's a tattletale

Victor only as an acoustic issue. The moderator (turn 6) follows up on Martin's previous request, by now more overtly asking for further specification about this girl ("who is that?"). Victor, whose turn (7) overlaps with the moderator's request, follows up on his own earlier question (whether anyone liked this girl) by giving the answer ("I think Stanton did"). To summarize thus far: Victor initiates a new topic, a girl that supposedly is not likable; he asks whether anyone ever liked that girl, implying that nobody would, and then gives the answer to his own question, suggesting that one of the participating boys, namely Stanton, actually likes (or liked) her.

In terms of analyzing how Victor crafted the implication that one of the participants liked an "unlikable girl," we may want to ask which other way he could have phrased his question. One suggestion is that he could have addressed Stanton more directly by, let's say, "You liked Kimberly Spears, who is an unlikable person." However, for reasons unclear at this point, he chose a highly indirect way to formulate what clearly can be construed as a challenge, since liking something or somebody "unlikable" requires some form of explication on the part of the person who has been implicated. However, there is no immediate response from Stanton. Instead, the subsequent turns (8–13, lasting for exactly 15 seconds) center first on some more information about Kimberly Spears, and from there move the conversation to other girl-boy relations. A more fine grained analysis of these turns would reveal, although I do not have the space to lay this out in detail, that the emerging activity frame in these few turns is one of gossiping about who in their peers is "going" with whom. If this is correct, then Victor's implication of Stanton retrospectively has turned into a de facto statement that Stanton "was going out with" Kimberly Spears. This is something that up to turn 13 had not been rejected but neither was it supported by anyone. It seemed to have become currently irrelevant. The flow of the conversation had moved on to another, seemingly more interesting, topic.

It is at this moment (turn 14) that Stanton formulates what becomes the answer to Victor's original question (turn 3), but he simultaneously counters Victor's challenge with turn 7: Stanton's "fine" in turn-initial position clearly marks his answer in contrast to what was laid out as expected. In other words, Stanton clearly contextualizes the dispreferred orientation that Victor had suggested and

decidedly counters it. At the same time, he hedges his answer carefully: he only “*kind of*” liked the girl under discussion. This modification is further specified by “*a little bit*”—a turn by Stanton that fully overlaps with Victor’s response to Stanton’s previous turn. The reaction to what in the sequential arrangement of the moment-by-moment actions of the participants is becoming an “admission” is in line with the dispreferred orientation of the initial question: Victor’s (turn 16) repetition (three times) of his “knowing” (past tense: “*I knew it*”) functions to align his audience to the sequence of his previous actions: my (Victor’s) challenge of you, Stanton, was and is legitimate. Wally’s reaction to Stanton’s “admission” is equally telling: He points at Stanton and outright laughs, though he first reassures his reaction by a quick gaze check towards Victor, the initiator of this sequence of moments, signaling that the target of his laughter is Stanton. At this point it is unclear as to why Stanton’s admission is “laughable,” unless we are about to bring in a categorical interpretation that men who “are going” with partners who aren’t likable are the laughing stock of other men. However, this could surmount a premature closing of what is in the midst of emerging in the conversation of the participants. Additionally it is from an adult vantage point; that is, not necessarily from the orientation that these 10-year-olds are in the business of working up.

A quick look into a different modality will strengthen and confirm the analysis of what is emerging here in the participants’ moment-by-moment interactions. At the time of the delivery of his question (turn 3), Victor’s body and gaze are fully oriented toward the moderator, suggesting that his question is clearly in response

Table 10.2 Transcript of lines 7–14 (including gaze and duration)

			Gaze direction/ object handling	Time duration between turn 7 and turn 14
7	Victor	[I think Stanton did	brief gaze to Stanton	—
8	Mod	who is Kimberly Spears		11
9	Wally	I do [not know]	full gaze to Stanton	11
10	Mod	[is she(.) is she (.)		11
11	Victor	it was a girl who used to uh go to our school (.) she moved um	shifting gaze to Mod	15 sec
12	Wally	who liked Brittany that was in Mrs. Petrie’s class	Stanton handling object	11
13	Victor	[no Britney Longlander† that was Louis (.) that was Louis Martinez//	<displaying disinterest>	11
14	Stanton	//fine I kind of liked her	—	11

to the moderator's question. Although it is not an answer, it nevertheless picks up on the moderator's suggestion to open the floor for turns from others; that's what he is following up on. At the point in time where he explicitly refers to and implicates Stanton (turn 7: *I think Stanton did*), he shifts gaze for a split-second to Stanton (turning his head but immediately turning it back) while maintaining his overall body orientation vis-à-vis the moderator. Then, when the moderator explicitly asks for more information, Victor turns more fully to Stanton, as if an answer is expected to come from Stanton. Then Stanton, who was resting his head on the table, upon hearing his name raises his head. However, he keeps his gaze fixed on an object that he simultaneously handles. He returns shortly afterwards to his former position, lowering his head and resting his chin on his hands on the table. He maintains this position another 10 seconds and does not move up his chin during the performance of his turn (14: *fine I kind of liked her*). However, when challenged by Wally (turn 15) and Victor (turn 16), Stanton moves his head up. He delivers his modification "*a little bit*," expressed with a bright smile, then moves his head back into a resting position again. In sum, this brief description of the sequential arrangement of body posture and gaze orientation adds to a better understanding of what actions are sequentially at play in the construction of some integrated sense of what is going on.

In the following, I will limit my analysis to two small parts of the subsequent actions between the participants. Victor's characterization of Kimberly in turn 18 as having "*like a fruit punch thing around her mouth*" orients toward the category of "slob" or "baby" (or both). It is countered by Stanton by a turn initial agreement (*I know*), but then he negates (*no*), and subsequently corrects Victor's claim, making clear that her lips looked the way they looked due to being chapped. Stanton's implication can be heard along the lines that chapped lips can happen to anyone; they are not Kimberly's fault, while drinking fruit punch resulting in fruit punch lips is. In other words, Stanton's remarks can be understood in terms of his action-orientation as fending for Kimberly. Subsequently, Victor responds (turn 18) with a turn-initial consent (*yeah, chapped lips*) but then continues with a slurping noise, which may be understood as insisting on his earlier fruit punch version. He further characterizes Kimberly's lips in terms of a rather largely affected area. In parallel to his previous move, Stanton (turn 19) opposes Victor's version (*no*) and describes the affected area to be much smaller (*it was like only here*). Again, while Victor's descriptions of Kimberly can be taken to downgrade her appearance and her character, something that is in line with his original and opening characterization of Kimberly as "unlikable," Stanton's descriptions are fending off and can be understood as upgrading Kimberly as a potentially likable character.

The second segment I briefly want to analyze is consequent to Stanton's further admission in turn 23, namely that he liked two other *people*, none of them at their school anymore. While it is noteworthy that these two girls are referred to as "people" and that neither of them is said to be at their school anymore, I want to focus on how this statement assists Stanton in involving the other participants in

Table 10.3 Transcript of lines 16–21

16	Victor	[I knew it I knew [it I knew it (.) that girl used to always have like a fruit punch thing around her mouth=
17	Stanton	[a little bit =I know (.) no chapped lips
18	Victor	yeah, chapped lips (.) like she had like this big thing that used to go eeuw// <encircles his mouth with both hands - with high pitched noise]
19	Stanton	//no it was like over here <motions just a little under and around his left edge of his mouth>
20	Mod	and you you think it was from [fruit punch?
21	Wally	[there was this one girl (.) there was this one girl

a guessing game as to who these girls might be. Note that he was not pressed for more information on girls, in particular girls he liked; so the subsequent rounds of individual turn-taking actions are clearly (re-) initiated by him. Then, when he discloses the name of the second girl, Shannon (turn 36), since nobody seems to remember the first girl, Victor starts out with an evaluative sound (*eeuw*) and a question that is rhetorically formatted to display a nonpreferred response (*you liked Shannon*), followed by two ultimate negative assessments (*she was so ugly*

Table 10.4 Transcript of lines 23–40

23	Stanton	[there's two other people I like that aren't in the school anymore I
24	Martin	who
25	Stanton	no one
26	Martin	you can't tell them
27	Victor	Brittany [Long
28	Wally	[Britney =Long
29	Victor	=I know that you used to always hang around Britney Long (.) Britney Long (.) Britney Longlander!//
30	Stanton	//Britney Britney
31	Martin	I think James Mason likes Christine Janson
32	Wally	Christine liked James uh [James Heisen before
33	Stanton	[Stephanie(.) not Stephanie [that's in school now (.) Stephanie//
34	Wally	[at the beginning of the year yeah she told us
35	Victor	//Gonsalves!//
36	Stanton	//no! she's not in school anymore (.) and (I sec) Shannon <smiling and coming up from resting-on-table position>
37	Victor	eoh and you liked Shannon she was so ugly I [hate her <moves both hands up to his head—covers his eyes - pulls his hat down>
38	Stanton	[yeah she's annoying but
39	Mod	(I sec) alright [see....
40	Victor	[she's a tattletale

and *I hate her*). In parallel to Stanton's earlier activities of tending for Kimberly, he starts his turn (38) by an initial agreement (*yeah*) but then considerably downgrades Victor's evaluation by describing her "only" as "annoying", followed by "but," suggesting a list of further attributes disagreeing with Victor and working toward an upgrading of Kimberly.

Summary

Attempting to answer the question of what the participants are talking *about*, or what the overall topic of the conversation is that holds it together thematically, Victor and Stanton both refer to three female characters (actually, there are more, but I only analyzed these three). The characters are drawn up in some evoked past events that are not further specified: Kimberly Spears, Shannon, and Stanton. It is the relationship between Stanton and these two girls, respectively, that is under discussion—whether he actually "liked" these girls. Now, we could have started out with the question: What does it mean for a 10-year-old boy to like a girl, and we could have speculated about that. Instead, we decided to make this question more specific by asking: What does it mean to get caught liking a girl by one's male peers? The investigation focused on this question by analyzing the discursive means that are employed when becoming implicated in exactly this.

One important aspect of the discursive means employed were particular characterizations in the sense of designing or fashioning characters in the realm of the talked about. As we could see, Stanton carefully positions Kimberly and Shannon in the referred-to world of the there-and-then in order to position himself in the here-and-now of the group discussion. And equally, Victor positions Kimberly, Shannon, and Stanton in the there-and-then in order to position himself in the here-and-now to display a sense of how he understands gender and gender relationships. In that sense, the interaction between the two boys, Victor and Stanton, into which the other participants are pulled, is not really about those girls, but about themselves, individually as well as in this group. Both of them engage in some very careful positioning of the characters in the there-and-then of the referred-to world and themselves in the here-and-now of this interaction, signaling that they are maneuvering in between two pulls.

At first glance, these two pulls can be characterized in terms of coming across as finding girls attractive versus not being interested in girls. As such, both boys can be heard as juggling two "dominant discourses": One according to which they can be seen as being invested in girls where "going with" constitutes a potential gain in social capital, and the other in which they come across as not attracted to girls, where hanging out with girls and "doing girl-stuff" is uncool. This is what one might expect in preadolescent and adolescent (American) boys, where girls "have cooties" and are characterized as "yuck." However, behind this superficial characterization that traditionally tends to inscribe these contradictions in particular developmental phases of growing up heterosexual (Maccoby, 1998), two more powerful conceptual orientations seem to be lurking: These pulls can be characterized as two master narratives (or dominant discourses) that position nar-

rators in quite different ways. The two conflicting master narratives in this case are a dependent, soft and caring, more feminine sense of self on the one hand, and an independent, strong, noncommittal, and more masculine sense of self on the other. Whereas the first is used by Stanton to position himself regarding girls, Victor employs the second to position himself as different and in contrast to girls. Victor and Stanton, in their discursive maneuvers between these two positions, can be shown as constructing two distinguishable orientations as ways of making sense of themselves (and each other).

CONCLUSIONS

The above analysis, performed on the sequential arrangements of interactions among the five participants, has revealed aspects of the genesis of how people make sense of themselves and others—here with emphasis on the interactive practices of 10-year-old young males. As has been demonstrated, the analysis was not attempting to access sense-making as intrapsychological activities in the mind, but *in the activities* among participants—positionings of self and others in the social domain of talk-in-interaction. And it should be noted that the analysis was not solely relying on language as linguistic activities and strategies. It is the body that is analyzed in concert with other bodies, with language taking a somewhat central role but always deeply embedded within other multimodal actions (such as postural configurations, gaze, prosodic delivery, and suprasegmentation). Local contexts and situated meanings are constituted and continuously produced and reproduced in concert with these actions. What became notable in the analysis of the sequence under consideration was how sense-making as a moment-to-moment process is grounded in the developmental dynamics of integration and differentiation: While the individual acts in their sequential arrangements were seen as becoming progressively differentiated, they also were viewed as simultaneously becoming integrated into larger meaningful units, thereby contributing to some overarching understanding of what is being accomplished in terms of the genesis of identities and selves in local, situated activities (*Aktualgenese*).

Of course it could be argued that the participants must have had access to the kinds of pulls in the form of master narratives prior to the specific encounter analyzed. In one way or another, they must have heard or been exposed to them before, so they can call them into being by drawing up positions vis-à-vis these master narratives. However, previous exposure does not result necessarily in complicity or in counterpositions. At best, the argument of previous exposure may lead participants to try out positions, without prematurely fixing them as positions—and this is precisely what we are able to show by way of microanalytically delineating the maneuvers that lead to the identification of positions. Further analysis into the ways these maneuvers are negotiated could lay open how, in spite of the competitiveness of the individual moves of the interactants, they still result in something that can be characterized in terms of (male) solidarity and probably even harmony.⁸ Speaking sociogenetically, the participants use the interaction to

test out masculinity discourses, manipulate them for different purposes in order to check for potential gains and losses, while overall still striving for some form of relational stance among each other.

Starting from the assumption that moment-by-moment changes are the ground against which events begin to stand out and then can be integrated into larger, overarching configurations that are socially and individually meaningful, we can begin to appreciate how a process-orientation can be productively used for empirical work in developmental inquiry. Along similar lines, work within this type of approach to development and change (and constancy) equally contributes to a better understanding not only of the identity dilemma, but also to how identity becomes constituted as same and different from others (the sameness dilemma) and how the individual agentively construes him- or herself and is constantly being construed by social, outside forces (the construction dilemma). The assumption that process is a natural ingredient of meaning construction that reaches deep into the formation of selves and identities, opens up new challenges for developmental psychologists and forms a particularly exciting frontier for empirical contributions that attempt to link the micro and the macro of our social world.

Notes

1. Mambo #5, a 1999 hit by Lou Bega, has become an MTV expression for "wanting to have too many things at the same time." See for the wording of the song: <http://www.lyricsondemand.com/onehitwonders/mambo5lyrics.html>
2. This is not to deny that there are other possible accounts of learning in the form of a history of trials and errors, possibly mixed with a good amount of rewards and punishments; or, alternatively, accounts that build on our genetic endowment and sociocultural constraints in the form of socialization practices.
3. Interestingly, micro- and sociogenesis both complement one another in these practices: What can be viewed on the one hand as the emergence of individual accomplishments of means-end relations (e.g., in the form of counting practices), on the other hand appears as communal practice that has the potential of resulting in the joint experience of intimacy and belonging as emergent relations among the participants, thereby reaffirming the process of "practicing."
4. Positing relationality or dialogicality as intraorganismic "substances" is asking for a very traditional type of developmental inquiry, namely one that centers on their unfolding at moments in ontogenesis—rather than along micro- and sociogenetic lines (i.e., investigating how relationality and dialogicality are actually established in the time and space of moment-by-moment interactions).
5. Making sense is meant very literally: While sense-making traditionally is a figure of speech for the mental activity of "understanding," here we are appealing to the activity of sense construal—in action and interaction between people—and only in subsequent steps in the head or in the mind of individuals.
6. Note how this resembles the developmental principle of *integration* and *simultaneous differentiation* into some overarching, holistic organization.
7. "Discursive pulls" are discursively organized types of making sense; although they can be analyzed as having an existence outside of concrete interactions and exercises.

ing a certain rhetorical power over individuals and their actions, our analysis below only attends to these "pulls" insofar as participants of the interaction actually evoke the categories and display these "pulls" in their interactions.

8. Note how both Victor and Stanton start each of their turns marking an overall agreement before detailing their disagreement. And note further how their exchanges display an overall sense of tentativeness and playfulness.

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