[interpretation] might be "Secretaries in general are female, you're female, so you in particular are our secretary." (p. 481)

Bethan Benwell and Elizabeth Stokoe (2006:61–62) used a conversation between three friends to illustrate key concepts in conversation analysis. The text is prepared for analysis by numbering the lines, identifying the speakers, and inserting ↑ symbols to indicate inflection and decimal numbers to indicate elapsed time.

104 **Marie**: !Has !anyone-(0.2) has anyone got any really non:

105 sweaty stuff.

106 **Dawn**: Dave has, but you'll smell like a ma:n,

107 (0.9)

108 **Kate:** Eh [!huh heh]

109 **Marie:** [Right has] anyone got any !fe:minine non sweaty stuff.

The gap at line 107, despite being less than a second long, is nevertheless quite a long time in conversation, and indicates an interactional glitch or trouble. As Kate starts to laugh, Marie reformulates her request, from '↑has ↑anyone got any really non: sweaty stuff,' to 'right has anyone got any, ↑fe:minine non sweaty stuff.' . . . the word **'**really' is replaced by 'feminine,' and is produced with a hearable increase in pitch and emphasis. This replacement, together with the addition of 'right,' displays her understanding of the problem with her previous question. . . . for these speakers, smelling like a 'man' (when one is a 'woman') is treated as a trouble source, a laughable thing and something that needs attending to and fixing.

Narrative Analysis

Narrative methods use interviews and sometimes documents or observations to "follow participants down *their* trails" (Riessman 2008:24). Unlike conversation analysis, which focuses attention on moment-by-moment interchange, narrative analysis seeks to put together the "big picture" about experiences or events as the participants understand them. **Narrative analysis** focuses on "the story itself" and seeks to preserve the integrity of personal biographies or a series of events that cannot adequately be understood in terms of their discrete elements (Riessman 2002:218). Narrative "displays the goals and intentions of human actors; it makes individuals, cultures, societies, and historical epochs comprehensible as wholes" (Richardson 1995:200). The coding for a narrative analysis is typically of the narratives as a whole, rather than of the different elements within them. The coding strategy revolves around reading the stories and classifying them into general patterns.

Narrative analysis A form of qualitative analysis in which the analyst focuses on how respondents impose order on the flow of experience in their lives and so make sense of events and actions in which they have participated.

For example, Calvin Morrill and his colleagues (2000:534) read through 254 conflict narratives written by the ninth graders they studied and found four different types of stories:

1. *Action tales,* in which the author represents himself or herself and others as acting within the parameters of taken-for-granted assumptions about what is expected for particular roles among peers.
2. *Expressive tales,* in which the author focuses on strong, negative emotional responses to someone who has wronged him or her.
3. *Moral tales,* in which the author recounts explicit norms that shaped his or her behavior in the story and influenced the behavior of others.
4. *Rational tales,* in which the author represents himself or herself as a rational decision maker navigating through the events of the story.

In addition to these dominant distinctions, Morrill et al. (2000:534–535) also distinguished the stories in terms of four stylistic dimensions: plot structure (such as whether the story unfolds sequentially), dramatic tension (how the central conflict is represented), dramatic resolution (how the central conflict is resolved), and predominant outcomes (how the story ends). Coding reliability was checked through a discussion by the two primary coders, who found that their classifications agreed for a large percentage of the stories.

The excerpt that begins this chapter exemplifies what Morrill et al. (2000) termed an *action tale.* Such tales

> unfold in matter-of-fact tones kindled by dramatic tensions that begin with a disruption of the quotidian order of everyday routines. A shove, a bump, a look . . . triggers a response . . . Authors of action tales typically organize their plots as linear streams of events as they move briskly through the story's scenes . . . This story's dramatic tension finally resolves through physical fighting, but . . . only after an attempted conciliation. (p. 536)

You can contrast that "action tale" with the following narrative, which Morrill et al. (2000) classify as a "moral tale," in which the students "explicitly tell about their moral reasoning, often referring to how normative commitments shape their decisionmaking":

> I . . . got into a fight because I wasn't allowed into the basketball game. I was being harassed by the captains that wouldn't pick me and also many of the players. The same type of things had happened almost every day where they called me bad words so I decided to teach the ring leader a lesson. I've never been in a fight before but I realized that sometimes you have to make a stand against the people that constantly hurt you, especially emotionally. I hit him in the face a couple of times and I got respect I finally deserved. (pp. 545–546)

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Morrill et al. (2000:553) summarize their classification of the youth narratives in a simple table that highlights the frequency of each type of narrative and the characteristics associated with each of them (Exhibit 10.8). How does such an analysis contribute to our understanding of youth violence? Morrill et al. (2000) first emphasize that their narratives "suggest that consciousness of conflict among youths—like that among adults—is not a singular entity, but comprises a rich and diverse range of perspectives" (p. 551).

Theorizing inductively, Morrill et al. (2000:553–554) then attempt to explain why action tales were much more common than the more adult-oriented normative, rational, or emotionally expressive tales. One possibility is Gilligan's (1988) theory of moral development, which suggests that younger students are likely to limit themselves to the simpler action tales that "concentrate on taken-for-granted assumptions of their peer and wider cultures, rather than on more self-consciously reflective interpretation and evaluation" (Morrill et al. 2000:554). More generally, Morrill et al. (2000) argue, "We can begin to think of the building blocks of cultures as different narrative styles in which various aspects of reality are accentuated, constituted, or challenged, just as others are deemphasized or silenced" (p. 556).

In this way, Morrill et al.'s (2000) narrative analysis allowed an understanding of youth conflict to emerge from the youths' own stories while also informing our understanding of broader social theories and processes.

EXHIBIT 10.8 Summary Comparison of Youth Narratives*

Representation of	*Action Tales (N = 144)*	*Moral Tales (N = 51)*	*Expressive Tales (N = 35)*	*Rational Tales (N = 24)*
Bases of everyday conflict	disruption of everyday routines & expectations	normative violation	emotional provocation	goal obstruction
Decision making	intuitive	principled stand	sensual	calculative choice
Conflict handling	confrontational	ritualistic	cathartic	deliberative
Physical violence†	in 44% (*N* = 67)	in 27% (*N* = 16)	in 49% (*N* = 20)	in 29% (*N* = 7)
Adults in youth conflict control	invisible or background	sources of rules	agents of repression	institutions of social control

*Total *N* = 254.

†Percentages based on the number of stories in each category.

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Narrative analysis can also use documents and observations. Narrative analyst Catherine Kohler Riessman (2008:67–73) describes the effective combination of data from documents, interviews, and field observations to learn how members of Alcoholics Anonymous (AA) developed a group identity (Cain 1991). Propositions that Carole Cain (1991:228) identified repeatedly in the documents enter into stories as guidelines for describing the progression of drinking, the desire and inability to stop, the necessity of "hitting bottom" before the program can work, and the changes that take place in one's life after joining AA.

Cain then found that this same narrative was expressed repeatedly in AA meetings. She only interviewed three AA members but found that one who had been sober and in AA for many years told "his story" using this basic narrative, while one who had been sober for only 2 years deviated from the narrative in some ways. One interviewee did not follow this standard narrative at all as he told his story; he had attended AA only sporadically for 20 years and left soon after the interview.

> I argue that as the AA member learns the AA story model, and learns to place the events and experiences of his own life into the model, he learns to tell and to understand his own life as an AA life, and himself as an AA alcoholic. The personal story is a cultural vehicle for identity acquisition. (Cain 1991:215)

Grounded Theory

Theory development occurs continually in qualitative data analysis (Coffey & Atkinson 1996:23). The goal of many qualitative researchers is to create **grounded theory**—that is, to build up inductively a systematic theory that is "grounded" in, or based on, the observations. The observations are summarized into conceptual categories, which are tested directly in the research setting with more observations. Over time, as the conceptual categories are refined and linked, a theory evolves (Glaser & Strauss 1967; Huberman & Miles 1994:436). Exhibit 10.9 diagrams the grounded theory of a chronic illness "trajectory" developed by Strauss and Corbin (1990:221). Their notes suggested to them that conceptions of self, biography, and body are reintegrated after a process of grieving.

Grounded theory Systematic theory developed inductively, based on observations that are summarized into conceptual categories, reevaluated in the research setting, and gradually refined and linked to other conceptual categories.

As observation, interviewing, and reflection continue, researchers refine their definitions of problems and concepts and select indicators. They can then check the frequency and distribution of phenomena: How many people made a particular type of comment? How often did social interaction lead to arguments? Social system models may then be developed, which specify the relationships among different phenomena. These models are modified as researchers gain experience in the setting. For the final analysis, the researchers check their models carefully against their notes and make a concerted attempt to discover negative evidence that might suggest that the model is incorrect.

Heidi Levitt, Rebecca Todd Swanger, and Jenny Butler (2008:435) used a systematic grounded method of analysis to understand the perspective of male perpetrators of