

Abstract

In this paper we analyze how differences in issue framing emerge in multi-stakeholder conversations. From a discursive approach to issue framing we draw on conversational studies of disagreement, difference and conflict to build up a theoretical framework. This leads us to understand differences in issue framing as relationally significant, sequentially relevant and discursively constructed incompatibilities between two or more issue elements. In the study of multi-stakeholder conversations in the context of natural resources management in Southern Ecuador, we analyzed 8 difference emergence episodes during three interaction moments. We show that the discursive structure of the difference-initiating speaking turns is multi-layered. The differences emerge by working cautiously towards a specific but clear challenge and then adding further challenging layers of implications, and can be understood as oriented to simultaneously being to the point and being relevant. As was the case in 4 of the studied difference emergence episodes, this multi-layered structure can be exploited by interrupting a divergent movement in order to prevent the emergence of a difference. Finally, the interaction contexts in which the differences emerge can be characterized as asymmetrical, putting the burden of the risky business of initiating differences on the shoulders of the weaker parties, who proceed very prudently and produce generally weak signals of difference.

Keywords: framing, difference, multi-actor negotiations

Introduction

How do people differ in opinion? This question is probably relevant for many of our daily activities but becomes highly relevant if the people involved represent organizations that in one way or another depend upon each other for tackling complex problem situations. In these complex organizational contexts where multiple actors are involved and interdependencies are high, collaborative arrangements have been proposed for reaching viable solutions (Gray, 1989; Huxham, 1996). Examples of such contexts include business alliances, technological innovation projects, interactive policy-making and public service coordination. Our study cases primarily involve natural resources management in the context of international development cooperation in Southern Ecuador, where the tuning of different interdependent uses and users of the various natural resources usually requires extensive negotiation.

Research on *issue framing* (Putnam & Holmer, 1992; Dewulf, Craps & Dercon, 2004) has shown that people often differ in opinion by differently framing the issues at hand. Different (groups of) people make sense of their situation in different ways, use different labels to describe it, and suggest different ways of acting upon it. This leads to differences of opinion that cannot be arbitrated in any straightforward way by searching for the right information. Rather, when different issue frames meet, different constructions of what is the case are juxtaposed or counterposed and ambiguity ensues (Dewulf et al., 2005). While both cognitive and interactional approaches to framing have shown that differences in issue framing are often considerable and have important implications, little or no research has been done on how differences in issue framing emerge in actual conversations. We studied this aspect in the context of two collaborative development projects concerned with irrigation management and soil conservation respectively, in order to gain insight in how these often crucially important differences emerge in ongoing interactions. The qualitative research methods of discourse and conversation analysis (Wood & Kroger, 2000) are particularly suited for this endeavor, since they focus on how people construct meaning in interaction.

This paper orients our attention to the way different frames get confronted in actual interaction moments. Dewulf, Craps and Dercon (2004) have outlined a *discursive* approach to issue framing. They stress its interactive rather than individual character, since the enactment of a certain frame depends on the reactions of others to establish its meaning (Gray and Donnellon, 1990; Drake and Donohue, 1996). Starting from the general observation that people talk differently about certain issues depending on whom they are talking to, they stress the communicative aspects of framing, rather than cognitive processes, concluding that people use frames that serve their current interactional concerns in a conversation (Aarts, Van Woerkum, & Vermunt, 2003; Benford and Snow, 2000). Finally they stress the constructive rather than representative characteristics of issue framing, which are based on the possibilities of linguistic choices to generate alternative descriptive versions of events with very different implications (Potter & Wetherell, 1987; Edwards, 1997). We want to build on this concept for an investigation of how differences in issue framing emerge during multi-actor interaction moments where the definition of issues and the delimitation of a common problem domain are at stake.

Since a good understanding of the research context is essential for understanding the qualitative research results, we will first provide the necessary background for the cases and interaction moments we studied. This can then inform the development of our theoretical framework, the methodological approach and the presentation and discussion of the results in the subsequent sections.

Research context: the cases

The three multi-actor interaction moments, in which we studied the emergence of differences in issue framing, were part of two cases in which an engineering center at the University of Cuenca in Southern Ecuador played a leading role.

In the *irrigation management* case, the focus was on the hydraulic management of an irrigation system. The university engineering center had implemented a computer model for simulating the water flow in the 30 km main canal of an irrigation system administered by an indigenous organization. In this study, we will focus on the interaction moment called *hydraulic model presentation*, in which the

university engineers present a hydraulic model of the irrigation system and its possible applications to representatives of the indigenous organization.

In the *soil conservation* case, a collaboration with non-governmental development organizations and community organizations was built to counter erosion and soil fertility problems. Dewulf, Craps & Dercon (2004) have analyzed the diversity of frames that meet each other in this project. Here we will zoom in on the emergence of differences in issue framing during two interaction moments. The first interaction moment, called *potato harvest*, consists of an explanation by a university engineer on soil issues with a group of farmers at a demonstration plot. The second interaction moment, called *coordination workshop*, consists of a large meeting with representatives of all the organizations involved in the collaboration in which the coordination of activities is discussed.

A theoretical framework for differences in issue framing

Since the study of issue framing in interaction is a relatively unexplored domain, few previous studies are directly relevant to our question. This situation leads us to explore a number of research domains that do offer important insights, upon which we can draw to conceptualize our approach to studying differences in issue framing in multi-actor conversations. In the following sections we will first clarify how issue frames can be understood as discursive entities assembled in conversations, then review studies of how disagreement works in conversations, address the enactment of different social contexts and finally propose a definition of differences in issue framing.

Framing issues through assembling issue elements into sensible wholes

Lawrence, Phillips and Hardy (1999) studied multi-actor contexts as arenas of discursive struggle over issues, actors and interests. They define issues as discursively constructed accounts negotiated in conversations that construct the world as problematic and as requiring action. These accounts can be formulated on different levels of abstraction, however. Therefore we need to make a distinction between issues and issue elements. Making an interactional translation of some of the concepts that have been used by cognitive mapping studies helps to clarify the relation between issues,

issue elements and frames in interaction. Cause maps or cognitive maps consist of a collection of nodes and relations (Eden, 1994; Weick & Bougon, 1986). Individuals differ in the selection of which nodes to include and in how these nodes are interrelated. Issues in conversations can be conceived as consisting of a number of interrelated issue elements. As different from cause maps or cognitive maps however, we do not refer to states of the world or states of mind respectively. Rather we refer to an evolving collection of discursive issue elements that are assembled into issues through the process of issue framing. During an interaction sequence between different actors, participants may mention any number of issue elements. Depending on the interaction context, this can vary from a quick query about a specific element during a hasty encounter, to an extensive discussion of a whole range of issues in a workshop, or an in depth analysis of a specific problem, to name some examples.

Discursive psychological studies of descriptions and accounts in conversations (Locke & Edwards, 2003) have shown that people often construct different descriptions or versions of events, which stress certain aspects and downplay others, often rhetorically oriented to avoiding certain implications of these descriptions, like blame or responsibility. In terms of issue framing, participants in a conversation can differ in the selection of issue elements and the way they interrelate them. They can interrelate these issue elements by including them in a description, a story or any other conversationally sensible whole. What can usefully be taken as issue and issue elements in a specific context cannot be determined beforehand or on an abstract level. Rather, our approach focuses the attention on what participants in a multi-actor conversation orient to as being at issue, in order to stay as close as possible to how the participants make sense of the situation.

Conceptualizing an issue frame as a particular selection and assemblage of issue elements into a sensible whole implies that no issue can be formulated outside a frame. This implication is in line with our theoretical position that an entirely 'neutral' or 'objective' description of reality is impossible.

Disagreement in conversations

A lot of issue elements are unproblematic parts of the ongoing conversation, as participants engage in whatever the interactional business may be at that moment. At some points, however, participants may construct some of these issue elements as incompatible with each other, as when a

certain proposal is said to be beyond the budgetary possibilities, for example. This kind of disagreement is an interactive accomplishment. According to Knoblauch (1991), disagreement as a conversational phenomenon

is based not so much on the incompatibility of validity claims (i.e. semantic contents) or on 'hidden dissent' (as, e.g. in 'sharp remarks' or implicit contradictions). Disagreement may be regarded as interactive accomplishment of speakers' utterances. That is, whatever speakers may say and however contradictory their utterances may be from a logical point of view, disagreement only has argumentative consequences for the participants if the dissent produced is recognizable by them. (p.174)

In other words, the relation between two or more elements should be oriented to by the participants as incompatible, in the sense of construing both elements as unable to co-exist without some kind of undesired tension between them. Although the analyst will and should perceive incompatibilities between one thing that is said and the next, we propose a *discursive criterion* to determine whether an incompatibility did actually arise. Only if the participants can be shown to treat two or more elements as incompatible through their talk such a conclusion can be drawn.

Empirical studies of disagreement show us how disagreement is discursively constructed and recognizable. Pomerantz (1984) analysis of agreeing and disagreeing with assessments in ordinary conversations is especially relevant for our treatment of differences in issue framing. With an assessment, a speaker states and evaluates a state of affairs and by doing so claims knowledge of that which he or she is assessing. One systematic environment in which assessments occur is in speaking turns just subsequent to others' assessments. The preferred next action following an initial assessment is an agreement, although not invariably so, like in the case of self-deprecation. As has been shown for other typical pairs of utterances, like for example an invitation and a reaction to it, generally positive answers are preferred (Sacks, 1987). *Preferred* reactions (accepting the invitation) have different discursive characteristics than *dispreferred* reactions (declining the invitation). While preferred actions are usually immediate and direct, negative answers tend to be delayed, prefaced and mitigated. In the following extract N's decline of the invitation is delayed (note the prolonged "hon: uh::m" at line 2) and prefaced by an appreciation of it ("you're real sweet"). N's reaction is also mitigated in the sense

that the invitation is not declined directly but through giving the account of having something else to do.

Extract from telephone conversation

1 E: Want to come down 'n have a bite of l:unch with me:? I got some bee:r and stu:ff (0.2)

2 N: Well you're real sweet hon:, uh::m (.)

3 E: or do you have something else [(t')

4 N: [No:, I have to uh call Rol's mother (.) I told her I'd
ca:ll her this morning

(simplified from Edwards, 1997: 105)

In the case of assessments, Pomerantz (1984: 65) identified the following differences between agreeing and disagreeing with assessments: (1) agreements have agreement components occupying the entire agreement turns; disagreements are often prefaced; (2) agreements are direct; disagreements may be indirect, accomplished with a variety of forms, for example partial agreements/partial disagreements; and (3) in general, agreements are performed with a minimization of gap between the prior turn's completion and the agreement turn's initiation; disagreement components are frequently delayed within a turn or over a series of turns. Silences, hesitations, questioning repeats, requests for clarification, weakly stated agreements, and the like, can thus function as signs of an upcoming disagreement. In this sense the discursive characteristics of a disagreement reaction can be used as a resource by the speakers, not only as indicators of what will follow, but also for avoiding a dispreferred action from occurring. The delayed character of disagreement turns give the original speaker the possibility to reformulate or back down from their original assessment before a disagreement actually occurs.

Enacting interaction contexts

In subsequent studies of disagreement, the generality of the preference for agreement structure has been questioned through the analysis of discursive practices where disagreement turns didn't show the typical dispreferred turn characteristics.

It's important to note that the aforementioned studies are primarily based on ordinary informal conversations. Formal, institutional or organizational conversations are usually considered as

variations on or deviations from the ordinary conversation. One such deviation concerns the *participation framework*, i.e. the way speaking turns are allocated. While in ordinary conversations speaking turns are allocated on a local turn-by-turn basis, where participants can self-select or select others as the next speaker by various means, institutional conversations often deviate from this by standardizing or unilaterally controlling the allocation of speech turns, for example in the case of classroom or courtroom conversations. Different roles may also be established as to who can use which type of speaking turns, for example who gets to ask questions and who gets to answer them. These institutional arrangements may also have implications for expressing disagreements, and more specifically they often seem to regulate the tension that is associated with disagreements in ordinary conversations. Moderated panel debates, for example, seem to allow for challenging and disagreeing in forms and intensities that would be threatening a further social relationship if voiced outside of it.

Even in informal conversations, a discursive practice called *informal discussion* has been identified where disagreement is a valued element (Knoblauch, 1991). Disagreement can be a mechanism to produce topical relevance, to provide for thematic progression or for entertainment. Knoblauch (1991) contends that “the apparent violation of rules, the seemingly redundant constructions of disagreement and the incessant interruptions, are vital constituents of argumentation in informal discussion” (p.169). This kind of disagreement functions primarily as sociable way of discussing within certain social networks (in this study a family), where disagreement helps to produce interesting problems to discuss about. This goes together with a shift towards impersonal and general topics so that all involved can safely make their contributions, without risk for the disagreement to end up in a conflict. Although this practice does allow for particular kinds of disagreements to occur, the constraints operating here are of a similar social-relational nature as those involved in maintaining face (Goffman, 1999). Knoblauch (1991) terms these as the avoidance of asymmetry in informal discussions, where speakers produce disagreement collaboratively in a way which evades dominance, especially by avoiding both the abyss of conflict talk and the byway of instruction. Edström (2004) has also observed direct disagreement between new acquaintances as well as close friends. He suggests that the nature of the topic over which disagreement occurs may play a role in determining what level

of directness is appropriate in a given setting. A topic in which none of the participants are personally invested in, allows for a more direct expression of disagreement.

Approaching this problem in a different way, Kothoff (1993) studied changes in preference structure within conversations. She found that the classical preference for agreement structure could be inverted, disagreements being immediate and direct, while agreements were performed reluctantly. Her findings suggest that the preference structure can change once a disagreement has been displayed. In that case, participants are expected to defend their positions: disagreement becomes preferred, while conceding becomes dispreferred (delayed, mitigated) since it threatens the face of who concedes. After the resolution of the disagreement, the preference structures shifts again to preference for agreement.

Research on conversations has documented various ways of doing disagreement (ranging from very prudent to very direct), but also a variety of interaction contexts (or preference structures) in which disagreement occurs (both in informal and institutional conversations). From these studies, it appears that (1) the structure of disagreements depends on the interaction context in which it is produced (as when disagreements become direct and unmitigated in informal discussion), and (2) the structure of the interaction context depends on the way disagreements are produced (as when a disagreement turn changes the preference structure from preference for agreement to preference for disagreement). How can we understand this circular dependence? One way to understand this is in terms of simultaneous definition: the definition of the disagreement and the context in which it functions happens at the same time. In other words the meaning of higher level (interaction) and lower level (utterance) contexts are established simultaneously. Shaping a specific disagreement as dispreferred, not only shapes the disagreement itself, but simultaneously defines the interaction context in which it occurs as a context in which agreement is the norm. By shaping disagreement turns as dispreferred ones, a preference structure for agreement is enacted.

In multi-actor contexts, interdependent differences are at the same time the reason of existence and the main challenge for multi-actor projects. Therefore, the interaction context for disagreements is important in multi-actor conversations, although a difficult one to answer in general. The typical ambiguity and confusion in multi-actor conversations concerns the issues as well as the definition of

what the social context is or will be like. For each context, and probably for each interaction moment, this will have to be established anew by analyzing how the interaction proceeds.

Differences in issue framing

This conceptualization of difference can be further refined by drawing on the sensemaking process as proposed by Weick (1979, 1995) and applying it to conversations. Every utterance can be considered an *enactment* in the double sense that Weick (1979) proposes: it is an action that creates or at least modifies the environment or the ongoing conversational context, and it is an enactment also in the sense of selectively bracketing specific parts of the ongoing conversational experience. In the sequential organization of conversations, bracketing is done by selectively referring back to parts of previous turns, either by indexical reference or by (re)formulating parts of it. Inevitably, something specific gets done to the bracketed portion of the previous utterance, like confirming, challenging or elaborating. The result of this enactment is an equivocal display for the other participants, which they can subsequently try to disambiguate through their enactments. This sensemaking process is eminently dependent on the interaction of mutual enactments in a conversationally meaningful sequence, where each move at the same time depends on and makes specific sense of the previous move. In order for a difference in issue framing to emerge, a participant must bracket a specific issue element from a previous utterance and challenge it with one or more other issue elements.

Drawing on the above discussion of issue framing and disagreement, a difference in issue framing can be defined as a discursively constructed incompatibility between two or more issue elements, which is relationally significant. In other words, the relation between two or more elements should be oriented to by the participants as incompatible, in the sense of construing both elements through their talk as unable to co-exist without some kind of undesired tension between them. The constructed incompatibility between issue elements should also involve a social-relational tension. By this we mean that the tension between issue elements should go together with a tension between different participants. In other words, one or more issue elements of another participant must be challenged in order to speak of a relevant difference in issue framing in multi-actor conversations. This excludes for example contrasts, comparisons or contradictions that the speaker may employ,

when these are used to make a point that is fully compatible with the statements of the other participants in the conversation. This also implies that at least two speaking turns need to be involved, where, in the simplest case, the next speaker challenges an issue element that was part of the previous turn of another participant.

Method: discourse analysis of multi-actor conversations

Discourse analysis has its roots in linguistics, social and cognitive psychology, sociolinguistics and poststructuralism and has a lot to offer for the study of sensemaking in organizing processes. Existing varieties of discourse analysis differ in their relative emphasis on text versus context (Phillips & Hardy, 2002). In this study, the primary emphasis is on interaction patterns as enacted in specific texts, although the study of the surrounding context is necessary for the interpretation of the issues and issue elements in the specific texts. Our approach to discourse analysis is closest to conversational analysis, as outlined by Heritage (1997), who characterizes conversation analysis as “a field that focuses heavily on issues of meaning and context in interaction” (p.162). Wood and Kroger (2000: 95) provide a general description of the analysis process, inspired by Potter and Wetherell (1987): “The overall goal of the analysis is to explain what is being done in the discourse and how this is accomplished, that is, how the discourse is structured or organized to perform various functions and achieve various effects or consequences.”

These interaction moments were theoretically sampled from the aforementioned and other initiatives for their relevance to studying frame diversity in interaction: multiple actors were involved and the diversity of frames was important. From a practical point of view, the quality of the recording was also taken into account for selecting these interaction moments. Interaction moments from two different initiatives were included to make the results more generalizable.

The recording and the transcription of this interaction moments were analyzed for signs of differences in issue framing, including disagreements, opposing questions and signs of tension, surprise or confusion. When a participant is challenging an issue element of another participant at that point, the emergence of that difference was traced back and the involved speaking turns were

transcribed according to conversation analytic conventions (see Appendix 1) and analyzed in detail. Table 1 gives an overview of the differences that emerged: 8 differences in issue framing were identified from the three studied interaction moments. For each difference a summarized description is given, the central issue elements and the initiator of the difference are mentioned.

When referring to this data in the remainder of the text, we will use 'Difference 1' or 'D1' and so forth. We will often include line numbers to refer to specific parts of a sequence transcript, like 'D1: 3-69'. These line numbers refer to the lines in the original Spanish-language transcripts and are inserted in the English translations of the transcripts. We will use double quotes and specify line numbers when parts of a transcript are reproduced in the main text, while we will use single quotes for paraphrasing parts of a transcript or issue elements in the main text.

With the help of software for qualitative data analysis (Atlas-ti) the differences sequences were analyzed on a turn-by-turn basis, including the steps of descriptive commenting, coding issue elements and analytic memoing in terms of emerging differences or other theoretical or methodological issues. The analyses were done on the original Spanish-language transcripts, of which the examples included here were translated for presentation purposes.

The role of the first author was partly that of an observer and partly that of an action researcher. Temporarily cooperating in an interdisciplinary action research project on the participative development of technological innovations at the University of Cuenca, of which the aforementioned initiatives formed part, the researcher actively supported the local project staff in conceptual, methodological and practical issues. In these interaction moments with actors from outside the university, the researcher participated as an observer, without intervening in the discussions.

Research context: the interaction moments

Before going in to the results, we provide some background about the studied interaction moments. This background is necessary for understanding the transcripts that we will reproduce below in order to ground the results of the analyses.

Hydraulic model presentation (Irrigation management case)

During the interaction moment *hydraulic model presentation* from the irrigation management case, the junior engineer who is giving the presentation (E) speaks as a representative of an engineering centre at the University of Cuenca (Ecuador), specialized in water and soil management. This centre has worked together for a number of years already with an indigenous organization that manages a mid-sized irrigation system in the Ecuadorian Andes, north to the city of Cuenca. However, this meeting with the director (P) and the irrigation technician (T) of the indigenous organization is the first meeting concerning a new topic, formulated on the first slide of the presentation as "Improvement of the hydraulic management of the irrigation system". The meeting takes place at the university. Apart from the junior engineer giving the presentation and the two representatives of the irrigation organization, two senior engineers and two researchers, including the first author, attended the meeting.

Technically, the irrigation system consists of an upstream reservoir, with an outlet to regulate the flow rate that goes into a canal of about 30 km in length that descends while going around a mountain. The reservoir saves water to compensate for deficits, especially in the dry season. At different points in the main canal, smaller canals (branches) lead the water to mostly small-scale farming communities where it is used on the fields by approximately 1500 families who are registered as users of the system. Water that goes down the canal and is not used for irrigation flows into the downstream river. The proposal of the engineers focuses on the water that flows through the canal at night and is not used for irrigation. They propose to close the main outlet at night and store that water in the reservoir for later use. However, the water flow through a canal of that size is a technically very complex matter. Depending on the direction and the size of flow rate variations at the outlet, it can take between a few hours and half a day until these variations take their effect e.g. halfway the canal. With the hydraulic model of the irrigation system that the engineers have implemented, they can calculate at which time the outlet should be manipulated if a certain flow rate is wanted at a given time at a given point in the canal.

The meeting took 1 hour and 25 minutes in which most of the time the junior engineer was presenting, interrupting his presentation from time to time to check comprehension and ask questions to the indigenous representatives. The latter also interrupted the presentation a number of times in order to ask questions or to start a discussion.

At the beginning of the presentation, E explains extensively what is meant by improving the hydraulic management of the irrigation system, thereby framing important aspects of the problem domain. This will also be the starting point for the emergence of a first difference in issue framing (D1), which will be analyzed below. As in the title of the presentation, E puts forward the management of the irrigation system as the central issue, and he mentions the constant flow rate during day and night as an important aspect of it. From this framing of the situation, the problem is formulated: "what we see is that there exists a nocturnal waste of water" (D1:21-22) because "essentially irrigation happens during the day" (D1:23). E then proceeds to solution alternatives. He discounts a first solution (nightly irrigation) and presents a second alternative: "we propose ... a reduction in the nightly flow rate" (D1:41-42). E then starts from the earlier proposed solution (i.e. reduction of nightly flow rate) to formulate a new problem: 'in a system as large as yours, how can we know when to open and close the valves at the upstream reservoir'? E connects this problem formulation directly and strongly with the solution: a computer model, 'which we have implemented' (D5:64-65). The meeting until now – i.e. after 7 minutes presentation – is the starting point for an interactive issue framing process. The engineers have presented their well-prepared framing of the issue, and the indigenous managers are now more or less required to assemble their framing of the issue on the spot. Their questions and reactions set in motion an attempt to explore and define a common problem domain, in which five differences in issue framing emerge (D1 – D5).

Coordination workshop and Potato harvest (Soil conservation case)

The background of this collaborative initiative was extensively documented in Dewulf, Craps & Dercon (2004). Parts of the included transcripts have already been presented there. Suffice it to recall that the engineering project team led by the expatriate coordinator and the local coordinator played a central convening role in the initiative. They motivated an important number of professional and

community actors to collaborate for ‘soil conservation’ in the small-scale agriculture in the Southern Andes of Ecuador. The interaction moment *coordination workshop* took place in the context of the establishment of coordination platforms at the local village level. The meeting was convened by the university team but took place in the village itself. The expatriate engineer (E.E.) dedicates a large part of the meeting to explaining about soil conservation and the need for collaboration to representatives of professional and community organizations. Concretely, he suggests coordination and dissemination meetings among the different organizations, aimed at coordinating activities and sharing knowledge. In this interaction context, the local Farmers’ Organization (F.O.) presents a proposal for the elaboration of an overarching strategic plan with all the organizations that have something to do with the village. This leads to the emergence of a difference (first D7 and later D8). The interaction moment *potato harvest* takes place at a later stage, in the context of the ‘participative validation and demonstration fields’ that serve to validate and demonstrate the proposed solutions for soil conservation at the fields of local farmers. At the occasion of the potato harvest at such a demonstration field, a junior engineer (E) gives an explanation to the present farmers about soil conservation issues. In this interaction context, one of the farmers (F) shifts the attention from soil conservation to irrigation, resulting in the emergence of a difference (D6).

Discussion of the results

We will discuss the results of our analyses according to the following aspects:

1. the nature of the differences in issue framing in our cases;
2. the sequential multi-layered structure of differences in issue framing;
3. attempts at preventing differences; and
4. the kind of interaction contexts that get enacted.

These five aspects have been analyzed for each of the eight differences. Each aspect will be explained with an analysis of one the differences in issue framing.

Differences in issue framing

Table 1 gives an overview of the differences in issue framing that were identified.

Table 1. Overview of the emerging differences

Nr.	Description	Challenged element	Challenging element	Discursive design	Preventing attempts	Start / Length	Initiator
Interaction moment "Hydraulic model presentation" (Irrigation management case)							
D1	P argues that the flow rate is not stable because of droughts and connects this to water waste, organization and distribution.	'constant flow rate' (E)	'unstable flow rate' (P)	Pragmatic disagreement Delay, mitigation	None	01m46s 95 lines	P
D2	P puts forward an extra issue element ('infiltration'), as threatening the model and connects this to a practical question of how to detect and remedy these infiltrations.	'flow rate figures' (E)	'infiltration' (P)	Opposing question (rhetorical question) Delay, mitigation, account	1 turn (E)	12m10s 58 lines	P
D3	T retakes the infiltration issue element, checks some model figures and asks for practical information about it.	'having the infiltration data as part of the model' (E)	'presenting a practical report about the infiltrations' (T)	Pragmatic disagreement Delay, account	1 turn (E)	17m23s 76 lines	T
D4	P asks a question about their being the pilot case, which establishes a difference with respect to the proven merits of the model	'pilot study' (E)	'get recommendations from other systems' (P)	Opposing question (focus shifting question) Delay, mitigation, account	2 turns (E)	38m03s 66 lines	P
D5	T contrasts nightly irrigation on flat lands with reducing the flow rate at night, and points to the importance of varying social and technical conditions.	'nightly reduction of flow rate' (E)	'nightly irrigation is possible in certain conditions' (P)	Pragmatic disagreement Delay, mitigation, account	None	49m18s 78 lines	P
Interaction moment "Potato harvest" (Soil conservation case)							
D6	F suggests irrigation as an important element rather than drought, and concludes that a technique is needed	'drought' (E)	'irrigation' (F)	Opposing question (focus shifting question) Delay, mitigation	1 turn (E)	5m14s 27 lines	F

Interaction moment "Coordination workshop" (Soil conservation case)							
D7	FO proposes competing coordination initiative for the village and ask for a meeting date	'coordination and dissemination' (EE)	'strategic plan' (FO)	Pragmatic disagreement (unmarked) Delay, account	None	10m25s 88 lines	FO
D8	FO questions relation between coordination initiative and strategic plan	'coordination and dissemination' (EE)	'strategic plan' (FO)	Not identifiable due to distance from tape recorder	--	28m13s missing	FO

In total 8 differences emerged during these interaction moments. Apart from a short description for each difference, the table gives the issue element from the preceding turn that is challenged and the issue element from the current turn that is framed as being in tension with it. Finally the onset of the difference emergence episode is given, the number of transcript lines comprising the emergence of the difference, and the participant who initiated the difference.

It's important to specify that only the differences that appeared within a stretch of consensus talk were marked of as emerging differences. These differences evolved and were combined with other differences in the ensuing discussion, until the participants resolved the difference or left it for what is was by changing the topic, and returned to some form of consensus talk. The episodes where differences emerged are thus turning points from consensus talk to interaction to dealing with differences.

Analyzing the content of the differences in the conversational contexts in which they occurred, the initiators of these differences mostly raised locally new issue elements that challenged the preceding turns in one way or another. In two cases (D3 and D8) a difference emerges that closely resembles a difference that had appeared earlier in the conversation. The disagreement turns displayed the characteristics of dispreferred turns, including delays, mitigated formulations and the provision of accounts.

Transcript D1:69-95 gives an example. This first reaction of the president of the indigenous irrigation organisation (P) and his irrigation technician (T) comes just after the intervention of the engineer described above.

Transcript D1: 69-95 (from hydraulic model presentation)

69 P: ((coughs)) the problem is tha:t (.) in the case 70 of the management of the system (.) the flow rate is almost not 71 stable the:re (.) there are periods of DROUGHT (.) in 72 which the given flow rate reduces

73 ((P ask unintelligible question to T who sits 74 next to him)) 75

76 T: (-- 250) 77

78 P: e:h e:h in the last eh in the last droughts 79 (.) it has lowered perhaps to [250] 80

81 T: [yes] (indeed) 82

83 P: so tha:t is not not permanent 84 it affects also (.) in organising directly 85 already (.) in the branches and modules an:d (.) even 86 MORE problems [in the fields] 87

88 T: [indeed] 89

90 P: [irrigation] 91 on the fields. There comes the problem of (.) 92 let's say IT GOES in a sequential (.) relation 93 I would say the problem of wasting (.) water no (.) 94 e:h and problems also were of organisation and 95 distribution 96 97

In his reaction, P brings in a new issue element, namely "the flow rate is not stable" (70-71) because there are "periods of drought" (71) in which the flow rate diminishes substantially. This refers back to the 'constant flow rate' that the engineer mentioned several times. The disagreement is marked at different points: "the problem is ..." (69); "the flow rate is not stable" (70); "there is no permanent flow rate" (83). P and his irrigation technician (T) collaboratively elaborate the difference in a small dialogue. P apparently checks flow rate numbers with T (74) in order to support his argument (79), concluding that "there is no permanent" flow rate (83). The issue element of 'unstable flow rate' is further connected to problems in the organization of water distribution at the levels of canal branches, modules and fields (84-95). Mitigation is apparent in P's formulations through the use of the qualifiers "almost" (70) and "perhaps" (79). The production of the difference is delayed in P's first turn through preliminaries such as "the problem is ..." and "in the case of ..." (69). It is also delayed in another sense, namely that further and more important differences (e.g. "even more problems in the fields", 86) are added later in the difference emergence episode. We will focus on this phenomenon in the next sections.

The multi-layered structure of emerging differences in issue framing

Although it is between the focal issue elements that the difference is clearest, like the difference between 'constant' and 'unstable' flow rate in D1, the focal elements are surrounded by additional issue elements. These do not only provide a meaningful frame for the focal element, but they also add more layers to the difference. In all of the emerging differences these additional elements include other more important issue elements that are not part of the engineers' presentation and thus contribute to the challenge that makes up the difference. This process has the structure of sequentially adding layers of implications or importance to the focal difference. In D1 at lines 70-71 the focal difference is produced, which is further clarified (71-80) and repeated (83). In the remainder of their interventions (83-95), P and T connect other locally new issue elements to the discussion and frame them as more important ("even more problems in the fields", 86; "there comes the problem", 91). In the following transcript of the emerging difference that forms the start of Sequence 2, this pattern can also be observed.

Transcript D2: 3-59 (from hydraulic model presentation)

3 E: I told you that in the year 2000 we 4 conducted an experiment. What did that 5 consist of?
 (4) Well we were a group of about 6 6 or 7 people (2) and well eh using the 7 valves (-- for) manipulating the canal we 8 carried (.) we carried out the following 9 activity. From the main valve (.) we produced 10 eh some e:h variations of the flow rate (.) 11 that is we found the canal here we can see in 12 this graph (.) this is 6 am 8 am 10 am until 13 6 pm. This experiment had this span of time 14 (.) approximately from 7 am until 4 pm. What 15 we see here is the flow rate (.) I will 16 explain (.) at 7 am the main valve or let's 17 say the outlet (.) the flow rate (was) around 18 400 (.) liters per second (we read) at the 19 valve the flow rate (is close to:) (.) 375 20 exactly (.) we read at the valve. What we 21 did is close the: the valve in a very small 22 time span in less than 5 minutes we closed 23 the valve and we lowered the flow rate to 150 24 liters per second (2) a:nd and further eh 25 after a period of half an hour or almost an 26 hour (.) we came back and closed the valve 27 more (.) almost until making the canal dry 28 when I say almost to 0 litres per second 29 (this also) in a short time span. 30 [(----)] 31

32 P: [this] depe- depends of the: (.) what? 33

34 E: Well this (.) this here let's say eh (.) 35 was only eh with the goal of obtaining data 36 for us (.) fo:r calibrating our model >which 37 is what I will explain [later on]< 38

39 P: [there] we have seen a little bit already 40 that's where the practice comes in perhaps that flow 41 rate that I say (.) of what goes down after 42 (.) closing the valves (.) doesn't perhaps 43 also influence there the: (.) the the 44 infiltrations in the canal? Because recently 45 we have detected a loss of more than 60 46 litres, no? Almost almost it amounts to 70 47 (.) liters of loss o:f (.) I mean no more 48 than km 3 [isn't it?] 49

50 T: [more or less] 51
 52 P: [in that part] there is a 53 serious problem this could
 implicate even 54 (.) VARY I would say the results that have been reached (.)55 because of
 these situations in the physical part I don't know 56 how could they be [DETECTED] PRACTICALLY.
 57
 58 T: [(yes ---)] 59

During his explanation of how the mathematical model was calibrated on the basis of field experiments in the irrigation system, P interrupts and asks a very elliptical question "this depends on what?" (32), to which E doesn't respond. Instead he avoids it by restricting the meaning of his previous intervention, being only about "obtaining data for us to calibrate our model" (35-36). P does intervene anyway by putting forward a new issue element, namely 'infiltration', which might "influence" (43) even the results of the experiments. Infiltration, which refers to water infiltrating into the porous parts of the canal, becomes here the focal element of a difference (42-43), which is again further clarified with concrete numbers (44-48). Towards the end of the intervention, P upgrades his formulations ("serious problem" that could "vary the results", 52-54) and adds another challenging layer to the difference, namely the emphasized practical question as to how these situations could be "practically detected" (56).

Here again, the difference starts with a challenge between focal issue elements, but through adding other elements and further implications a multi-layered difference emerges. This double movement can be understood as oriented to multiple concerns (Edwards, 1997). Apart from the general concern of avoiding face threatening acts apparent in the dispreferred characteristic of the disagreement turns, two competing concerns can account for the complex structure of the difference emergence episodes: (1) participants initiating a difference orient to producing a clear and specific challenge, and (2) through adding layers of implication they stress the importance of the challenge. While these concerns are clearly divergent, both need to be oriented simultaneously. Through producing only a clear and specific challenge one risks to be interpreted as making fuss about unimportant details. Making only vague claims about issues of general importance, one risks to be interpreted as irrelevantly talking off topic. Orienting to both specificity and generality can counter both risks and promote an interpretation of what one is doing as simultaneously to the point (by

producing a clear and specific challenge between focal elements) and of broad relevance (by adding layers of implications to the focal difference).

Preventing differences

Let's jump to the end of the first intervention of the engineer in D3, to illustrate a remarkable characteristic of some of the difference emergence turns.

Transcript D3: 34-90 (from hydraulic model presentation)

34 E: ... (So) our model represents exactly the 35 data that we took in the field. That's the
36 most important thing. (4) Do you have some 37 question about this? (3).38

39 T: (-) that is ((coughs)) for example °(we 40 really want to know --)° for example a 41
certain person is well looking at the initial 42 flow rate, how much is coming out, at a given
43 point for example. (2) I mean the flow rate 44 comes out a:nd it says 350 liters, at the 45
outlet until km 3, so now you lower the flow 46 rate, did you also realize well (-) how much 47
loss there is i:n, I mean, in case of infiltrations 48 did you take that date also for
example?=49

50 E: =yes=51

52 T: =a:nd 350 it lower the thre- the 50, at 53 km 2 300 must be arriving. In reality these
300 do not54 (-) arrive, more or less there arrives 280 260 55 >something like that<, e:h the
rest that lacks 56 there exist infiltrations at each outlet, we (--)= 57

58 E: =thank you, all those data that you 59 present we can we can locate each two 60
kilometers, fr- from the outlet till km 2 we 61 can say how much infiltration (up in the 62
hills), from the 2 to the 4 how much 63 infiltration >all these data we can show< 64

65 T: because we have seen there that (--- 66 critical points in some cases ----- we really 67
lose a quantity (.) of) 300 liters only at 68 km 2 1/2 a quantity of 40 liters is lost, there
are 69 a lot of infiltrations there a little bit at km 6 (--), 70 I mean, in the end the water
must have (--), 71 there's entering 300 liters in the end, now there's 72 arriving (1.5) more
or less 240, 230 there's 73 lost 60 to 70 liters (--), I don't know at that 74 point, you who
have done this WORK should 75 more or less inform us, in which segment the MOST 76
infiltrations occur= 77

At the beginning of Sequence 3, E is comparing observed with simulated water level, incorporating infiltration in his story as was illustrated above, and concludes that "our model exactly represents the field data" (34-37). His invitation for questions is taken up by the irrigation technician (T), who first sums up an example of observing the water level and makes a statement with respect to water loss due to infiltration. In this first part of his response the irrigation technician takes up the element of infiltration and asks if they specifically observed the amount of infiltration. With a swift confirmatory answer from the engineer, the technician goes on to contrast an example of what should

arrive at km 2 with what actually arrives at km 2 and explains this by referring to infiltration. T frames his own examples as 'data' (48) thereby aligning with the engineer's frame. The engineer's response is swift ("thank you", 58) and confirms again that all the infiltration examples are taken into account in the model. T continues to make his point, stating that 'we really loose a lot of water' (66) through which a desired situation is contrasted with an actual one. At the end of his intervention T formulates a challenge by stating that "you should inform us where most infiltration" occurs, implicating clearly that this is not what he understands the engineers as doing at that moment. In terms of issue elements, the difference that emerges is between 'having the infiltration data as part of the model' (cf. 62) and 'presenting a practical report about the infiltrations' (74-76).

Taking together the steps that are taken in this sequence gives the following picture. T starts with a benign question ('did you realize the amount of infiltration', 45-48), to which E can respond positively (50). T elaborates his point with further examples and E jumps in to connect these examples to his own line of argument. T still continues (starting with "because" at 65) stressing the importance of the problem and terminating with a firmly pronounced question towards the engineers: "you should inform us" (74), which finally creates the difference. The way this difference emerges shows the same structural features of sequential multi-layeredness as the other differences, but in this case E interrupts the build-up of the difference twice (at 50 and at 58-63). In this way, E exploits this structure by trying to interrupt a divergent movement and steer the conversation back to his own line of argument before the other goes too far, or before the divergence becomes too big to be easily handled. Since we found more instances of this pattern in our data, we re-analyzed the difference emergence episodes for indications of what we termed *preventing differences*. As mentioned in Table 1, we found this kind of utterances in 4 episodes (D2, D3, D4 and D6). In the transcript of D2 above, E similarly tries to stop a diverging movement with his intervention at 34-37, namely by not answering P's question that announced the emergence of a difference. The interesting thing about preventing differences is that it draws on the sequential multi-layered structure of difference emergence episodes by trying to stop a divergent movement, which is likely to result in the emergence of a difference, before it becomes too important. It is mainly accomplished by interrupting or early turn-taking during interventions where differences are being built up.

Enacting interaction contexts

What can we say about the interaction contexts that the participants in these interaction moments enact, on the basis of our study of emerging differences in issue framing? A first observation from Table 1 is that the community representatives are consistently the ones that initiate a difference in issue framing. This reveals an important asymmetry in the enacted interaction context that can be described as follows. In the irrigation management case, the analyzed interaction moment has the format of a presentation: one of the engineers stands in front of the room, giving his talk while slides are being projected. During the potato harvest interaction moment, the harvesting work is stopped and the engineer stands in the middle of the field in front of a group of standing or sitting hearers. In the coordination workshop interaction moment the expatriate engineer presides the meeting in a rural school room. These settings differ in many respects but have a number of aspects in common: (1) the university engineering representatives steer and structure the interaction moment; (2) they contribute a significant part of the content during the meeting; (3) during large parts of the interaction moments the other participants are mainly in the position of public; (4) the other participants intervene when the university engineering representatives probe for reactions; and (5) the other participants intervene by interrupting the normal proceeding of the interaction moment. It's important to clarify that this interaction context is not so much strictly imposed by the engineers, but collaboratively enacted by the involved participants, since this interaction format wouldn't be possible without their cooperation. In this kind of interaction context, the smooth and unproblematic proceeding of the interaction moment consists of one actor delivering information (proposals, explanations, ...), and the other actors either asking questions for clarification, answering specific queries or responding positively to the suggestions. Questioning the contributions of the engineers - in ways that are more antagonistic than asking for clarification - or responding negatively to them, interrupts the smooth flow of the meeting format. By shaping the speaking turns in which they initiate a difference as dispreferred, the other actors help to enact this interaction context. At the same time, their being in a reactive position puts the risky business of doing differences primarily as a burden on their shoulders - they have to cause

the trouble of starting a difference sequence if they want to put different issues on the table, or put issues on the table in a different way.

The differences in issue framing are indeed initiated in a very prudent way. In Gruber's (1998) terms we could describe the interaction context as 'low involvement', in the sense that the conversations are not very lively or direct. The surface structure is cooperative, but the interventions can have either sympathetic or antagonistic implications – the latter is true for the difference emergence episodes in which the framing of the engineers gets challenged by the other participants. But this characterization alone does not wholly capture the enacted interaction context. The differences that emerge are mostly striking by their subtlety. Consider the following transcript from the potato harvest interaction moment.

Transcript D6: 3-33 (from potato harvest)

3 E: While here a time will come when (.) a:nd 4 can be so rich in nutrients that maybe the 5 use of fertilizers would no longer be necessary. 6 So it's the: this reserve is what we are 7 achieving, yes? And it (can go) but this 8 I tell you we will go bit by bit improving this. The same 9 with the corn and the beans higher up, but (.) here 10 an important factor tha:t plays also is water no?=
11

12 F: =irrigation? 13

14 E: irrigation (.) and here we suffered months tha:t 15

16 F: °summer° 17

18 E: of drought, summer, but ok after all of 19 that we are (.) harvesting anyway with all 20 the problems of drought 21

22 F: °yes° 23

24 F: Irrigation would be the: the factor, perhaps 25 (sometimes), when we would go irrigating like that it would 26 drag along everything, isn't it, therefore it would be (.) to have 27 a skill or (.) a technique 28

One could even ask the question whether this is actually a difference, in the sense of a relationally significant, sequentially relevant and discursively constructed incompatibility between two or more issue elements. It is indeed a very weakly pronounced difference. However, introducing the element of irrigation is sequentially relevant in the context of the extensive preceding talk about soil issues. It is also relationally significant since it concerns the kind of activities that will be part of the development agency – target group relationship. Discursively, it is important to note while E repeats the issue element of irrigation (D6: 14), a short pause follows and E goes on addressing drought – he

does not make irrigation part of his story. Instead he downplays the original element of water that he introduced just before, and so does away with the irrigation element. Although there's clearly a difference involved, it could be understood as a *weak signal*: a new issue element pops up in an intervention ("irrigation?" 13) that is somewhere between asking a question and collaboratively complementing the ongoing talk. In the context of these projects where the professional development agents - often against their honest intentions - easily dominate the discourse in their interaction with target groups that generally haven't had much formal schooling, it is of prime importance that these weak signals are picked up and explored. According to Van Dongen, De Laat en Maas (1996), these weak or non-dominant signals of sensemaking are always present, and can, when they are attended to, provide the ground for new meanings and open up new opportunities.

Conclusion

We started from the question how differences in issue framing emerge in multi-stakeholder conversations. An interactional approach to issue framing led us to understand differences in issue framing as relationally significant, sequentially relevant and discursively constructed incompatibilities between two or more issue elements. In the study of multi-stakeholder conversations in the context of natural resources management in Southern Ecuador, we analyzed 8 difference emergence episodes. We showed that the discursive structure of the difference-initiating speaking turns is multi-layered. The differences emerge by working cautiously towards a specific but clear challenge and then adding further challenging layers of implications, and can be understood as oriented to simultaneously being to the point and being relevant. As was the case in 4 of the studied difference emergence episodes, this multi-layered structure can be exploited by interrupting a divergent movement in order to prevent the emergence of a difference. Finally, the interaction contexts in which the differences emerge can be characterized as asymmetrical, putting the burden of the risky business of initiating differences on the shoulders of the weaker parties, who proceed very prudently and produce generally weak signals of difference.

This study has its weaknesses, e.g. the labour intensive and detailed analysis methods of data gathered in real life multi-organizational settings puts limits on the number of cases that can be studied. On the other hand, this study shows how the emergence of subtle differences can fruitfully be turned into issues for empirical study by drawing on the methodological approaches of discursive psychology. In this way, this and future studies can give us more insight into how people negotiate the meaning of situations, events and problems through their interaction and how they thus enact various forms of cooperation and conflict. From a practical point of view, attending to the emergence of differences in interaction episodes can provide levers for mediators or facilitators to intervene very early in the build-up of a potential conflict, and to stimulate constructive ways of dealing with these differences.

References

- Aarts, N., Van Woerkum, C., & Vermunt, B. (2003). Framing Planning in Regional Innovation Networks. In P. Hibbert (Ed.), *Co-creating Emergent Insight. Proceedings of the 10th Conference on Multi-organizational Partnerships, Alliances, & Networks*, Glasgow, June 26-28.
- Benford, R., & Snow, D. (2000). Framing processes and social movements: an Overview and Assessment. *Annual Review of Sociology*, 26, 611–39.
- Bouwen, R. (1998). Relational construction of meaning in emerging organizational contexts. *European journal of work and organizational psychology*, 7(3), 299-319.
- Brown, P., & Levison, S. (1987). Politeness: some universals in language use. In A. Jaworski, & N. Coupland (Eds.), *The Discourse Reader*. London: Routledge.
- Dewulf, A., Craps, M., & Dercon, G. (2004). How issues get framed and reframed when different communities meet. *Journal of community and applied social psychology*, 14, 177-192.

- Dewulf, A., Craps, M., Bouwen, R., Taillieu, T., and Pahl-Wostl, C. (2005). Integrated management of natural resources: dealing with ambiguous issues, multiple actors and diverging frames. *Water Science and Technology*, 52(6), 115-124.
- Drake, L.E., & Donohue, W.A. (1996). Communicative framing theory in conflict resolution. *Communication Research*, 23, 297-322.
- Eden, C. (1994). Cognitive mapping and problem structuring for system dynamics model building. *System Dynamics Review*, 10(2-3): 257-276.
- Edström, A. (2004). Expressions of disagreement by Venezuelans in conversation. *Journal of Pragmatics*, 36, 1499–1518.
- Edwards, D. (1997). *Discourse and cognition*. London: Sage.
- Gergen, K.J. (1994). *Realities and relationship: soundings in social construction*. London: Harvard University Press.
- Goffman, E. (1999). On face-work: an analysis of ritual elements in social interaction. In A. Jaworski, & N. Coupland (Eds.), *The Discourse Reader*. London: Routledge.
- Gray, B. & Donnellon, A. (1990). *An interactive theory of reframing in negotiation*. Unpublished manuscript. Pennsylvania State University, College of Business Administration.
- Gray, B. (1989). *Collaborating. Finding common ground for multiparty problems*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.
- Gruber, H. (2001). Questions and strategic orientation in verbal conflict sequences. *Journal of Pragmatics*, 33, 1815-1857.
- Gruber, H. (1998). Disagreeing: Structure and sequential placement of disagreements in conflicts phase of talk. *Text*, 18(4): 467-503.
- Heritage, J. (1997). Conversation analysis and institutional talk: analysing data. In D. Silverman (Ed.), *Qualitative research: theory, method and practice* (pp.144-160). Thousand Oaks: Sage.
- Huxham, C. (Ed.) (1996). *Creating collaborative advantage*. London: Sage.

- Knoblauch, H. (1991). The taming of foes: the avoidance of asymmetry in informal discussions. In I. Markova & K. Foppa, *Asymmetry in dialogue*. London: Harvester Wheatsheaf.
- Kotthoff, H. (1993). Disagreement and concession in disputes: On the context sensitivity of preference structures. *Language in Society*, 22, 193-216.
- Lawrence, T., Phillips, N. & Hardy, C. (1999). Watching whale watching: exploring the collaborative foundations of collaborative relationships. *The journal of applied behavioral science*, 35, 479-502.
- Locke, A., & Edwards, D. (2003). Bill and Monica. *British Journal of Social Psychology*, 42, 239–256.
- O'Connell, S. (2004). *Managing disagreement to avoid confrontation in sports talk radio*. Working Papers in TESOL & Applied Linguistics. Teachers College, Columbia University.
- Phillips, N., & Hardy, C. (2002). *Discourse analysis: investigating processes of social construction*. Thousand Oaks: Sage.
- Pomerantz, A. (1984). Agreeing and disagreeing with assessments: some features of preferred/dispreferred turn shapes. In J. Atkinson and John Heritage (Eds.), *Structures of social action: studies in conversation analysis*. Cambridge: University Press.
- Potter, J., & Wetherell, M. (1987). *Discourse and social psychology: beyond attitudes and behaviour*. London: Sage.
- Putnam, L., & Holmer, M. (1992). Framing, reframing and issue development. In L. Putnam & M. Roloff, *Communication and negotiation*. London: Sage.
- Sacks, H. (1987). On the preferences for agreement and contiguity in sequences in conversation. In G. Button and J. Lee (Eds.), *Talk and social organization*. Clevedon: Multilingual Matters.
- Shotter, J. (1994). *Conversational realities*. Thousand Oaks: Sage.
- Van Dongen, H., De Laat, W., & Maas, A. (1996). *Een kwestie van verschil*. Delft: Eburon.
- Weick, K. (1979). *The social psychology of organizing*. Second edition. McGraw-Hill.
- Weick, K. (1995). *Sensemaking in organizations*. California: Sage.

Weick, K., & Bougon, M. (1986). Organizations as cause maps. In H.P. Sims, Jr. and D.A. Gioia (eds.), *Social cognition in organizations*. San Francisco: Jossey Bass.

Wood, L., & Kroger, R. (2000). *Doing discourse analysis: methods for studying action in talk and text*. Thousand Oaks: Sage.

Appendix. Transcription conventions (adapted from Wood and Kroger, 2000: 193)

A: Some [talk] going on B: [overlap]	Square brackets in consecutive lines of talk indicate the onset ([) and end (]) of overlapping talk
A: end of line= B: =start of line	Equal signs indicate latching (no interval) between utterances.
(.)	Untimed pause (just hearable; <1 second)
(2)	Pause timed to the nearest second
Bu-	A dash shows a sharp cutoff of speech
<u>Underlining</u>	Underlining indicates emphasis
CAPITALS	Capital letters indicate talk that is noticeably louder than surrounding talk
°soft°	Degree signs indicate talk that is noticeably more quiet than surrounding talk
>fast<	>< indicates talk that is noticeably faster than the surrounding talk
Ho:me	A colon indicates an extension of the sound or syllable that it follows
. , ? !	Punctuation marks are used to mark speech delivery rather than grammar. A period indicates a stopping fall in tone; a comma indicates a continuing intonation; a question mark indicates rising inflection; an exclamation point indicates an animated or emphatic tone.