Theoretical Writing

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> Editor's note: This paper addresses common questions about the particular way in which grounded theorists should write about their classic grounded theory. This important chapter has been excerpted and lightly edited for clarity and context from chapter 8 in Glaser's *Theoretical Sensitivity* (1978).

The goal of grounded theory methodology, above all, is to offer the results to the public, usually through one or more publications. We will focus on writing for publication, which is the most frequent way that the analyst can tell how people are "buying" what really matters in sociology, or in other fields.

Both feedback on and use of publications will be the best evaluation of the analyst's grounded theory. It will be his main source of criticism, constructive critique, and frequently of career rewards. In any case, he has to write to expand his audience beyond the limited number of close colleagues and students. Unless there is a publication, his work will be relegated to limited discussion, classroom presentation, or even private fantasy. The rigor and value of grounded theory work deserves publication. And many analysts will have a stake in effecting wider publics, which makes their substantive grounded theory *count*.

The best form to publish in sociology is through a monograph. The highest rewards, in general, go for writing books, for they probably reach the most diverse public with the maximum amount of material. Journal articles, of course, run a close second. One solution which many analysts take is to write chapters into articles, while fewer combine articles into books. We shall mainly focus here on the chapter form, which is similar to the article form with minor adjustments.

In this final stage of grounded theory methodology, writing is a "write up" of piles of ideas from theoretical sorting. Writing techniques are, perhaps, not as crucial as the techniques characteristic of the previous stages, but they are still crucial. Since writing sums up all preceding stages, but they are still crucial.

Since writing sums up all the preceding work, it cannot be left uncontrolled, perhaps to scuttle it. Rather, writing must capture it. It must put into relief the conceptual work and its integration into a theoretical explanation. So very often in qualitative research, the theory is left implicit in the write-up as the analyst gets caught up in the richness of the data.

Below we shall discuss the logic of construction of shape of and conceptual style of a monograph and a chapter. Then we discuss the reworking of initial drafts, in order to sharpen the shape and style. We briefly indicate our view of uses of the literature, and close with recommendations for the analyst's theoretical pacing.

It must be underlined that the write-up of sorts is a theory of a core variable which freezes the ongoing for the moment. It is unfortunate, perhaps, that writing has this "slice of reality" character. We have covered this problem as best as possible by using concepts

and processes that have duration and are independent of time and place. We also construct a theory that is readily modifiable. The analyst should underscore these points in his writing because his writing probably will read mainly as a fixed conceptual description, not an explanation, by most readers. We are in essence stuck with this paradox.

Logic of Construction

Typically, sociological monographs are constructed on the bases of a "little logic." It is the main building idea of the book, hence the ensuing chapters. The little logic usually consists of no more than a paragraph or two, and often just one long sentence. In monographs it may be stated as an interest, a general idea, a logical deprivation, a hypothesis, a finding to be explored, an explanation, a statement of purpose, and so forth. In our case a little logic states that the core variable explains a large amount of the variation in a behavior or set of behaviors. For example, in *Awareness of Dying,* we stated that awareness contexts account for much of the behavior around a dying patient in a hospital.

These little logics are found in the preface, introduction, editor's note (when the author does not state it) or appendix. Separate little logics may introduce each chapter, based on the build-up of the book. Or they may end a chapter to set up the reason for the coming chapter. Sometimes each chapter further refines the logic.

Implied in the little logic of monographs are many aspects and assumptions of its construction. It implies whether the study will be descriptive, verificational, or the focus on theory generation. The little logic for a grounded theory monograph must clearly reflect its generative intent. It also should imply the book's methodology, the book's unity as a whole, and its level of conceptualization. It brings out the model for its integration: such as in a grounded theory book, we state that the core variable will explain a behavior implying that it will be written this way as its purpose. The little logic also brings out the unsolved question or problem with its necessary dissonance, which will interest the reader in finding out how the BSP [basic social process] will process or resolve it. The little logic can be substantively coded or theoretically coded but is usually the former with the latter implied.

In most monographs, we usually find one little logic and sometimes two or none at all. The single one is all that is needed in grounded theory, for it is based on a core variable analysis. Books without any wander all over and books with two, as noted earlier, find difficulty in handling both together adequately. The promise implied in the little logic is one criterion by which to judge its success: "did he pull it off?" as the saying goes. The grounded theorist should be cautious in his promise to the reader. The modesty of his effort should be underscored, but with no apology.

Sometimes an author will over generalize his logic and spend much of his book specifying it. Others will state their logic too specifically and soon transcend and leave them behind. The reader then feels lost in trying to find the book he has been invited to read. In our case, the level of generality of the little logic is based on the core category, hence the logic is consistent with the level of conceptualization of ensuing analysis.

Implied in the above discussion is the basic assumption of grounded theory. Writing is a careful systematic "construction job." It does not merely flow from a witty mind, no matter how much wit might help. Readers who wish to write grounded theory should look at several monographs to discover their little logics and theory properties. Such experiences give an armamentarium of ideas on how to write a monograph effectively without committing the errors of colleagues. This study is invaluable. It is not to evaluate the substantive or abstract worth of monographs; it is to learn more techniques in the construction of a book. For example, one discovery we and our students have made is that there are a number of authors who write a little logic with minimal awareness of its import. Hence, they are not or only slightly constrained in following its implications for the ensuing work. In grounded theory, a little logic is written realistically and with awareness so that it can be followed throughout the book.

Shape

In grounded theory we follow the standard shaping of sociology monographs and chapters or articles. For chapters, we begin with an introduction which includes first the general problem, second the methodology (if appropriate as in an article or introduction to a book), and third, a prose outline of the coming substantive theory for the chapter sections. If the chapter is an introduction to a book, we close with the outline of the book. If it is a subsequent chapter, we close with a transition to the next. We close articles and books with general conclusions. However, we do handle this shaping in somewhat different ways than standard because of the aim of putting the substantive theory into relief.

Introduction

In writing of introductions, there are several forms that we do not use. For example, authors often may derive the problem for the book or paper from a general perspective, from a literature search or general interest, or in some combination of those and with more or less synthesis and comparative work. However, in introductions we derive the problem and core variable from the grounded theory, which has been generated in the research. Existing perspective and literature are only used as supplements of contrasts, if at all.

Our approach to introducing the problem is to use a "funnel down" from a "nature discussion" to introducing the problem. The general, grounded, most relevant properties of the core variable are discussed to give the fullest meaning of its general nature. Then from these properties we select those that will be developed in the chapter in relation to the problem. Thus, typically, one discusses in a chapter or paper only one of many properties of a core category. For example, there are several dimensions upon which clients judge the performance of a professional they visit: cost, desire to help, kind of help, pace of their service, kind of clientele, references, and so forth. One study focused on the combination of cost and desire to help. The clients weighed whether the client thought the professional was most interested either in helping or in the money. This affected whether or not they returned and referred the doctor to others (Hayes-Bautista, 1975).

To set out the general nature of the core variable and then funnel it down to a theory on a specific process and problem that is associated with one property of it is very effective. The general meaning of the chapter or paper transcends its specificity, thus putting it in

general perspective. Without it the selectivity may lose general meaning and seemingly refer to a very limited study. It starts to appear unit focused. The "nature" paragraphs may have relevant literature and perspectives woven into them, as we previously said, but only as supplements or contrasts, not as sources of derivation. The source of these properties, which establish nature, is their grounding in systematic research.

Once the problem and core variable are "funneled" down to the purpose of the paper, it is appropriate to state the integrative outline established through sorting. The outline is written as cumulative build-up of how the paper will handle the promise of the purpose. More precisely, the outline discusses each section and how sections are related to each other. Then the reader knows what he can expect in the theory. This promise is fulfillable since the analyst is merely stating what he has already generated and sorted for writing.

If the analyst has not yet codified his outline, or is not sure of its integration, or indeed finds as he gets into the paper that the outline falls apart, he should write anyway. He should ask himself what he should talk about in order to write the most relevant parts of his theory. Writing can have the consequence of integrating the outline or reintegrating what has fallen apart. It is a good way out of a block in integration. If it does not fully accomplish integration, then reworking initial drafts will (discussed below).

The outline paragraph can be written or rewritten at any stage in writing. The analyst can do it first or last. It is a matter of preference. Some analysts prefer, from the beginning, to establish a tight rein on what they will write. It forces them to stick to the sorts. Others do it last when reworking drafts, after studying what they have done, in terms of their sorts, and resorts as well as perhaps license to add and subtract yet even more material. By their writing, analysts are always outgrowing their previous perspective on the data and some like to leave options open to change the integration.

Once again, it is a worthwhile exercise for the analyst to study tables of contents and chapter outlines in published work in order to develop a grounded perspective on how other authors resolve this step—if they do resolve it—or forget it or fulfill the promise of their outline.

When appropriate, a brief methodology of the chapter can be put in the introduction or relegated to an appendix.

Substantive Sections

The sections, of course, simply follow from the sorts. They render visible the hard work that the analyst has done over many months thus they bring the satisfaction coming from the culmination of the work in a product. If the analyst's pent-up demand is too great to de-burden himself of his formulations and to feel the gratification there from, then the substantive sections or chapters can be written before the introduction.

Ending the Paper

We have a special view of ending a written work. First, summaries are not advised.

After all, in conceptual work the paper or chapter is in some manner its own summary. Students ask us, "How do I finish the paper? I have written the theory, what else is there to say?" A summary is redundant and an affront to those readers who have actually read the paper, and a "cop out" for those who have not read it, however useful to them. Summaries are usually forced by an editor or brought on by the analyst who does not know how to end his paper.

Writing a conclusion of recommendations can be worthwhile if the theory is relevant for practitioners. Our approach to the ending is to take the core variable, and perhaps a few of those sub-core variables that worked best and generate their use and contribution for formal theory in sociology and for other substantive realms in sociology. This can be done relatively easily by brief comparative analysis with data from experience, knowledge, and the literature, and by raising the conceptual level.

Thus, it is easy to see the general import of cultivating in a study of the cultivating of housewives by milkmen. Since it is a study of cultivating of clients for keeping business and for profit, why not also cultivating of relationships for family fun and/or recreation such as in marriage or friendships? Cultivating can be seen as occurring up and down social rank; milkmen cultivate up, doctors often down. Cultivating is a general problem in the service industries and in the professions. And so it goes; it is not difficult to bring out such general implications of the core and sub-core variables, which contribute by suggesting other substantive areas of inquiry to broaden the substantive theory as well as suggest the importance of generating a formal theory. One can also suggest theory on other aspects of the core variable not delt with in the paper, but reviewed in the introductory "nature" paragraph. At this point the rigors of grounding can be relieved for conceptual elaborations. We believe that readers find this approach to ending a paper stimulating and transcending of the substantive content given previously.

It must be noted that the generalities of the beginning and the end sections to the paper are quite different. The beginning section is systematically generated properties from research within the substantive area. The end section is generalized properties applicable to other substantive areas and conceptually elaborated through non-research comparisons. Substance of time and place are left behind.

Conceptual Style

One very frequent problem in writing grounded theory is that analysts have trouble in maintaining the conceptual level that they have worked so hard to generate. The dictum is to write conceptually, by making theoretical statements about the relationship between concepts, rather than writing descriptive statements about people. Thus, the analyst writes in such a way as to make explicit the dimensions, properties, or other theoretical codes of his theory as well as the theoretical integration of these codes.

It is quite easy to slip into excessive description when illustrating, perhaps most of us have so much experience in writing descriptively. So, descriptive writing comes naturally, conceptual writing does not. It is even easier when the data is relatively conceptually unanalyzed. The most important thing to remember is to write about concepts, not people.

Thus, one should write about cultivating or becoming, not milkmen who are cultivating or nurses who are becoming. Saying this is easier than doing it! If writing momentum is important, then don't worry, write, because the concepts can be brought out during the reworking stage. Usually initial drafts are a mix of both conceptual descriptive levels.

Indicators for the concepts, which are descriptive statements, are used only for illustration and imagery. They support the concept; they are not the story itself. They help introduce the concept, which can then be carried forward illustration free. Thus, the dosage mix for grounded theory is to minimize illustrations, using them for support purposes, so that the analyst can maximize use of concepts within the allotted space of the paper or chapter. The power of the theory resides in concepts, not in description.

The credibility of the theory should be won by its integration, relevance, and workability, not by illustration used as if it were proof. The assumption of the reader, he should be advised, is that all concepts are grounded and that this massive grounding effort could not be shown in writing. Also, that as grounded they are not proven they are only suggested. The theory is an integrated set of hypotheses, not of findings. Proofs are not the point; illustrations are only to establish imagery and understanding as vividly as possible when needed. It is not incumbent upon the analyst to provide the reader with description or information as to how each hypothesis was reached. Stating the method in the beginning or appendix is sufficient, perhaps with an example of how one went about grounding a code and a hypothesis.

As the analyst learns to maintain a conceptual level, he finds that it supports itself by becoming more dense and integrated. As he writes on this level, he should not state in so many words that he will explain some behavior. He should write the explanation of how processes actually process problems, so the reader will see that explanation as such. In short, the analyst should do theory, not tell that he is going to do it. The latter too easily leads to excesses in promise, wastes valuable space, and "cops out" by offering a thin theory. Doing a theory just presents itself as it is; a modestly dense, integrative, and explanatory theory.

Temporal distance from the data helps to maintain conceptual level. Sometimes it is best to wait months, even a year, in order to think about the data sufficiently to be able to write conceptually. Letting sorts or memos lie fallow always helps to mature the conceptualization of the data. The analyst simply forgets descriptive details from the field while his conceptual scope grows. It is easier to be conceptual sooner in secondary analysis of other's data because the analyst never experienced the field where the data was collected, hence is free of the uncollected data that lodge in the field worker's head (Glaser, 1963).

There are a few rules that will help those analysts write who have difficulty in writing. Write as one talks, not as one writes. This makes writing much easier. So does the idea that if one has two things to say, say them one at a time. Write the first draft, with no heed to English construction, so as to focus on the theory construction. The grammar can be edited later in subsequent drafts. As with memos, it should not be allowed to interfere with the ideational out-put. The reader should not underestimate this problem, many an

analyst cannot write because of concern with perfect English. Our first concern must be to put over "good" ideas, which means getting them on paper.

Also, avoid in the substantive sections the use of analogies to bring out concepts and their relationships. While apparently useful, under examination any analogy may prove otherwise. While the current analysis and the analogy (with lots of imagery such as games, drama, or machines) may have a few similar characteristics, that is often as far as the comparison goes. The difference in other characteristics between the two undermine the analysis unless analyzed away. This takes unnecessary space and time and prevents a straightforward getting on with the current analysis. For example, in some ways interaction life may be like a drama, but dramas are very different from life. Thus, other properties of drama cannot be applied to life (such as "not for keeps," stage lights, curtain, directors, etc.). But the catchy drama analogy can take a lively-minded reader easily down the wrong line of thought as he starts over applying drama instead of doing the analysis itself. The reader is then either lost, not thinking correctly, or is forced to analyze his way back to the matter at hand, if he cares to.

Reworking

The first draft usually is a delight for the analyst, but also it usually is very rough. All of its defects can only be corrected by reworking the draft. As we said, its aim was to capture the conceptualization and integration of the theory. Like memos, it was not to be burdened or blocked by the requirements of perfect English. Until an analyst is an accomplished writer, one half or more if his creativity typically occurs in reworking his initial draft.

This reworking may take many trips through the work, as the analyst solves a problem at a time. Taking on too many problems at once may prevent doing a good job for each. Writing is a division of labor process, requiring different jobs of English, conceptual and scholarly editing. Needless to say, a general property of the reworking is that as each problem is corrected, the chances are that it is likely to reveal still other previously unnoticed problems and possibilities. This phenomenon does saturate however, or in the alternative, the analyst will settle for less than perfection out of exhaustion and growing personal saturation.

There are many standard problems for which to rework the initial draft. They can be seen on two dimensions: English and professional (conceptual and scholarly) editing. The latter includes weeding out unit focus and conceptual style and other needs of sections and subsections. We shall discuss professional editing here with respect to conceptualization and scholarship. English editing can be hired or drafted from among friends.

A basic reworking tactic for conceptualization is "flip-flopping" paragraphs; that is, making the theoretical statement come first. Most of us, but beginning writers in particular, often write paragraphs that start with description and work up to the concept and general hypothesis in the last sentence. This comes naturally and also comes from the constant generating that goes on. For it to be completely a conceptual writing and to bring the conceptualization into relief, what is necessary is to put the last sentence first. Or "flip-flop"

the paragraph by starting with the concept and then illustrating it as though it originally grew in reverse. Then the concept is imagined, "out front," emphasized and usable in carry-forwards. The description is trimmed to fit the need of illustrating. The same applies to concepts buried within the paragraph if they are the main idea of it.

The carry-forward notion of concepts and the cumulative build-up of the theory care crucial in reworking. To let a concept drop may indicate its lack of relevance. And to not have sections and chapters tied together with theoretical meaning and development is to undercut grounded theory. All methods we have detailed previously to this, especially sorting, have set the writing up for an integrative build-up and the use of relevant concepts. During reworking, the analyst makes sure these two facets of theory generation are there.

In the heat of writing the initial draft it is easy to not tie sections and chapters together sufficiently. Now the analyst writes and rewrites these transitions. He makes sure of the directions of his explanations and brings into relief why and how each chapter goes in the direction it does. As he reworks, he sees clearly that a concept which has been dropped can be worked usefully in a forward position to enrich the analysis. And if it has not been used for 100 pages or so, perhaps more illustration is warranted. Missing and messed transitions are easy to spot with the perspective of a second or third trip through the writing. This polishing can be immensely gratifying.

Lastly, it is sometimes useful during reworking to submit work to colleagues for opinions and critique. If this is too traumatic, the usefulness is neutralized. The analyst should be wary and submit only to those colleagues with sensitivity enough to be appreciative, delicate in suggestion, and knowledgeable enough to understand and give positive and possible suggestions to the reworking.

Submitting drafts to journals is a good source of evaluation from the outside world of un-chosen readers. It is an excellent source of material for reworking to solve problems that derail the professional and layman public who do not know the meanings familiar to and often assumed as general by the grounded theorist. There is as yet no standardized sociology with respect to either method or paradigm. This freedom to do different kinds of sociology is a strength of our field and spawns growth in many directions. But it also forces accommodations to make grounded theory accessible to other sociologists with training in different methods and theorizing. Their critique should be seen in such light, not as "dumb," "deprecating," or "outrageous."

Footnoting the Literature

One important aspect of reworking drafts is to integrate the generated theory into the existing literature through the use of footnotes. The key to this task is the analyst's attitude toward the existing literature. His attitude should not be one of adumbration, volume, or reverence. It should be one of carefully weaving his theory into its place in the literature.

To "adnumbrate" is for the analyst to find in the literature an idea he has generated, especially in the literature of a great man. It is amazing how many authors try to find their

best ideas in previous work in order to legitimate using it, as borrowed or derived as if they could not be allowed to generate it on their own. The proper attitude is simply to accept having discovered ideas. There are so many in grounded theory work! And if the analyst discovers that one of his many ideas has already been used elsewhere, the proper attitude is "he (the other author) discovered it too," as might any theoretically sensitive analyst in dealing with the same or similar data. The essential point to remember is that the discovered idea is relevant because of its connections to other variables which make up a theory which accounts for the variation in a pattern of behavior. And the analyst will almost never find this relevance associated with the concept as it was used previously! Thus, his contribution remains truly original, since the crucial issue is a multivariate, grounded theory that works.

Many a scholar, theorist, or empirical research worker will voluminously footnote every piece of possible related literature. The footnotes seem like a reading list or an extensive bibliography (Merton, 1949/1968; Smelser, 1962). There are far too many to integrate meaningfully. Interestingly enough when, in theoretical writings, one studies these footnotes carefully, one usually discovers that nothing is referred to that might detract from the originality of the citing author. This is so even when well-known related, relevant works are overlooked by the theorist, perhaps purposefully, so as not to threaten his creativity. Thus, much necessary integrated placement of these theoretical works is missing. This non-integrative approach cannot fail to hinder the growth of theory.

Reverential, commemorative, and referral footnotes are fine, as long as they do not take precedence over the generated theory. They go hand in hand with integrative placement of the grounded theory. There is no magic about a theory in print before the analyst's writing just because it already occurred that warrants undue reverence. Soon the analyst also will be in print and his ideas will be used. Thus, reverence and commemoration should be moderate based on what the idea from the literature truly contributes to the big picture, just as the analyst uses ideas for his own theory. Idolization of "great men" should be replaced with the attitude: "He too was working with these ideas." In addition, there should be no implication that the current idea was derived from a previous author's merely to legitimate the idea. In our research, ideas are discovered on their own or emergently fit. Clearly, reverential derivations are farthest from out methodological position.

Integrative placement of the grounded theory in existing literature occurs through a footnote alone or combined with text. The citation indicates the theory's place among others working on the same topics or ideas. It briefly extends the theory of others. It refers to other ideas in the literature of a related by tangential direction. And it conceptually transcends, while grouping together, empirical articles which just present findings.

These efforts should be as short as possible so as not to derail a reader who stops to see the footnote. A reader will also be less likely to miss footnotes, because they are brief, since he can see at a glance that his reading will barely be slowed. Footnotes that require length can be put at the end of the chapter as noted references. Even longer requirements can result in another article.

Obviously, this kind of footnoting takes analytic work; it is not easy. But it is done

just as the analyst does his grounded theory; he compares, generates memos, sorts and writes up the idea for the footnote.

Theoretical Pacing

It is appropriate to close this chapter by referencing to many of the properties on theoretical pacing as they apply to writing. The theoretical pacing of reading, talk, deadlines, respites, collaboration, and personal growth become very relevant during writing.

Reading

We have said that during data collection, coding memos and sorting of memos, the analyst should read in other fields so as not to preempt his thought regarding the significant variables in the substantive area under research. The analyst should continue this rule throughout the initial draft, if his sorting has not reached a firm integration. This maximizes on another dimension the emergence of his theory.

But when he starts reworking his draft, he should make a concerted effort to cover as much literature as possible in the same area in which he is writing his theory. Now the job is to compare his work to others and weave it into its place in the pertinent theoretical and substantive literature. It also sensitized the analyst to reworking his theory to the best advantage, as he studies how others are theorizing in the field. As noted above, integrative placement of ides by supplementing, extending, and transcending others' work is the issue, not their preemption of his ideas.

It is a travesty not to do this scholarly aspect of grounded theory for sociology, though some analysts do not because of their personal saturation. Just because grounded theory has emerged and can stand on its own, does not mean it should be left to isolation or only for the consumption of laymen interested in the area. It should contribute more explicitly to the "bigger enterprise" in some way. If theoretical and substantive literature is sparce, as it has been for some of our own studies, hopefully it starts a literature to which others can contribute.

Talk

As in doing codes and memos, the analyst should avoid talking about the ideas he is writing. At best, talk is interrupting and distracting. At worst, it gives the ideas away before writing by releasing the energy behind them which can easily be followed by forgetting them or feeling no need to write them up. Also, others can derail or block even the most careful writing up of sorts. Once the analyst is deep in the writing mode, he should stay there undistracted. There is plenty of time during reworking to discuss ideas for critique, clarification and polishing after the initial draft. At this point, they are down on paper so they cannot get lost or blocked. The initial draft can always be changed, if it is written. But we have seen too many drafts get blocked or prematurely changed or closed off by a too soon critique of ideas by a trusted colleague who has little notion of the interrupting effect of his ideas through connections to other codes that he is unaware of.

Collaboration

A carefully applied exception to the rule on talk is to seminar with a collaborator who is stimulating rather than draining. Again, when writing, the analyst must be careful because of possible blockage, derailment, and/or drain from even this trusted, respected source. There is really no reason why collaborators cannot also wait to talk during reworking once they know which parts of the integrative outline they will write up.

Collaboration is very useful in reworking because it saves much time. An analyst may have to wait a month or two to be able to rework his draft with sufficient freshness. While a collaborator can start reworking it the next day, since for him the initial draft is fresh (not having written it), when collaborators trust each other with reworking of their initial drafts, then writing proceeds very fast. When they do not trust, they can destroy each other (Hagstrom, 1965).

Collaborators who are out of "sync" with each other's pacing should be patient in waiting for the other to be ready to talk. Demanding talk can be damaging to the work and the collaboration. It may force premature closure of the writing of one collaborator, when the other's judgement is valued.

By the same token, to demand talk of a personally saturated colleague who cannot say one more word about the project is to be avoided. At this point, the collaboration is either over for the moment or completely.

Deadline

Our goal in preventing talk and showing one's work before the initial draft is to maximize the energy behind productivity and minimize those circumstances which so often short circuit it. Helpful along these lines is the analytic rule of giving oneself the shortest possible deadline for the initial draft. This pressure prevents wasting time on premature showing and talk. And it gives the analyst an expectation to himself and others as to when he can show his work. A deadline is strength inducing to ward off these and other typical foibles of writing. It prevents drift, evasion and over elaboration of the theory. It generates focus, perseverance, and closure.

A deadline should include the possibility of respites consistent with the analyst's personal pacing recipe. Otherwise the work may become a drudge, that undercuts the richness of the writing. The deadline and respites should be synchronized both with the analyst's personal pacing and the natural pace of the work. Respites occur best after semi-closures, such as finishing a section or sub-section.

Outgrowing the Material

From the outset, grounded theory work is a growing experience both personally and with theoretical understanding of the data. Writing further grows the analyst with respect to maturity with his data, and fortunately, knowing far more than he is capable of getting on paper. The sheer fact of writing a paragraph, quite often, yields insights that put the analyst beyond it. This outgrowing of one's material can be disconcerting and even undermining of the final writing of the theory. In grounded theory work, the analyst must realize that *writing is but a slice of a growing theory.*

The analyst, who feels that he cannot finish writing because he can never begin to tell what he knows, should just accept this fact and finish as sorted and planned. He can never outstrip his own constant growing, no matter how much he writes. His writing will always spawn growth and yield more to say. He cannot overload his work and break his integrative outline—thus, he must accept that although he knows more and better, his reader, knowing less, can greatly benefit by whatever the analyst does write. It will be "news" to the reader, even if "old hat" to the analyst. Others will respond to the richness of the dense grounded theory, while the analyst may feel he had only begun and that it is "sort of thin."

It is a tribute to grounded theory that it maximizes this outgrowing of one's theoretical material. The reduction, natural high, and relief from closure on what theory he has written, usually outweighs the nagging realization that much more could be said. Yet some analysts still are blocked by the "puniness" of writing compared to what they really "could tell."

Other qualitative methods leave much theory implicit and undeveloped because they do not allow for much generating, strategies of coding, sorting, memoing, and integrating. These likely will leave the theoretically inclined researcher with an even worse feeling that much has been undone and left out, since he has not at least integrated a fledging theory that fits and works.

The point is to publish this "slice" of a growing theory so others can get to this point and also use it and grow with the theory. The differential perceptions of the reader and the writer does not redound against the writer. He will be applauded for what he did, not what he knows he did not do. What he did not have room to set down can be covered in other papers or books and can be suggested to others as future research leads. What is arbitrary about writing and publishing a substantive theory is more than compensated for by the contribution of the grounded theory methodology by which the theory was generated.

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