ABSTRACT

A TRANSACTIONAL ANALYSIS OF MARITAL COMMUNICATION PATTERNS: AN EXPLORATORY STUDY

By

Frank E. Millar III

The focus of this research was on transactional communication patterns of normal marriage partners within a natural setting. The research question involved determining transactional characteristics to differentiate types of relational communication patterns. Two such structural characteristics were created: a rigidity-flexibility and a stability-instability dimension of verbal communication behaviors. The purpose of this exploratory study was to describe different types of transactional patterns and identify other behavioral and interactional differences between relational types.

The data was collected by personal interviews with 45 randomly selected couples in the Greater Dayton, Ohio area. These interviews gathered two general classes of information: (a) self-report data from both the husband and wife individually; and (b) verbal discussions between the marriage partners. These taped discussions formed the basis for the transactional communication data.

A secondary purpose of this study was to evaluate the usefulness of the transactional coding scheme recently developed by Ericson and Rogers (1973). Their procedure is recommended for communication researchers as it appears to have face validity, can be coded with good levels of intersubjective reliability, provides a dynamic description of a system's relationship and is readily adaptable to several communication concepts.

The couples were classified into four groups on the basis of their stability and rigidity dimension scores. Several main effects for each transactional characteristic were observed. The stable couples reported discussing more topics frequently and more interspousal communication satisfaction than did the unstable couples. The discussions of the stable dyads contained: (a) more verbal exchanges; (b) more transitory configurations; and (c) fewer complementary configurations than those of the unstable pairs. Extended control struggles were only observed in the unstable couples' transcripts.

The rigidity-flexibility dimension also differentiated the dyads on several measures. Compared to the flexible couples, the rigid pairs: (a) reported more agreement and displayed more understanding on their marital satisfaction level; (b) had more of their discussions contained within long sequences; and (c) exhibited more symmetrical long sequences. The discussions of the rigid

couples also had more transitory, neutralized symmetrical and transitory units with the husband one-down than the flexible dyads' discussions. The flexible couples, on the other hand, manifested a larger proportion of: (a) complementary configurations, (b) complementary units with the husband one-up; (c) competitive and submissive symmetrical transacts; and (d) transitory units with the husband one-up than did the rigid partners.

In general, the wives appear to control the interaction in the rigid dyads while the husbands control the relational definitions in the flexible couples. It was speculated that the rigidity-flexibility dimension will covary with the degree of role consensus within the marital partners and the stability-instability dimension will index consensus on interaction rules. The proportion of complementary units manifested is predicted to vary inversely with role consensus and the proportion of symmetrical units is expected to vary inversely with the amount of rule consensus.

It was concluded that this exploratory study represented an important first step in developing a transactional theory of marital dyads. Such a theory would be useful to both the communication scholar and practitioner in describing and explaining the process of interpersonal communication.

A TRANSACTIONAL ANALYSIS OF MARITAL COMMUNICATION PATTERNS: AN EXPLORATORY STUDY

By

Frank E. Millar III

A THESIS

Submitted to
Michigan State University
in partial fulfillment of the requirements
for the degree of

DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

Department of Communication

1973

Accepted by the faculty of the Department of Communication, College of Communication Arts, Michigan State University, in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the Doctor of Philosophy degree.

Gerald R. Miller
Director of Thesis

Guidance Committee: Gerald R. Miller, Chairman

Randall P. Harrison

James L. Phillips

To Mike and Jenna . . .

from whom I learned the

meaning of love.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I wish to express my gratitude to all the members of my guidance committee, Drs. Gerald R. Miller, Randall Harrison, James Phillips and Donald Cushman. My deepest appreciation is extended to my advisor, Dr. Gerald Miller, whose professional guidance and personal assistance have made this possible. No professor has deserved the Distinguished Faculty Award more. Also, the intellectual stimulation and enthusiasm of Don Cushman are especially acknowledged.

I am particularly grateful to my Dayton colleagues and friends, Phil Ericson, Edna Rogers and Ken Villard. Without them this project could not have succeeded.

I am further grateful to my friend, Norm Fontes, whose intellectual prodding and personal generosity kept me going.

In addition, the constant encouragement and moral support offered by my parents must be acknowledged.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

LIST OF TABLES

LIST OF FIGURES

LIST OF GRAPHS

LIST OF APPENDICES

CHAPTER I

RATIONALE

Introduction

Man is aware of himself and defines himself through his interpersonal relationships. Interpersonal relationships are initiated, maintained and changed through communication behaviors. Increasingly communication scientists have become interested in studying the relational aspects as well as the content of communicative acts. This inquiry focuses on creating useful classifications of the behavioral patterns that characterize a system's transactional structure.

One major approach to the transactional study of communication has its roots in the work of Ruesch and Bateson (1951), Haley (1962), Jackson (1965), Sluzki and Beavin (1965) and Watzlawick et al. (1967). Emphasizing the interdependency of transactional patterns, these authors conceptualize the relational characteristics of messages in terms of their control defining nature and the degree of control similarity between the dyad's members. Interpersonal interactions are stated to be either complementary or symmetrical.

Research employing this approach has had two general problems: (1) the majority of the studies using these concepts has been conducted on pathological dyads and families; (2) there has been considerable difficulty in operationalizing these central concepts of complementarity and symmetry.

Statement of Purpose and Division of Inquiry

The central purpose of this study is to determine the communication patterns of normal marriage dyads in a natural setting. This description of the transactional communicational pattern will be compared with the couple's marital behavior and satisfaction.

A secondary purpose of this research is to evaluate the usefulness of the classification scheme developed by Ericson and Rogers (1972) for operationalizing transactional communication behaviors in dyadic systems.

Chapter I will present a rationale for this study including a brief review of the relevant family literature on marital satisfaction. The procedures of data collection will be reported in Chapter II as well as the hypotheses to be tested in this exploratory analysis of transactional patterns. The results of these analyses will be reported in Chapter III, and the theoretical significance of the findings will be discussed in Chapter IV.

Review of Marital Satisfaction Literature

In their review of the literature on marital happiness and stability, Hicks and Platt (1970) state that most of the research has lacked a conceptual framework and reflects little more than the curiosity or the "personal hunches" of the investigator (1970, p. 550). Those studies which have had a theoretical base borrow heavily from the psychological, sociological or social psychological areas.

Not only are there theoretical problems with the literature in this area but also methodological problems abound. For instance, the definitions of the terms happiness and satisfaction as well as the operations used to measure them tend to be unique to the investigator, thus severely limiting generalizability of results (Hicks and Platt, 1970, pp. 551-553). Also there has been an excessive reliance on self-report data. This in and of itself is not necessarily troublesome if that is the only way to obtain information; but the addition of convergent operations would aid the precision and interpretation of these findings. However, this has not been the case. "There is virtually no research in this area in which observation of behavior by trained observers provides the data or in which self-report data were validated against such objective criteria." (Hicks and Platt, 1970, pp. 554-555)

A third methodological problem with these studies has been the size and representativeness of the samples

used. The sample size has been generally small, ranging anywhere from 20 to 50 persons. Rarely are probability samples drawn and when they are, the sample tends to consist of atypical groups like married university students. Hicks and Platt summarize by stating that the bulk of the studies concerned with marital happiness have been conducted on white, middle-class persons between the ages of 20 to 40, who are college educated and have been married an average of ten years (1970, p. 558).

A notable exception to these sampling problems is a study by Gurin et al. (1960). They interviewed more than 2,400 people over the age of 21. Their results suggest that to a great degree, happiness in marriage implies that the spouses are happy with their relationship. Persons who reported they had very happy marriages were more likely to concentrate on the relational aspects of their marriage as the source of satisfaction while those reporting less happiness in marriage tend to dwell on the situational aspects of marriage. The reverse was also demonstrated, so that the very happy persons when stating an aspect of their marriage that made them unhappy tended to mention situational conditions, while the less happy stressed relational aspects or their spouse as sources of unhappiness in marriage.

Navran (1967) reports results that are directly concerned with the relation between communication and marital satisfaction. His sample, however, is unrepresentative as

Navran compared 24 couples who stated they were happily married with 24 couples who had sought marital counseling. The happily married couples were reported to differ from the unhappy pairs in that they: (a) talk more to one another; (b) convey the feeling that they understand what is being said to them; (c) have a wider range of topics to mutually diccuss; (d) tend to show more sensitivity to the feelings of their spouses; and (e) keep open and preserve their channels of communication. Based on the couples' self-reports, Navran further suggests that having good verbal communication is more strongly related to marital adjustment than is good non-verbal communication.

In summarizing the descriptive correlational studies of the last decade on happiness and stability, Hicks and Platt (1970, p. 562) state that the following conclusions are warranted: there are positive relationships between marital happiness and higher levels of (a) occupational status, (b) income, and (c) education; further, marital satisfaction is positively related to similarities in the husband and wife's (d) socioeconomic status, (e) age, (f) religion, and (g) affectional rewards for the spouse (like esteem). "The strongest, most compelling data emerging from research . . . however, added a new dimension to these accepted findings; the significance of the positive relationship between the instrumental aspects of the male's role and marital happiness has been strongly demonstrated . . . ." (p. 562) Thus, marital satisfaction is more

heavily dependent upon the husband's role performance than upon the wife's. For instance, data from several studies (Luckey, 1960; Stucker, 1963; Taylor, 1967; and Hurvitz, 1960, 1965) suggest that if the wife and husband agree on the husband's own role definition as father and husband, both are happier.

Descriptive studies like these reviewed by Hicks and Platt, however intriguing, do not assist the scientist in his pursuit of a theoretical procedure to study the marital pair's transactional process.

As stated earlier, the purpose of this study is to describe the transactional patterns of normal marriage pairs in their natural setting. The focus of concern is on creating useful classifications to characterize a dyad's transactional structure as manifested through its verbal behavior.

The value of such a descriptive study is given by Haley (1962). Haley argues for new methods of investigation based on more satisfactory descriptions of families. Questions concerning the functions, the effects, and the cultural differences in various behavioral patterns within and across families cannot be adequately studied until a more useful classification scheme is developed.

> Answers to such questions will come only with the development of a descriptive system which will rigorously classify families and differentiate one type from another . . . . Such a classification cannot be a characterization of individual family

> members, e.g., what sort of personalities the mothers and fathers have. Similarly, impressionistic descriptions, such as statements that a family exhibits covert resentment or has shared delusions will not lead to rigorous classification. The crucial differences between families would seem to reside in the sorts of transactions which take place between family members; the study of differences becomes a classification of communication patterns in the family. (Emphasis my own) (1962, p. 262)

Since this quotation was written a variety of procedures intent on classifying family interaction patterns have been proposed. The conclusion that families do have different interaction patterns over time and situations seems warranted from the literature. (Drechler and Shapiro, 1963; Riskin, 1964; Haley, 1964, 1967; Stabenau, 1965, Murrell and Stackowiak, 1965, 1967; Waxler and Mishler, 1968b, and Ericson, 1972). The majority of these studies have a clinical perspective and have been conducted on families with a pathological member. The focus of these studies has typically been on describing the differences in the interaction patterns between normal and pathological family units.

For example, Winter and Ferreira (1967) used a modified version of the Bales' Interaction Profile Analysis scheme to profile the interaction patterns of three person families. The families studied represented four groups differentiated according to the diagnosis of the child. These groups were: (a) normal, (b) emotionally maladjusted, (c) delinquent and (d) schizophrenic. They developed several indices based on the messages of each member as

coded by the IPA scheme. Although they obtain some interesting results, they state that the IPA as a coding scheme adds little to our knowledge of the interaction of different diagnostic groups. They summarize their article by stating:

> . . . we are forced to conclude that the Bales IPA system, in its present form, is not suited for work with families. Even with presumably adequate training of raters, neither we nor Waxler and Mishler (1966) have been able to achieve reassuring reliability levels. The major difficulty seems to be that the categories are multidimensional in meaning, and the raters are required to classify the items on the basis of high-order inferences. Thus, there seems to be no easy way to achieve consistency in these interpretations. What is needed is the development of new behavior categorization . . . which are more unidimensional in meaning. (Winter and Ferreira, 1967, p. 241)

Thus, the IPA scheme, although used extensively in small group research with ad hoc groups, does not seem suited for a transactional analysis of systems with a history.

For one thing, extensive training of the coders is necessary and still adequate intersubjective reliabilities are hard to obtain. A major reason adequate reliabilities are difficult to obtain is that the raters are required to use both audible verbal and paralinguistic cues in coding each message. Not only "what" is said but also "how" it is said are needed to code any given statement. Therefore, any given message requires high-order inferences in order to be categorized and these inferences make reliability difficult to obtain even with extensive training sessions.

Secondly, the Bales procedure would be hard to adopt to settings other than the laboratory. The coders

are either required to be present during the interaction or the dyad's discussions must be video-taped. Either of these procedures would be difficult and expensive to initiate outside of the laboratory. Furthermore, the obtrusiveness of these procedures can only be surmised, but the effects on the naturalness of the setting would probably be considerable.

Third, and more importantly, an interaction analysis like the Bales scheme does not provide the type of data consistent with the purpose of this descriptive study. A Balesian-like procedure essentially views communication as a series of person-to-person interacts. This type of interaction analysis is basically a stimulus-response model with each person's behavior viewed as a response to another producing a profile of the dyad's communication. The emphasis in this approach is on a cause-effect perspective through which to view interpersonal communication. The results of this kind of analysis have produced several interesting findings particularly those concerning imitation and the reciprocity norm.

Although the possibility of group processes and hence a ralational analysis is introduced by a Balesian technique, the relational processes are not the direct focus of analysis. A Balesian-like scheme deals directly with the content of the messages. The obtained profiles concern the content or "floor" control behavioral patterns, they do not

tap the relational control pattern. In order to discuss a group's relationship, other theoretical frameworks (such as role theory, intra-psychic or various interpersonal theories) are introduced to interpret these profiles in terms of the motivations and purposes of the interactants. Notice, however, that these interpretations are essentially individual oriented. This is also true of social skill models of interaction like Argyle's (1969). The primary concern is with the individual person as he affects and is affected by the other group members. In other words, an interaction analysis is concerned with how the individual affects the system rather than emphasizing the effects of the system's structure on the individual. A transactional analysis of a two-person system, however, attempts to classify the parameters of a dyad's communication processes first and then look back at the individual. An interaction analysis just reverses this perspective.

The goal of a transactional analysis as compared to an interaction analysis is to categorize directly the system's relational pattern. The operations of such an analysis must focus on the structural characteristics of the system, on the relative position of each person as manifested through his communication behavior. The smallest unit of analysis that will allow this perspective is a pair of overlapping consecutive messages. For example, in a sequence of messages between speakers A and B, the basic

unit of analysis would be the following:

$$A_1B_1/B_1A_2/A_2B_2/B_2A_3/A_3B_3/.....B_nA_n.$$

This basic interact (i.e., A_1B_1) is transformed into a transact on the basis of the control dimensions of the messages. These transactional units (i.e., pairs of overlapping relational control codes) are the most useful means of viewing the structure of the dyad's communication pattern. These transactional units must be derived from the content of the messages but refer to the relationship existing within the dyad.

The minimal conditions needed for an adequate description of a dyadic system's transaction from a communication perspective, then, appear to be: (a) the content of the message is the focus of analysis; (b) overlapping consecutive pairs of messages representing dyadic information are the units of analysis; (c) these overlapping units of analysis must be capable of transformation into relational or transactional units, so that (d) their arithmetic summations and/or stochastic sequencing represent reliable patterns of communication behaviors, i.e., the relational structure of the system.

Basis of a Transactional Approach

Olson (1970), after reviewing the marital and family therapy literature, argues for a system approach to the study of both the marriage dyad and the family. He

classifies the existing therapeutic frameworks into five general categories: (1) intra-personal, (2) inter-personal, (3) quasi-interactional (4) interactional, and (5) transactional. The therapeutic unit of analysis is the individual in the first three categories with the goals of therapy being the improvement of the individual either as self (#1) or as an interactor with others (#s 2 and 3). The interactional approach to therapy focuses on group processes, but the therapeutic goal is basically the improvement of the individual self in relation to others.

In the transactional therapeutic framework, the unit of therapy is the natural system itself with the goal being the improvement of the family's process of interrelating (Olson, 1970, pp. 506-509). The Haley, Watzlawick, Jackson approach falls into this framework and their approach is an excellent example of the transactional therapeutic emphasis. For instance, schizophrenia is viewed by Watzlawick et al. (1967, p. 47) not as an "incurable and progressive disease of an individual mind," the classical psychiatric interpretation, but as "the only possible reaction to an absurd or untenable communicational context (a reaction that follows, and therefore perpetuates, the rules of such a context)."

Olson favors the transactional framework for therapeutic intervention but claims that new concepts need to be created in order to adequately deal with the transactions

between members of the system. He prefers the Haley, Watzlawick, Jackson tradition in family therapy although not without some reservation. He states:

> Although there has been difficulty with the conceptual and, particularly, the operational definitions of these terms, this approach has pointed out the inadequacy of psychoanalytic, personality, and social theory concepts for adequately describing the dynamics of family process. (Emphasis my own) (1970, p. 501)

These concepts of symmetry and complementarity have been troublesome to operationalize. Sluzki and Beavin (1965) and Mark (1970, 1971) represent two attempts at classifying verbal (audible linguistic) messages as being either symmetrical or complementary.

Sluzki and Beavin in their work with married couples assumed that "long-lasting dyads behave as homeostatic systems with a constant tendency towards equilibrium, both within the dyad and between the dyad and the environment." (1965, p. 232) This equilibrium is created and maintained through interaction. The interaction is not random but follows some mutually established set of rules.

> Furthermore, it is possible that each dyad will basically show a modality of interaction as an expression of its own homeostatic system . . . if we can achieve a comprehensive and mutually exclusive (systematization) of the field of interaction, it would be possible to classify each dyad according to its type of interaction which is more preponderant or repetitive. (1965, p. 325)

These authors posit that every message in an interaction either defines, reinforces or redefines the nature of the dyad's relationship. Secondly, they contend that in

every interactional sequence, even those of short duration, there will be key indicators that will allow the specification of the dyad's typical transactional pattern.

Sluzki and Beavin define symmetry as the structural resemblance and complementarity as the lack of this resemblance in the dyad's communication behaviors (1965, p. 324). On the bases of these assumptions and definitions, Sluzki and Beavin attempted to develop a coding scheme which would adequately classify dyadic relationships as manifested by their communication behavior. Although their research is a well-reasoned attempt at operationalizing the concepts of symmetry and complementarity, their data provide interactional information and not transactional information as their focus is still on the individual.

Mark (1970, 1971) borrowed heavily from the Sluzki and Beavin approach but attempted to refine their work so that the dyad's relationship is the direct focus of analysis. He developed a three digit coding scheme to operationalize the relational concepts of symmetry and complementarity. Following Sluzki and Beavin, Mark assumed that, ". . . every message in an interaction serves as either the definition, reinforcement, or re-definition of the nature of the relationship." (1971, p. 223)

Mark utilized every speech in the dyad's verbal interchange and attempted to create a coding scheme which would map a couple's typical or predominant communication

pattern, i.e., the structure of the relationship. However, his scheme is cumbersome, has double message code categories which are confusing and difficult to identify, and lacks a clear distinction between the types of codes used in his second and third digits.

Accepting Mark's basic approach to developing transactional categorizations, Ericson and Rogers (1973) recently modified and made more internally consistent Mark's coding scheme. Following Sluzki and Beavin, Mark's control codes were one-up, one-down and symmetrical. However, to use symmetry as a control code is to confuse the definition of symmetry as structural resemblance in the dyad's relational pattern. A message is not symmetrical, neither is a pair of messages. Rather a pair of control codes are either similar or dissimilar in direction. If the pair of control codes are similar, they represent symmetrical transactional units; dissimilar and in opposite directions, they are termed complementary.

Nonetheless, Mark did point out the need for a third control dimension. Not all interpersonal messages seem capable of being defined as direct attempts at control (one-up) or as submission to another's relational definition (one-down). Several interpersonal messages, perhaps the majority, appear to avoid, neutralize, or to not accept another's relational control attempt. Therefore, Ericson and Rogers added a third control dimension called one-across.

The addition of this category was intended to increase the precision of the control codes. The one-across dimension also creates a third transactional unit called transitory. Transitory transactional units are those that are dissimilar (but not opposite) in direction. The definition of the three transactional units will be made clearer in the following brief discussion of Ericson and Rogers' coding scheme.*

Like Mark's, Ericson and Rogers' is a three digit coding form: the first digit represents who speaks, the second gives the grammatical form of the message, and the third codes the messages as a response to the preceding statement. A message is defined as "any talk by an individual of any length beginning with his first word, and continuing until the other party in the dyad speaks." (Mark, 1971, p. 223) The basic interaction unit is a pair of overlapping consecutive messages.

The content categories used to code the interaction in Ericson and Rogers' scheme are as follows:

---

*For a much more detailed discussion of their coding form and its development, see Ericson's (1972) or Rogers' (1972) dissertations from the Department of Communication, Michigan State University.

1st Digit	2nd Digit	3rd Digit
1. Speaker A	1. Assertion	1. Support
2. Speaker B	2. Question	2. Non-support
	3. Talk-over	3. Extension
	4. Non-complete	4. Answer
	5. Other	5. Instruction
		6. Order
		7. Disconfirmation
		8. Topic change
		9. Initiation-termination
		0. Other

Each individual verbal message is coded with these content categories. This coding represents the first step in classifying the dyad's relational structure. The next process is to translate these massage codes into control codes, i.e., to specify the control dimension of any given message. Ericson and Rogers propose three mutually exclusive control directions any given message can have: (a) an attempt to demand control of the relationship which is designated as one-up (↑); (b) an acceptance of control by the other individual, designated as one-down (↓); or (c) a message can have a non-demanding, non-accepting, leveling and somewhat neutralizing control aspect, designated as one-across (→).

The control dimensions of message types are given in Figure 1. Notice that the control dimension is based on both the form and the response characteristics of the message. The five grammatical form codes (second digit) and the ten response codes (third digit) represent 50 different combinations, each with its own control dimension. Thirty-five of these pairs of codes are one-up messages,

eight represent one-down messages and seven are classified as having one-across control aspects.

Figure 1. Control Dimensions of Message Types

2nd Digit: Grammatical Form		3rd Digit: Response Mode									
		Support 1	Non-support 2	Extension 3	Answer 4	Instruction 5	Order 6	Disconfirmation 7	Topic Change 8	Initiates-terminates 9	Other 0
Assertion	1	↓	↑	→	↑	↑	↑	↑	↑	↑	→
Question	2	↓	↑	↓	↑	↑	↑	↑	↑	↑	↓
Talk-over	3	↓	↑	↑	↑	↑	↑	↑	↑	↑	↓
Non-complete	4	↓	↑	→	↑	↑	↑	↑	↑	→	→
Other	5	↓	↑	→	↑	↑	↑	↑	↑	↑	→

This control matrix forms the basis for obtaining transactional information. The theoretical concepts of symmetry, complementary and transitory are operationalized by combining the directional control dimension of Speaker A with the directional control dimension of Speaker B. This combination is termed a transact or transactional unit.

Each transactional unit then is structural information and provides a measure of the speakers' relationship from a particular set of messages.

In combining the control codes for Speaker A with those of Speaker B nine transactional or relational units are developed. These transactional units are given in Figure 2. Complementary types are those combining one-up and one-down control dimensions and are shown in cells 2 and 4 of the matrix. Symmetrical transactional units are those that have similar control dimensions shown in cells 1, 5 and 9 of the matrix. Cell 1 is termed competitive symmetry and refers to Watzlawick's escalating symmetrical pathology (1970, p. 107). Cell 5 is labeled submissive symmetry and depicts an acceptance by both members to control by the other. Cell 9 is called neutralized symmetry and characterizes overlapping reciprocal messages having neither an acceptance nor a demand for control.

The four control configurations representing transitory transactional units are given in matrix cells 3, 6, 7, and 8. The theoretical significance of this third type will be a major focus in evaluating the usefulness of the Ericson and Rogers scheme.

These transactional units can then be summed across a dyad's communicational sequence to obtain its predominant transactional pattern. Likewise, a stochastic analysis of the dyad's interchange can be performed to discover what

Figure 2. Control Configurations of the Nine Types of Transactional Units

Control Dimension of Speaker B's Message	Control Dimension of Speaker A's Message		
	One-up (↑)	One-down (↓)	One-across (→)
One-up (↑)	1. (↑↑) Competitive Symmetry	4. (↑↓) Complementary	7. (↑→) Transitory
One-down (↓)	2. (↓↑) Complementary	5. (↓↓) Submissive Symmetry	8. (↓→) Transitory
One-across (→)	3. (→↑) Transitory	6. (→↓) Transitory	9. (→→) Neutralized Symmetry

types of messages tend to follow and precede given transactional units both within and between transactional types. These summated transactional units serve as the basis for classifying a dyad's relational structure and form the basic descriptive data of this study.

CHAPTER II

PROCEDURES AND HYPOTHESES

Description of Sample

Conjoint husband-wife interviews were conducted on 65 couples in the greater Dayton, Ohio area in the spring of 1972. These couples were part of a sub-sample of a sample of 399 respondents interviewed by telephone during Phase I of a research project sponsored by the Office of Civil Defense, OCD Contract No. DAHC-20-71-C-0297. The Phase I respondents were randomly drawn from the telephone listing of the metropolitan and suburban areas of Dayton, Ohio. The sub-sample for Phase II consisted of all those respondents of Phase I who reported being married and having children under 12 years of age. One-hundred and forty-two families met these criteria.

The attempt was made to contact and interview all 142 families. These attempts resulted in 65 completed interviews or 46% of the sample. Forty-four couples or 31% refused to participate and another 33 couples (23%) could not be located or were unavailable during the three week interview period.

The typical marital pair in this sample was White (95%), had been married over 11 years (11.6), and had a

yearly income ranging between $8,000 to $15,000 (55%). The average wife was 32 years of age (32.6), considered herself a fulltime homemaker (88%), and had generally completed one semester of college (12.6). Her husband was typically three years older than she (35.9) and had one and one-half more years of college (14.0). Thus, even though this was a probability sample drawn on a large Midwestern city, the respondents who participated mirror the general group of persons on whom the majority of studies of marital satisfaction have been conducted (Hicks and Platt, 1970, p. 555).

Procedure for Data Collection

The respondents were contacted personally at their place of residence. The interviewer introduced himself and gave the couple a letter of introduction explaining the purpose of the study and stating that persons who participated would receive ten dollars for their time. (See Appendix B for a copy of the letter). The interviews were conducted conjointly with the husband and wife. They consisted of two parts and generally took about two hours to complete.

The first part of the interview consisted of a self-report questionnaire which was filled out separately by both husband and wife. The couples were not permitted to discuss their responses to these questions. (See Appendix A for a copy of the questionnaire). The questionnaires were

identical except one was worded for the husband and the other for the wife. These self-report questionnaires elicited the following types of information: Questions 1 through 6 asked how much and with whom the couple spent their time. What topics they discussed, who generally controlled their conversations, and how they felt about their typical manner of conversation were asked in Questions 7, 8, and 9 respectively. What were their sources of information on civil defense matters and how they process such information when it is mailed to them were the focus of Questions 11 through 13. Questions 14 and 15 were intended to discover the couple's individual role descriptions (Question 14) and role expectations (Question 15) concerning various marriage tasks.* The 28 items of Edwards Personal Preference Schedule (1959) were included in Question 16.** Lastly, socio-economic information and marital satisfaction ratings were obtained in Questions 17 through 26.

The second part of these home interviews were verbal interchanges between the marital pair. The couples were asked to discuss with each other four topics. (See Appendix B for the topics used and the complete set of

---

*The reader is referred to Rogers (1972) dissertation for a thorough role discrepancy analysis of the data collected.

**The reader is referred to Ericson's (1972) dissertation for an analysis of the Edward's dominance-submission measure and its relation to the couple's transactional patterns.

interviewer instructions.) These discussions provide the data base for discovering the relational information about the dyad's communication pattern. The first and third topics, respectively, concerned how the couple decided to marry and their view on both the husband and wife having independent careers. The second and fourth topics concerned civil defense information. The former asked the couples to discuss their joint plan in case of a nuclear attack and the latter focused on their preparedness in case of a tornado. These discussions were recorded on cassette tapes and were transcribed for analysis.

To begin each discussion period, the interviewer handed each respondent a copy of the topic and reviewed it with them. The couple was told they had only ten minutes in which to discuss and come to a conclusion about the issue of concern. Generally, it was the interviewer's task to get the husband and wife talking with each other and not with the interviewer. To this end, the interviewers were instructed to stay out of the conversation and to avoid making eye contact with the couple. In other words, the interviewer was to manage the situation rather than conduct a personal interview. The interviewer then suggested that the couple might tell each other their impressions, expectations, feelings, forseeable problems and possible solutions to the problems presented by the situation. These five topic guidelines given prior to each discussion were also

used as standard probes during the conversation when necessary.

Probes were only used when the couple specifically asked for assistance, or when neither respondent had spoken for a period of fifteen seconds, or when the joint conversation had not lasted at least five minutes. These procedures worked well as the average total amount of taped dialogue per couple was just over twenty-eight minutes. Accepting Sluzki and Beavin's (1965) assertion that even in short interactions there are enough key indicators to give valid information of the dyad's typical relational pattern, this time is considered sufficient for a classification of the dyad's communication structure.

Coding Procedures

The transcripts of the taped interactions were coded according to Ericson and Rogers' (1973) Transactional Coding Scheme. (See Appendix C for the set of coder instructions and descriptions of the coding procedure.) Three female undergraduates were used as transactional coders. They were given two training sessions in which the form was explained to them, practice coding was supervised and disagreements were discussed among them. The percent of agreement across the three digit code was 0.86, indicating acceptable levels of intersubjective reliability. The percent of agreement on the second digit codes (the grammatical forms) was 0.93 with most of the disagreements stemming from whether

a statement was an assertion or a non-complete. Disagreements on the third digit categories (the response mode) seemed to stem from whether a statement was an extension or an answer, a support or a non-support. The overall percentage of agreement on the third digit codes, was, however, also high (0.91). The two independent percents of agreement do not average out to the overall value of 0.86 because the latter is based on the total number of configurations coded and not just on one digit of the coding scheme.

Exploratory Analysis and Hypotheses

The concept of a fluid transactional pattern provides the intuitive basis for classifying the communication structures of marital dyads in this exploratory analysis. Sluzki and Beavin (1965) in their discussion of possible typologies of dyads based on their predominant configuration suggest that some dyads may fluctuate from one principal type to another. This configurated fluctuation may be either adaptive, which is a flexible pattern related to environmental and/or relational changes, or chaotic, which indicates an unstable, nonadaptive pattern in the dyad's communication relationship. The couple who exhibits this flexible, fluctuating pattern is stated to have a fluid communication relationship.

The notion of an adaptive, flexible transactional structure is emphasized by Lederer and Jackson and is termed a parallel marital relationship (1968, pp. 169-170). A

parallel transactional structure is characterized as one where the couple alternates in the one-up position with occasional status struggles (i.e., competitive symmetry). This alternation of control is considered a functional response to changing environmental conditions. This type of marital relationship is claimed by the authors to be the "most durable, workable form" as each partner has roughly equivalent influence, depending on the situation, in the definition of the dyad's relationship.

The "fluid" relationships of Sluzki and Beavin (1965) and the "parallel" relationships of Lederer and Jackson (1968) suggest two major independent structural dimensions for classifying a dyad's transactional communication pattern. These are a rigid-flexible dimension and a stable-unstable dimension. The former refers to the degree of randomness in the couple's alternations in who controls and the latter refers to the dyad's norm concerning the consistency or the predictability of the types of control maneuvers used. The less fluctuation in who controls, the more rigid the transactional structure. The greater the consistency or predictability in when different types of control messages are transmitted, the more stable.

These two possible structural characteristics are mentioned or implied by other researchers although some confusion exists in the literature as to the distinction between them. For instance, Wynne and Singer (1963) suggest that a

rigid family interaction pattern creates identity problems for the child and may help develop schizophrenia. For these authors, rigidity appears to mean both an inflexibility in who controls the relational definitions as well as an inconsistency in the types of messages transmitted (i.e., a rigid, unstable pattern).

Haley (1964, 1967) found that both normal and schizophrenic families have transactional patterns which were not expected by chance. However, the schizophrenic pattern was more discrepant from chance expectations than was the normal family's pattern. This increased deviation from chance behavior suggests a more rigid transactional pattern in the schizophrenic family. Haley's discrepancy from chance expectations or degree of randomness definition of rigidity is more unidimensional than others and is the precedent for the rigidity operationalization offered in this study.

Waxler and Mishler (1970), after reviewing this literature, summarize by stating that the general pattern in normal families more readily allows for change and is more flexible than the pattern in schizophrenic families. Furthermore, normal families are more successful in sustaining a predictable sequencing of speakers once it has been established. Schizophrenic families, on the other hand, do not seem to have the interaction mechanisms for sustaining a predictable sequencing of communication behaviors.

The notion of a more flexible pattern mentioned by Waxler and Mishler is again suggestive of a concern with the rigidness in who controls or defines the relationships within the family. The more flexible pattern allows for change in who controls while a more rigid transactional structure is characterized by less fluctuation in who is allowed to define the relationship. Their second characteristic, concerning the success in sustaining a predictable sequence, implies a stability or instability in the consistency with which various types of control messages are transmitted. If unpredictable or unexpected relational demands or submissions are transmitted by one or more of the family members, this would tend to decrease the likelihood of maintaining any given verbal sequence. However, if the other interactants' relational statements can be fairly accurately predicted and expected, then each family member would be better able to define himself in relation to the other(s). This, in turn, would increase the likelihood that the interactants could mutually, more readily sustain their verbal interaction.

Thus the rigidity and stability of a system's transactional pattern have been concerns of both the theorist and practitioner. The more healthy pattern seems to be flexible and stable in that who defines the relationship is situationally related and the types of control maneuvers transmitted reflect a consistent, predictable norm within the

system. A pathological pattern, on the other hand, seems to be characterized by a rigid control structure which is continually adopted and maintained over situations and by an unstable norm concerning the consistency of various control maneuvers used to define the relationship. These concepts of rigidity and stability will constitute the major independent variables in this exploratory study of transactional communication behaviors.

The rigidity-flexibility dimension of communication transactions is conceptualized in terms of the degree of randomness in the couple's observed communication behavior. Rigidity is operationally defined as the couple's sum deviation from random use of the nine transactional configurations. If a couple exhibited complete randomness in their communication pattern, each transactional code would be observed 11% of the time, and their deviation score would be zero. Both the husband and wife would have asserted demand for control of the interaction and would have submitted to the other's assertion of control an equal number of times. This equality is assumed to represent a flexible and possibly more adaptive pattern which varies with situational requirements and relational needs rather than a chaotic pattern of who's in control. At the other extreme, if all the couple's transacts were coded as the same configuration, one member would have always been in control (unless it was symmetrical) and their deviation score would

be 177. If this singularly observed configuration was a symmetrical one, neither partner would have been in control and this is assumed to be a most ineffective and probably pathological pattern. The couple's score on the rigidity-flexibility dimension in this study is based on the dyad's total frequency distribution of the nine transactional configurations over all four discussion topics. The larger the score, the more rigid the transactional pattern.

The stability-instability aspect of communication behavior is conceived of as the consistency in the couple's observed types of control maneuvers. The concern here is not with who is one-up or one-down but with the dyad's own norm concerning the consistency with which one-up, one-down and one-across messages are transmitted as control maneuvers. Stability is operationally defined by the sum of the deviations per topic from the couple's mean proportional use of the complementary, symmetrical and transitory codes. If this summed absolute deviation is low, this is assumed to indicate a consistent interaction rule within the dyad concerning which and when certain control messages can be transmitted. It would indicate a certain amount of stability in the types of control messages allowed and in the sequencing with which they are transmitted. In other words, the stability dimension centers on the manner by which control is established and maintained within the conversation. Do one or both persons fluctuate unexpectedly in asserting,

competing for or submitting to relational control or is there some degree of consistency in the sequencing of the control direction of the messages transmitted by the marriage pair? These questions are the focus of the stability dimension. The lower the sum of the deviations, the more stable the transactional pattern; the higher the sum, the more unstable.

By combining the factors of stability and rigidity, the breakdown shown in Figure 3 is created. Couples will be categorized into one of these cells. Transactional structures will be described within and compared across these cells. A fluid or parallel relationship is defined as one that is both flexible and stable and is represented in the lower left-hand quadrant of the matrix.

Figure 3. Partition of Independent Variables

Rigidity Randomness in Observed Transactional Configurations	Stability Consistency of Transactional Types	
	High	Low
High	Stable and Rigid	Unstable and Rigid
Low	Stable and Flexible	Unstable and Flexible

The pattern in the couple's transactional codes will be analysed three different ways: first, arithmetically by counting the frequency with which each of the nine transactional configurations are observed; second, stochastically, by describing what types of responses tend to follow what types of messages; and third, the number and the configurational types of long sequences observed in the couple's transactional structure will be counted.

A long sequence is operationally defined as five consecutive transactional codes of the same configuration. For instance, a long competitive symmetrical sequence would have the following five transactional codes: (↑↑) (↑↑) (↑↑) (↑↑) and (↑↑). A long sequence, then, is made up of six messages, three from both members of the dyad. These three represent exactly the same control maneuver by that member. The number of such long sequences will be counted over dyads noting the different configurations which define each.

As stated earlier, this study should be classified as an exploratory, descriptive one. In this sense, it parallels several of the descriptive studies reviewed in Chapter I, but the data collected are of a different nature entirely from those earlier correlational studies. The conceptual base of this study stems from the concepts and theoretical speculations of Watzlawick et al. (1967), Sluzki and Beavin (1965), and Lederer and Jackson (1968).

Procedurally, Ericson and Rogers' (1973) transactional coding scheme which operationalizes and extends the concepts of Watzlawick et al. is used as the primary descriptive tool.

The purpose of this study is to describe the communication patterns of normal married couples in terms of the structural characteristics of stability and rigidity. The research question is whether or not couples can be differentiated along these dimensions, and secondly, do these differences make a difference. The hypotheses guiding the data analysis are basically "guesses" on how scores on the rigidity and stability dimensions might make a useful difference in describing and differentiating the communication patterns of marriage dyads. The hypotheses are intended to generate the type of information necessary for the development of theory and should not be viewed as theoretical predictions. In other words, the hypothesized relations under investigation should provide an empirical base for theory construction and are used as guides for analysis. They are not theoretical predictions being offered for validation. Given this perspective, the hypotheses directing this analysis of the transactional communication data will be informally stated.

I. Hypotheses on transactional configurations and long sequences.

1. Stability is predicted to be positively related to:

a. the proportion of neutralized symmetrical configurations;

b. the length of the observed long sequences; and

c. the proportion of the observed transitory configurations.

2. Stability is predicted to be negatively related to:

a. the number of different types of long sequences; and

b. the proportion of competitive symmetrical configurations observed.

3. Rigidity is predicted to be positively related to:

a. the number of long sequences observed; and

b. the proportion of complementary configurations.

4. Rigidity is predicted to be negatively related to:

a. the proportion of competitive symmetrical configurations observed; and

b. the number of different types of long sequences observed.

II. Hypotheses on the self-report data.

1. Stability is predicted to be positively related to each of the following:

a. the individual's marital satisfaction score;

b. stating that the marital relationship is the aspect liked most about the marriage;

c. the couple's communication satisfaction score; and

d. the frequency of reported positive feelings resulting from conversations with the spouse.

2. Rigidity is predicted to be negatively related to each of the following variables:

a. the amount of time spent talking with spouse;

b. the individual's marital satisfaction score;

c. the couple's communication score;

d. positively to the number of topics discussed once a month or less; and

e. positively to the number of years the couple has been married.

III. Hypotheses on message characteristics.

1. The proportion of successful talk-overs will be greater in the flexible than in the rigid transactional patterns.

2. The proportion of support statements will be greater in the stable than in the rigid patterns.

CHAPTER III

RESEARCH FINDINGS

As mentioned in the preceding chapter, the dyads were partitioned into four transactional groups and the data analyzed accordingly. The partitioning was based on the dyads' stability and rigidity scores. Stability refers to the internal consistency of the dyads' control maneuvers and rigidity concerns the degree of randomness in the couples' observed use of the nine transactional configurations. Since both of these scores are computed on the average proportional use of the nine types of transactional units, a minimum of 15 transactional units per topic was considered the least possible number to assure some degree of stability of the mean. If a couple exhibited only 15 transacts on each of the four topics, their total number of transacts would be 60. Therefore, only couples who exhibited 15 or more transacts per topic were included in the analyses. This criterion reduced the size of the sample from a possible 65 to 45. The observed number of transacts ranged from 75 to 528 with a mean of 238 and a standard deviation of 114.

An example of the operationalization of scores on the stability and rigidity dimensions of the observed transactional patterns seems in order. In Table 1, the derivation of the rigidity and stability scores for one of the dyads is shown. As can be seen, the rigidity score is the sum of the deviations from random usage (11%) of the nine possible transactional configurations. These deviation scores are based upon the couples' total number of transacts. The shape of the rigidity distribution is approximately normal with a range of 24 to 83, a mean of 52 and a standard deviation of 13.4.

The stability score is the sum of the deviations per topic from the couple's average usage of the three major types of transactional codes. The shape of the stability distribution is slightly skewed to the left with a range of 24 to 128, a mean of 60.3 and a standard deviation of 23.3.

Description of Sample

The sample analyzed mirrors the total sample of the interviewed dyads. The typical couple was White (96%) with an income range of $8,000-$15,000. Forty-four percent of this sample, however, had reported yearly incomes of above $15,000. Therefore, the sample is primarily middle to upper-middle class in terms of income range. The average wife was 32 years old (32.3) and had had one year of college (13.1). Her husband was typically three years older than she (35.7) and had had one-and-a-half more years of college

TABLE 1.--Example of how the scores on the rigidity and stability dimensions of the observed transactional patterns were operationalized. The couple shown is Dyad Number 283 who was classified in the High-Stability-Low Rigidity quadrant of the 2 X 2 matrix created by a median split on these two independent factors of communication patterns.

	Transactional Configuration									
	(↑↓)	(↓↑)	(↑↑)	(↓↓)	(→→)	(↑→)	(→↑)	(↓→)	(→↓)	Sum
Rigidity Score Derivation:										
Mean Proportion Over 4 Topics	.10	.05	.03	.06	.13	.16	.12	.22	.14	101
Absolute Deviation from Randomness (i.e. 11)	1	6	8	5	2	5	1	11	3	42

Rigidity Score = 42

Mean	Transactional Type					
	Complementary .15		Symmetrical .22		Transitory .63	
	Proportion	Deviation	Proportion	Deviation	Proportion	Deviation
Stability Score Derivation:						
Topic I	.15	0	.17	-5	.68	+5
Topic II	.10	-5	.27	+5	.63	0
Topic III	.12	-3	.17	-5	.71	+8
Topic IV	.23	+8	.22	0	.55	-8
Absolute Sum		16		15		21

Stability Score = 52

(14.5). The average couple had been married for just under 11 years (10.8). The age and length of marriage of these couples is certainly due to our selection of couples who had at least one child under 12. However, the income and educational levels may suggest a willingness on the part of the younger, more educated middle-class to be interviewed and to participate in survey research. This potential bias is probably unavoidable in any survey study of this type. While it is not a damaging problem, it does limit the conclusions drawn to the population actually sampled and excludes married couples in general.

Fortunately though, none of the above demographic characteristics were related to the two independent dimensions of stability and rigidity. (See Table 2) Exploratory Hypothesis II, 2e, which predicted a relationship between length of marriage and the dyads' rigidity scores, was not confirmed.

TABLE 2.--Demographic correlates of the stability and rigidity dimensions of transactional communication patterns.

	Stability	Rigidity
Husband's education in years	-.08	-.06
Wife's education in years	.05	-.11
Husband's age	-.11	.15
Wife's age	-.14	.11
Length of marriage in years	-.08	.01

The two dimensions of the couple's transactional pattern were conceptualized as being independent. The data substantiates this conceptualization as the correlation coefficient was .02, indicating no association between these two sets of scores. These notions of stability and rigidity as conceived and operationalized do reflect independent aspects of transactional communication patterns. This is not to state unequivocally that they represent valid dimensions, but only that they are distinct and unrelated characteristics of transactional communication patterns based on the control defining nature of verbal messages observed in dyadic interchanges.

A median split on these two dimensions resulted in the four following groups: High Stability-High Rigidity (n = 10), High Stability-Low Rigidity (n = 13), Low Stability-High Rigidity (n = 10), and Low Stability-Low Rigidity (n = 12). Given this 2 X 2 partition, most of the data were statistically analyzed with a 2 X 2 factorial analysis of variance design with unequal sized cells. Although the assumption of intervality of measurement is, at times, questionable, it was felt that in an exploratory study of this nature, the opportunity to observe possible relations was more important than strict measurement considerations. However, this error assumption necessitates a tentative and cautious interpretation of the obtained results, as the scores may not reflect quantitative

differences between the individuals and groups analyzed. Moreover, there is a need for future research to verify or falsify the validity of the results and hypotheses to be reported and suggested and to increase the precision of the measurements utilized.

Keeping this preface in mind, the results will be reported in five sections. The first section focuses on the self-report questionnaire and the obtained differences on the time allocations and reported satisfaction levels within and between the four transactional groups. The second section reports the differences between the groups on the types of messages transmitted and the observed frequency of the three control codes observed for both the husbands and wives. Part three concerns the differences in the observed frequency of the nine transactional configurations. The fourth section reports the analysis of the long sequences observed in the dyads' discussions. Section five centers on the analysis of what types of control messages tended to follow what other types of control messages both within and between transactional groups.

Section 1: Self-Report Measures

This section focuses on the relation between the rigidity and stability dimensions of transactional patterns and the respondents' answers to a variety of questions asked in the self-report questionnaire. The first set of analyses to be reported centered on the relation between

these transactional dimensions and the amount of time each couple spent with each other and in conversation. (The specific questions used were items 1a, 1b, 4a, 2a, 4b and 2b in Appendix A.) The research question involved in this analysis was concerned with whether or not differences on the rigidity and stability scores were related to and/or could help explain any differences in the amount of time the dyad spent together. There were no differences between the four transactional groups on the amount of time with spouse, nor on the time spent in conversation. (Thus exploratory Hypothesis II, 2a was not confirmed.) The scores used in these analyses are the dyad's score which is the average of the husband's and wife's individual responses to these questions. The means and source of variances for these six items are given in Table 3.

TABLE 3.--Means and analysis of variance results for the time estimates with spouse and frequency of topics discussed with spouse.

	Mean Square	df	F-ratio	Probability	Rigidity High	Rigidity Low
a. Time yesterday with spouse:						
Stability	0.018	1	0.147	ns		
High					6.0	6.0
Low					6.4	5.9
Rigidity	0.055	1	0.446	ns		
Interaction	0.055	1	0.446	ns		
Within	0.124					

TABLE 3.--Continued.

	Mean Square	df	F-ratio	Probability	Rigidity: High	Rigidity: Low
b. Time yesterday with just spouse:						
Stability	0.164	1	1.142	ns		
High					4.4	4.3
Low					4.2	3.6
Rigidity	0.119	1	0.829	ns		
Interaction	0.070	1	0.489	ns		
Within	0.146					
c. Time Sunday with spouse:						
Stability	0.141	1	1.288	ns		
High					7.6	6.9
Low					6.9	6.8
Rigidity	0.141	1	1.288	ns		
Interaction	0.093	1	0.852	ns		
Within	0.109					
d. Time yesterday in conversation:						
Stability	0.046	1	0.294	ns		
High					3.5	3.8
Low					3.4	3.5
Rigidity	0.046	1	0.294	ns		
Interaction	0.034	1	0.218	ns		
Within	0.157					
e. Time Sunday in conversation:						
Stability	0.0001	1	*	ns		
High					4.8	4.5
Low					4.8	4.5
Rigidity	0.090	1	0.808	ns		
Interaction	0.0001	1	*	ns		
Within	0.111					
f. Yesterday liked to have talked with your spouse:						
Stability	0.019	1	0.552	ns		
High					1.8	2.0
Low					1.9	1.7
Rigidity	0.0001	1	*	ns		
Interaction	0.026	1	0.721	ns		
Within	0.035					

* Less than .01

Item number 7 in the self-report questionnaire dealt with the frequency with which various topics were discussed by the marriage pair. One of the exploratory hypotheses, Hypothesis II, 2d, asserted that rigidity would be negatively related to infrequent topics of conversation. Although not significant at the .05 level, the data show a trend suggesting a relation between rigidity and infrequently discussed topics, i.e. once a month or less. However, the tendency suggested by the results was just the reverse of what was hypothesized. Low rigidity dyads stated that they rarely, if at all, discussed over two of the ten topics mentioned in Question 7, while high rigidity couples only mentioned one, on the average, as being discussed infrequently (Table 4). However, a Scheffe´ analysis revealed that this possible rigidity effect is due to the number of infrequently discussed topics reported by the Low Stability-Low Rigidity (LS-LR) group. These couples, then, possibly have fewer topics to discuss regularly than do the other three types of couples.

An analysis of variance on the number of topics discussed frequently--once a week or more--revealed a significant stability effect (Table 4). High stability dyads reported discussing just under nine topics on the average while low stability dyads reported slightly over seven topics as being discussed frequently in their conversation. In other words, stability was positively related to the

number of topics discussed once a week or more by the couple in their reported typical topics of conversation. Those higher on this dimension had a larger number of topics discussed frequently than did those dyads lower on the stability index.

TABLE 4.--Means and analysis of variance results for the frequency with which various topics were discussed with the spouse.

	Mean Square	df	F-ratio	Probability	Rigidity High	Rigidity Low
a. Number of topics discussed once a week or more with spouse:						
Stability	1.416	1	5.166	.05		
High					8.8	8.5
Low					7.4	7.5
Rigidity	0.012	1	0.044	ns		
Interaction	0.053	1	0.193	ns		
Within	0.274					
b. Number of topics discussed once a month or less with spouse:						
Stability	0.314	1	2.008	ns		
High					1.3	1.8
Low					1.5	2.7
Rigidity	0.624	1	3.996	.10		
Interaction	0.137	1	0.876	ns		
Within	0.156					

Two of the exploratory hypotheses dealt with the couples' reported level of marital satisfaction (Question 23 in Appendix A). Stability was expected to be positively

(Hypothesis II, 1a) and rigidity negatively (Hypothesis II, 2b) related to the reported level of marital satisfaction. Neither of these predictions was substantiated. There were no differences between the four transactional groups on their reported level of marital satisfaction. The means and sources of variance are given in Table 5.

There were also no differences between the groups on their reported satisfaction level with communication between them and their spouse (Question 9, Appendix A). Thus, Hypothesis II, 1c was also not substantiated. However, there were differences between the groups on the 15 items in Question 10 which dealt with the frequency with which various feelings arise during conversations with one's spouse. The summed score of these items revealed a significant stability effect, with high stability dyads reporting the occurrence of positive feelings more often than low stability couples. Hypothesis II, 1d was therefore confirmed. Items a, c, d, f, j, l, m and o in Question 10 were reversed in this summated score, so that the lower the score the more frequently positive feelings were reported to have occurred in conversations with one's spouse. The means and sources of variance are shown in Table 5. There was no relation between rigidity and this summated communication satisfaction score.

TABLE 5.--Means and analysis of variance results for the marital and communication satisfaction measures.

	Mean Square	df	F-ratio	Probability	Rigidity High	Rigidity Low
a. General level of marital satisfaction:						
Stability	0.017	1	0.786	ns		
High					1.2	1.4
Low					1.3	1.6
Rigidity	0.048	1	2.250	ns		
Interaction	0.008	1	0.377	ns		
Within	0.022					
b. General level of satisfaction with communication between husband and wife:						
Stability	0.189	1	2.17	ns		
High					1.9	2.0
Low					2.2	2.6
Rigidity	0.051	1	0.58	ns		
Interaction	0.024	1	0.28	ns		
Within	0.087					
c. Summed score on communication satisfaction questions:						
Stability	21.298	1	7.096	.01		
High					28.4	29.1
Low					32.2	34.4
Rigidity	2.205	1	0.735	ns		
Interaction	0.570	1	0.189	ns		
Within	3.002					
d. Principal factor score on communication satisfaction questions:						
Stability	6.477	1	7.996	.01		
High					10.7	10.8
Low					12.3	14.3
Rigidity	1.221	1	1.507	ns		
Interaction	0.912	1	1.126	ns		
Within	0.810					

The responses to these 15 items were factor analyzed to determine what statements clustered together. One principal factor emerged from this analysis, which accounted for 27% of the variance in these items. This factor consisted of items b, g, h, m, n, and o in Question 10, Appendix A. Item 10b had the strongest factor loading (.79) and reads: "I am satisfied with our ability to talk things out together." None of the six items in this factor had loadings lower than .61. This factor was labeled communication satisfaction, as all the items reflect a willingness and an ease in interspousal conversations.

The pattern of means on this factor score is isomorphic to the pattern described on the total summated communication feelings score. Here too, a significant stability effect emerged (See Table 5, part d). High stability dyads reported more satisfaction with their communication pattern than did low stability dyads. Rigidity was unrelated to the couples' scores on this communication satisfaction factor.

Two of Scheffe's (1967) three levels of consensus were amenable to analysis in this study. The first level, agreement, is defined as the agreement between the members of the marriage pair on their reported level of marital satisfaction, Question 23 in Appendix A. A second level of consensus, which Scheff labels understanding, concerns the ability of the two interacts to accurately predict the

other's attitudinal position. To measure this level of understanding between the members of the dyad, one simply compares the predicted level (Question 24) with the spouse's reported level of marital satisfaction (Question 23). Tables 6, 7, and 8 report the results of the analyses on these two levels of consensus.

As can be seen in Table 6, rigidity was related to agreement between the marriage partners on how satisfied they are with their marriage. High rigid couples, more often than low rigid couples, agreed (82% versus 48%) on how satisfied they were with their marriage ($X^2 = 4.284$, $df = 1$, $p = <.05$). Therefore, regardless of their reported satisfaction, those couples rated higher on the rigidity dimension agreed (i.e. reported the same satisfaction level) about 1.75 times more often than the less rigid, more flexible dyads.

The accuracy with which wives predicted their husbands' reported level of marital satisfaction is given in Table 7. Wives classified higher on the rigidity dimension were significantly more accurate in predicting their husbands' reported level than were wives lower on this transactional characteristic ($X^2 = 4.284$, $df = 1$, $p = <.05$). Notice, however, that there was no difference between the husbands on their ability to accurately predict their wives' satisfaction with marriage (Table 8). Since the overall Chi-square was neither significant nor suggestive, no

TABLE 6.--Frequency of agreement between the husband's and wife's reported level of marital satisfaction.

	Rigidity					Rigidity			Stability		
	High Stability		Low Stability								
	High	Low	High	Low	Total N	High	Low	Total N	High	Low	Total N
Agree	90%	75%	54%	40%	29	82%	48%	29	70%	59%	29
Disagree	10	25	46	60	16	18	52	16	30	41	16
Total N	10	12	13	10	45	22	23	45	23	22	45
	Degrees of freedom = 3					Degrees of freedom = 1			Degrees of freedom = 1		
	Chi-square = 6.678					Chi-square$_{yc}$ = 4.284			Chi-square$_{yc}$ = 0.178		
	Probability = .10					Probability = .05			Probability = .75		

TABLE 7.--Frequency with which the wife accurately predicted her husband's reported level of marital satisfaction.

	Rigidity					Rigidity			Stability		
	High Stability		Low Stability								
	High	Low	High	Low	Total N	High	Low	Total N	High	Low	Total N
Accurate	100%	67%	54%	40%	29	82%	48%	29	74%	55%	29
Inaccurate	0	33	46	60	16	18	52	16	26	45	16
Total N	10	12	13	10	45	22	23	45	23	22	45
	Degrees of freedom = 3					Degrees of freedom = 1			Degrees of freedom=1		
	Chi-square = 8.787					Chi-square$_{yc}$ = 4.284			Chi=square$_{yc}$ = 1.092		
	Probability = .05					Probability = .05			Probability = .40		

smaller breakdowns are included. These results suggest that having a more rigid communication pattern is associated with the wife's ability to understand her husband's evaluation of their marriage relationship, but that the type of communication pattern has no effect on the husband's understanding of his wife's level of marital satisfaction.

TABLE 8.--Frequency with which the husband accurately predicted his wife's reported level of marital satisfaction.

	Rigidity				
	High Stability		Low Stability		
	High	Low	High	Low	Total N
Accurate	90%	67%	54%	50%	29
Inaccurate	10	33	46	50	16
Total N	10	12	13	10	45

Degrees of freedom = 3

Chi-square = 4.424

Probability = .25

The last questions in the self-report data to be analyzed were items 25 and 26 in Appendix A. The former asked the respondents to state what they liked least about their marriage and the latter asked what they liked most. Following Gurin et al. (1960), the answers to these

questions were classified according to whether or not situational, personal or relational considerations were emphasized. The results of these analyses are given in Tables 9 and 10.

There is an interaction effect across these four transactional groups on stating either situational or relational aspects as that liked least about their marriage. High Stability-Low Rigidity (80%) and Low Stability-High Rigidity (70%) respondents were more apt to state situational aspects as liked least about their marriage, while High Stability-High Rigidity and Low Stability-Low Rigidity couples (63% and 53% respectively) were more likely to mention relational and/or personal aspects as those liked least about marriage. ($X^2 = 8.758$, d.f. = 3, $p = <.05$)

High Stability-Low Rigidity (HS-LR) respondents were the only group to state that situational and benefits from having a family were the aspects liked most about their marriage (Table 10). The other three transactional groups were more likely to mention relational benefits (like companionship, togetherness, "our ability to talk things out," love shared, mutual understanding and trust) as that liked most about their marriage. On closer inspection of the data, it appears that stability is positively related to <u>not</u> mentioning the relationship as that liked most about one's marriage. Only 40% of the high stability and 64% of those low on this dimension praised

TABLE 9.--Differences between the four relational groups on stating situational or relational and personal aspects as that liked least about their marriage.

	Rigidity					Stability			Rigidity		
	High Stability		Low Stability								
	High	Low	High	Low	Total N	High	Low	Total N	High	Low	Total N
Situational	37%	70%	80%	47%	44	61%	59%	36	56%	65%	36
Relational or Personal	63	30	20	53	29	39	41	37	44	35	37
Total N	16	20	20	17	73*	44	29	73	44	29	73
	Degrees of freedom = 3					Degrees of freedom = 1			Degrees of freedom = 1		
	Chi-square = 8.756					Chi-square$_{yc}$ = 0.010			Chi-square$_{yc}$ = 0.329		
	Probability = .05					Probability = .95			Probability = .60		

*N = 73 rather than 90 as 17 persons refused to answer this question.

TABLE 10.--Differences between the four relational groups on stating situational and family aspects or praising the marriage relationship as that liked most about their marriage.

	Rigidity					Stability			Rigidity		
	High Stability		Low Stability								
	High	Low	High	Low	Total N	High	Low	Total N	High	Low	Total N
Situational and Family	45%	33%	72%	39%	45	60%	36%	45	39%	58%	44
Relational	55	67	28	61	42	40	64	42	61	42	43
Total N	20	25	24	28	87*	45	42	87	45	42	87
	Degrees of freedom = 3					Degrees of freedom = 1			Degrees of freedom = 1		
	Chi-square = 8.502					Chi-square$_{yc}$ = 4.205			Chi-square$_{yc}$ = 2.578		
	Probability = .05					Probability = .05			Probability = .20		

*N = 87 rather than 90 as three persons did not respond to item #26 on the questionnaire.

their relationship as the thing most liked in their marriage. (X^2 = 4.205, df = 1, p = <.05) This result is in direct contradiction to exploratory Hypothesis II, 1b. Although not significant, this pattern is reversed on the rigidity dimension, with 61% of the high-rigid respondents and just 42% of the low-rigid individuals reporting relational aspects as the most liked aspect of their marriage. (X^2 = 2.578, df = 1, p = .20)

Summary of Section 1

The following results were substantiated by the analyses of the self-report questionnaire.

1. High stability dyads reported discussing more topics frequently (at least once a week) than did low stability dyads (Table 4).

2. Members of the high stability dyads also expressed more satisfaction with their interspousal communication than did low stability couples (Table 5, part c and d.)

3. High rigidity couples agreed more often than low rigidity couples on their reported levels of marital satisfaction (Table 6).

4. Wives in the high rigidity dyads were more accurate in predicting their husband's reported level of marital satisfaction than were wives in the low rigidity couples (Table 7).

5. Members of the High Stability-Low Rigidity (HS-LR) and Low Stability-High Rigidity (LS-HR) couples reported situational aspects while members of the High Stability-High Rigidity (HS-HR) and Low Stability-Low Rigidity (LS-LR) dyads reported relational or personal characteristics as that aspect of their marriage liked least (Table 9).

6. Members of the HS-LR couples stated situational and/or benefits of family life as that liked most while the other three types of dyads all praised relational benefits as the most liked aspect of their marriage (Table 10).

Section 2: Types of Messages and Individual Control Code Profiles

This section has two parts. The first concerns differences across transactional groups on the types of messages emitted by the respondents. Message types are defined by combining digits 2 (grammatical form) and 3 (response mode) in the coding scheme. The second part focuses on differences between these groups on the frequency with which the three control codes were observed in the messages produced by the husbands and wives in these four groups.* Because of the infrequency of most message types, only three message types

---

*The reader may wish to review the description of Ericson and Rogers' (1973) coding scheme given on pages 16-20 of Chapter I.

were included in the analysis.* The three message categories used were both successful and unsuccessful talkovers (digit 2) of all response modes (digit 3) and support messages (digit 3) of all grammatical forms (digit 2). There were no differences between these four transactional groups on the observed percent of their total messages coded as any of the above three combinations. Thus, the exploratory hypotheses on message types (e.g. Hypotheses III, 1 and 2) were not substantiated (Table 11).

The percentages reported are based on the dyads' total number of transacts observed over all four of their discussions. In order to standardize the percentages, they were transformed into arc-signs for analysis. The mean-squares are reported in arc-sign units while the cell-means were transformed back into percents for description and discussion. All the percentages to be reported and discussed in the following sections were treated in the same manner.

Although no differences emerged in the analysis of variance between these groups, stability was slightly but significantly correlated with the proportion of successful talkovers, unsuccessful talkovers and support messages observed in the dyads' verbal interchanges. The more stable the dyads' communication pattern, the more: (a) successful

---

*The reader is referred to Rogers (1972) pp. 159-160 for a complete listing of the observed frequency of all 50 message types.

talkovers (r = .36, p = <.02); (b) unsuccessful talkovers (r = .42, p = <.01); and (c) the more support messages observed in the couple's discussions (r = .33, p = <.05). These moderate to low correlations suggest that the stable couples are less concerned about interruptions or simultaneous talk than the unstable dyads and imply a more dynamic conversational style.

TABLE 11.--Means and analysis of variance results on the proportion of talkovers and support messages observed in each of the four relational groups.

	Mean Square	df	F-ratio	Probability	Rigidity: High	Rigidity: Low
a. The proportion of unsuccessful talkovers observed in the dyad's total interchange:						
Stability	0.0038	1	1.90	ns		
High					9.7%	10.6%
Low					9.7%	7.1%
Rigidity	0.0011	1	0.55	ns		
Interaction	0.0037	1	1.85	ns		
Within	0.0020					
b. The proportion of successful talkovers observed in the dyad's total interchange:						
Stability	0.0030	1	1.58	ns		
High					11.8%	14.6%
Low					10.9%	11.7%
Rigidity	0.0028	1	1.47	ns		
Interaction	0.0008	1	0.42	ns		
Within	0.0019					

TABLE 11.--Continued.

	Mean Square	df	F-ratio	Probability	Rigidity High	Rigidity Low
c. The proportion of support messages observed in the dyad's total interchange:						
Stability	0.0026	1	1.44	ns		
High					21.8%	20.8%
Low					19.6%	18.7%
Rigidity	0.0005	1	0.28	ns		
Interaction	0.0001	1	0.05	ns		
Within	0.0018					

The mean percent of the husbands' and wives' messages that represented one-up, one-down, and one-across control dimensions are shown in Table 12. These percentages are based on the total number of one-up, one-down, and one-across control codes observed in each respondent's messages divided by that couple's total number of transacts. For example, couple #283 had 250 transacts coded in their discussions. The husband made 72 one-up statements, 98 one-across statements and 80 one-down statements. His percentages were, respectively, 29%, 39%, and 32%. These individual percentages were summed over individuals within groups to discover any differences across groups in the average relative frequency of these three control codes.

Sex Differences Within the Four Groups

These percentages are remarkably similar over the

sexes. Both the husbands and wives within the four cells appear to exhibit these control codes with essentially the same relative frequency. The only exception to this pattern is the proportion of one-up control statements observed in the stable, rigid and stable, flexible dyads. In the former group, the wives made significantly more one-up statements than did their husbands ($t = 1.93$, $d.f. = 9$, $p = <.05$ one-tailed test); while the husbands in the latter group exhibited significantly more one-up messages than did their wives ($t = 1.87$, $d.f. = 12$, $p = <.05$ one-tailed test). There were no other differences between the sexes concerning the average observed proportional use of these three control codes.

TABLE 12.--Mean percent of one-up, one-down, and one-across control codes observed in the husbands' and wives' messages within each of the four relational groups.

	High Rigidity		Low Rigidity	
	Husband	Wife	Husband	Wife
High Stability:				
One-up (↑)	19.1%*	24.2%	29.3%*	24.3%
One-down (↓)	28.5	24.9	25.6	30.1
One-across (→)	51.7	50.1	44.7	45.1
Low Stability:				
One-up (↑)	20.1	22.4	29.7	26.0
One-down (↓)	24.5	24.8	27.5	31.2
One-across (→)	54.8	51.9	42.3	42.0

*These represent significant differences between the husbands and wives within that transactional group.

Differences in the Husbands' Profiles

Husbands low on the rigidity dimension used significantly more one-up statements than those high on this aspect of communication patterns. The husbands in the more flexible dyads issued just over 50% more one-up statements than did their more rigid counterparts (29.5% and 19.6% respectively). This result is also evidenced by the strong negative correlation ($r = -.65$, $p < .01$) between the couples' rigidity score and the proportion of the husbands' messages which were one-up. The results of the comparisons made between the husbands in the four different groups are given in Table 13 and those for the wives are shown in Table 14.

The above pattern was reversed for the average observed percentage of one-across statements. The high rigidity husbands made about 25% more one-across statements than the less rigid, more flexible husbands (53.4% versus 43.6% respectively). There was a strong positive correlation ($r = .64$, $p < .01$) between these measures. The larger proportion of one-up statements observed in the messages of the more flexible husbands seems to be at the expense of transmitting non-demanding, more neutralizing, one-across control messages as there was no difference between high and low rigidity husbands on their relative number of one-down statements.

The stability scores were unrelated to either the husbands' or wives' average percent of one-up, one-down

and one-across statements observed in the four transactional groups.

TABLE 13.--Analysis of variance results on the proportion of one-up, one-down, and one-across control codes observed in the husbands' messages.

	Mean Square	df	F-ratio	Probability
a. Proportion of one-up codes observed in the husbands' messages:				
Stability	0.0002	1	0.09	ns
Rigidity	0.0524	1	23.82	.001
Interaction	0.0001	1	0.05	ns
Within	0.0022			
b. Proportion of one-down control codes observed in the husbands' messages:				
Stability	0.0005	1	0.18	ns
Rigidity	0.0001	1	0.03	ns
Interaction	0.0047	1	1.68	ns
Within	0.0028			
c. Proportion of one-across control codes observed in the husbands' messages:				
Stability	0.0001	1	0.04	ns
Rigidity	0.0380	1	15.20	.001
Interaction	0.0030	1	1.20	ns
Within	0.0025			

Differences in the Wives' Profiles

A significant rigidity main effect was also observed in the wives' average percentages of one-across

statements. The high rigidity wives made relatively more neutralizing control statements (51.1%) than did the low rigidity wives (43.7%). The correlation between these measures was .53 ($p < .01$) which further evidences a strong relation between the rigidity of the dyad's pattern and the percentage of one-across messages transmitted. There were no differences between the wives on the relative frequency with which they attempted to assert control as about one-fourth of all the wives' statements were of a one-up control nature. However, the data suggest a rigidity effect on the relative number of one-down or submissive control messages transmitted by the wives. The female members of the more flexible dyads tended to give submissive messages more often than the more rigid wives (30.7% versus 24.8% respectively) Table 14.

TABLE 14.--Analysis of variance results on the proportion of one-up, one-down and one-across control codes observed in the wives' messages.

	Mean Square	df	F-ratio	Probability
a. Proportion of one-up control codes observed in the wives' messages:				
Stability	0.0001	1	0.03	ns
Rigidity	0.0018	1	0.67	ns
Interaction	0.0018	1	0.67	ns
Within	0.0027			

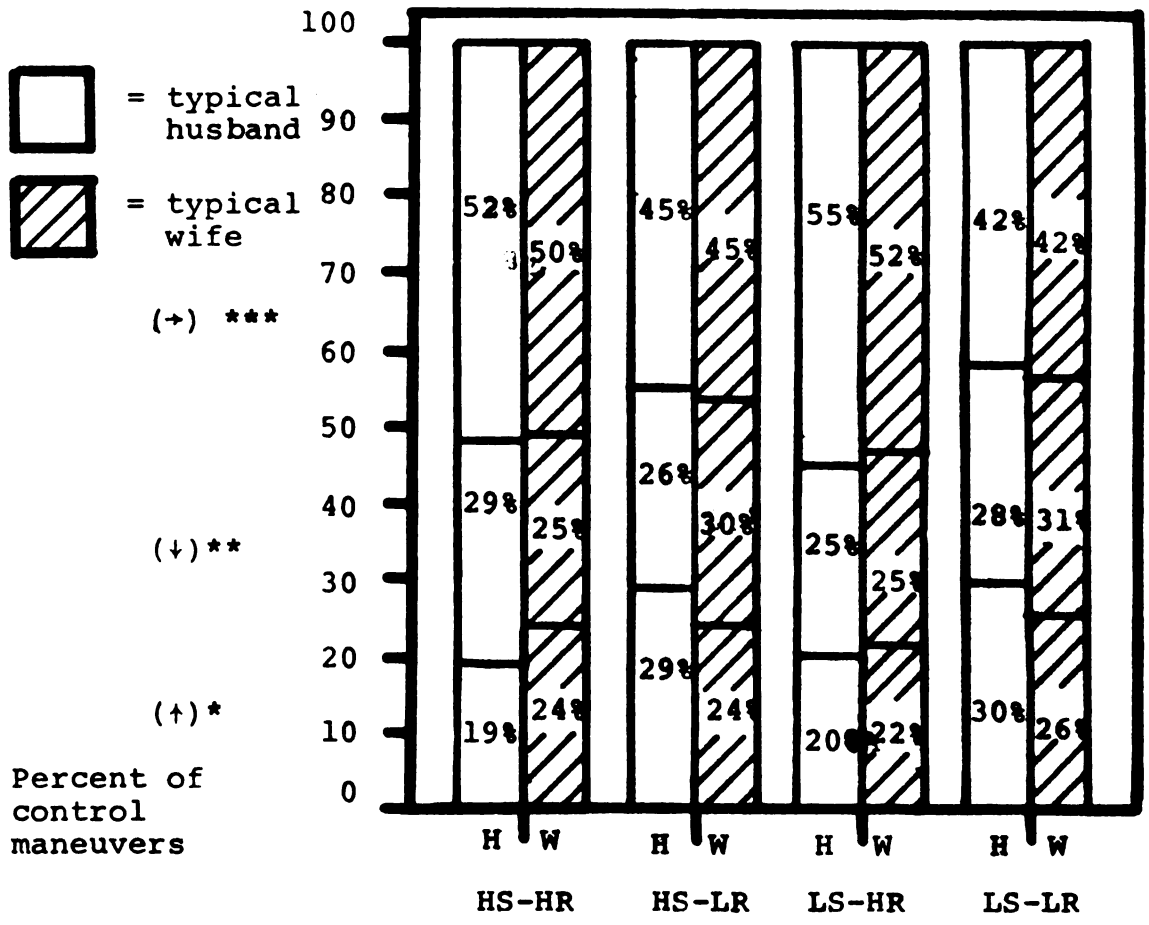
TABLE 14.--Continued.

	Mean Square	df	F-ratio	Probability
b. Proportion of one-down control codes observed in the wives' messages:				
Stability	0.0001	1	0.02	ns
Rigidity	0.0173	1	3.93	.10
Interaction	0.0001	1	0.02	ns
Within	0.0044			
c. Proportion of one-across control codes observed in the wives' messages:				
Stability	0.0001	1	0.04	ns
Rigidity	0.0212	1	9.64	.01
Interaction	0.0024	1	1.09	ns
Within	0.0022			

Summary of Section 2

In summary, the pattern that emerges from these analyses suggests that husbands in the less rigid, more flexible dyads assert control and their wives accept these control maneuvers more often than their rigid counterparts. Members of the high rigidity couples, on the other hand, manifest fewer attempts at asserting or accepting control as the majority of their individual messages were of a neutralizing or non-demanding control nature. The average percentage of each control maneuver transmitted by the husbands and wives are displayed in Graph 1.

Graph 1. Percent of one-up, one-down and one-across control maneuvers observed in the husbands' and wives' messages in each of the four transactional groups.



*Husbands classified in the less rigid groups transmitted significantly more one-up statements than those in the more rigid couples.

**Wives in the couples classified as low on rigidity tended to transmit more one-down control messages than wives in the more rigid groups.

***Both the husbands and wives in the more rigid couples exhibited more one-across control maneuvers than those in the less rigid couples.

Section 3: Arithmetic Analysis of Transactional Patterns

The arithmetic analyses of the transactional patterns are reported in this section. The research question asked in these analyses concerned the differences between the four groups on the types of transacts observed in their verbal interchanges. Put another way, the concern here is with the relative position of the husband and wife in their communication pattern. The focus is not a sequential analysis, but rather a summed profile of the proportion of each type of transact exhibited in the couples' interchanges. The mean percentage of each type of transact observed in the dyads' discussions are shown in Table 18. The first arrow represents the husband's control code and the second arrow shows the control dimension of the wife's message. Together, these control codes represent the transact or the basic unit of a transactional analysis.

Before discussing the differences in profiles between these four groups, three descriptive characteristics of the discussions will be reported. These three descriptive characteristics are the average total number of transacts (Table 15), the average length in minutes (Table 16), and the total number of silences observed in the verbal interchanges (Table 17).

A significant stability effect was observed in the analysis of the total number of transacts coded. High stability dyads made more statements than did low stability

TABLE 15.--Means and analysis of variance results on the number of transactional configurations observed in the groups' discussions.

	Mean Square	df	F-ratio	Probability	Rigidity: High	Rigidity: Low
Stability	6948.06	1	7.03	.05		
High					251	305
Low					167	222
Rigidity	2998.11	1	3.03	ns		
Interaction	0.7482	1	*	ns		
Within	988.04					

*Less than .01

dyads. Their discussions did not, on the average, last any longer (Table 16), but rather more messages of a shorter duration were transmitted by the high stability dyads. In other words, the typical communication pattern in the more stable couples contained more messages by both the husband and wife than did the transcripts of the less stable dyads. The pattern in the less stable couples appears to be one of longer individual messages, i.e. less interaction, than that in the more stable couples, as the total length of their discussions did not differ significantly.

A significant correlation between the dyads' stability score and the number of transacts counted was also found ($r = .45$, $p = <.01$). This moderate correlation is reported to give some indication of the strength of the observed stability effect. The number of transacts observed also slightly but significantly correlated with the couple's

TABLE 16.--Means and analysis of variance results on the length in minutes of the groups' discussions.

	Mean Square	df	F-ratio	Probability	Rigidity	
					High	Low
Stability	1.836	1	0.35	ns		
High					30	27
Low					31	28
Rigidity	9.456	1	1.82	ns		
Interaction	0.046	1	*	ns		
Within	5.187					

*Less than .01

rigidity score ($r = -.31$, $p = <.05$). This latter correlation together with the slight trend in the factorial analysis suggest that the more flexible couples transmitted more messages than did the more rigid dyads. However, this is a weak and tentative finding which is given only suggestive support by the data.

There was no difference between these four groups in the number of silences coded in their discussions. Although the pattern of means appears suggestive of a rigidity effect, the within variance is too large to adequately test this relation (Table 17).

Arithmetic Profile

The mean percent of the couples' discussions which were complementary, symmetrical and transitory are shown in Table 18. These three general classifications are broken into the types of transactional configurations

TABLE 17.--Means and analysis of variance results on the number of silences coded in the groups' discussions.

	Mean Square	df	F-ratio	Probability	Rigidity: High	Rigidity: Low
Stability	1.601	1	0.08	ns		
High					15.5	4.8
Low					13.8	9.8
Rigidity	48.511	1	2.30	ns		
Interaction	14.175	1	0.67	ns		
Within	21.056					

representing each. The average proportion of the dyads' interchanges coded as each of the nine possible transacts therefore is also displayed in this table. For instance, 9.3% of the typical High Stability-High Rigidity (HS-HR) couple's discussion was of a complementary nature. There are two types of complementary transacts: one where the husband is one-up and the wife one-down (↑↓), and the other where the wife is one-up and the husband is one down (↓↑). These represented, respectively, 3.5% and 5.8% of the typical HS-HR couple's total discussion. The source of variation between these groups on their typical use of the nine transactional configurations are given in Tables 19, 20, and 21.

TABLE 18.--Mean percent of each transactional configuration observed in the four relational groups.

	High Rigidity	Low Rigidity
High Stability:		
Complementary:	9.3%	12.8%
(↑↓)	3.5	7.3
(↓↑)	5.8	5.5
Symmetrical:	28.2%	27.2%
(↑↑)	5.0	7.0
(↓↓)	3.6	5.4
(→→)	19.6	14.8
Transitory:	62.2%	59.7%
(↑→)	10.7	15.0
(→↑)	13.8	12.6
(↓→)	19.9	14.9
(→↓)	17.8	17.2
Low Stability:		
Complementary:	10.2%	16.8%
(↑↓)	5.0	9.5
(↓↑)	5.2	7.3
Symmetrical:	30.0%	28.8%
(↑↑)	3.9	7.0
(↓↓)	2.7	6.1
(→→)	23.4	15.7
Transitory:	59.1%	52.8%
(↑→)	10.6	12.9
(→↑)	13.1	11.7
(↓→)	19.1	13.5
(→↓)	16.3	14.7

Both stability and rigidity main effects were observed in the analysis of the differences between these four groups on the average percent of complementary transacts observed in their discussions. The high stability dyads had slightly but significantly fewer complementary transacts coded in their interchanges than did the low stability dyads (11.3% and 13.2% respectively). The rigidity effect was much stronger, however.* Those couples lower on the rigidity dimension had about 50% more complementary transacts manifested in their discussion than did those higher on the rigidity scale (14.5% and 9.8% respectively). This result is the exact reverse of the predicted relation stated in Hypothesis I, 3b. In combination, these results indicate that those less stable and more flexible couples had more pairs of messages which asserted and accepted control of the interaction than did couples higher on these transactional dimensions (Table 19).

A Scheffe´ analysis of these mean percentages points out that all these groups are significantly different from each other with the exception of the High Stability-High Rigidity (HS-HR) and Low Stability-High Rigidity (LS-HR) groups. The lowest percent of complementary transactional

---

*Some indication of the strength of these associations is given by their correlations. Stability was not significantly correlated with the proportion of complementary units ($r = .19$) while a strong negative correlation was found with the dyads' rigidity scores ($r = -.69$, $p = <.01$).

units was observed in the High Stability-High Rigidity (HS-HR) group (9.3%), the most was in the Low Stability-Low Rigidity (LS-LR) group (16.8%), with the LS-HR (10.2%) and HS-LR (12.8%) groups falling in between. Each of these groups differed significantly from each other with the exception of the two high rigidity groups which exhibited statistically the same proportion of complementary transacts.

TABLE 19.--Analysis of variance results on the proportion of complementary transacts.

	Mean Square	df	F-ratio	Probability
a. Proportion of complementary transactional units observed:				
Stability	0.0050	1	4.17	.05
Rigidity	0.0237	1	19.75	.001
Interaction	0.0014	1	1.17	ns
Within	0.0012			
b. Proportion of complementary transactional units observed where the husband was one-up and the wife was one-down (↑↓):				
Stability	0.0056	1	3.73	ns
Rigidity	0.0288	1	19.20	.001
Interaction	0.0001	1	0.07	ns
Within	0.0015			
c. Proportion of complementary transactional units observed where the husband was one-down and the wife was one-up (↓↑):				
Stability	0.0008	1	0.53	ns
Rigidity	0.0025	1	1.67	ns
Interaction	0.0027	1	1.80	ns
Within	0.0015			

The pattern of differences on the proportion of complementary transacts is solely due to the differential use of the complementary transact where the husband was one-up and the wife was one-down (↑↓). The pattern of differences on this complementary unit was the same as the pattern of the total percent of complementary configurations except here all four groups differed significantly from each other.* The lowest percent of (↑↓) units was observed in the HS-HR group (3.5%), the next fewest was in the LS-HR (5.0%), the HS-LR group had the second largest (7.3%), and the largest percent was coded in the LS-LR couples' discussions (9.5%). A Scheffe´ analysis revealed that each of these groups different significantly from each other on the average relative frequency with which this particular complementary transact was observed.

There was no difference between these four transactional groups on the proportion of their taped discussion contained within the complementary transact where the wife was one-up and the husband was one-down (↓↑).

No difference existed between these groups in the average percent of symmetrical transacts observed. Just under three of every 10 transactional units coded were symmetrical. However, when we look at the three types of symmetrical transacts possible (i.e. competitive (↑↑),

---

*The negative correlation between the proportion of (↑↓) units and the dyad's rigidity score was also significant ($r = -.58$, $p = <.01$).

submissive (↓↓), and neutralized (→→), a significant rigidity effect is observed across all three configurations (Table 20).

TABLE 20.--Analysis of variance results on the proportion of symmetrical transacts.

	Mean Square	df	F-ratio	Probability
a. Proportion of symmetrical transactional units observed in the dyad's interchange:				
Stability	0.0024	1	1.50	ns
Rigidity	0.0001	1	0.06	ns
Interaction	0.0001	1	0.06	ns
Within	0.0016			
b. Proportion of competitive symmetrical transactional units observed (↑↑):				
Stability	0.0005	1	0.38	ns
Rigidity	0.0135	1	10.38	.01
Interaction	0.0009	1	0.69	ns
Within	0.0013			
c. Proportion of submissive symmetrical transactional units observed (↓↓):				
Stability	0.0001	1	0.08	ns
Rigidity	0.0194	1	16.17	.01
Interaction	0.0023	1	1.92	ns
Within	0.0012			
d. Proportion of neutralized symmetrical transactional units observed (→→):				
Stability	0.0032	1	1.68	ns
Rigidity	0.0243	1	12.79	.01
Interaction	0.0010	1	0.53	ns
Within	0.0019			

Those couples who displayed more flexibility in their transactional pattern had more contol struggles (↑↑), more mutual submissions to control (↓↓), and fewer mutual leveling or nondemanding transacts (→→) than those higher on the rigidity dimension. Although these percentage differences are small in an absolute sense, they are statistically significant indicating distinctive transactional patterns.

The less rigid dyads had about two-thirds more competitive symmetrical transacts observed in their discussions than did the more rigid couples (7.0% and 4.4% respectively). Exploratory Hypothesis I, 4a is, therefore, confirmed. Furthermore, these same less rigid couples manifested about 80% more mutually submissive or dyadic avoidance of communication control transacts than did the more rigid couples (5.7% and 3.1% respectively).

The more rigid couples, on the other hand, elicited about 40% more non-demanding or neutralalized symmetrical transacts than did the less rigid couples (21.7% and 15.2% respectively). A Scheffe´ analysis of the means revealed a significant difference within the high rigidity groups. The Low Stability-High Rigidity (LS-HR) couples exhibited more neutralized symmetrical transacts (23.4%) than the High Stability-High Rigidity (HS-HR) dyads (19.6%). Both of these groups differed significantly from the low rigidity groups and from each other on the average percent of (→→) transacts observed in their discussions.

The consistency of the above reported pattern of differences is further evidenced by the correlational findings. The dyads' rigidity scores were negatively correlated with the proportion of competitive ($r = -.59$, $p = <.01$) and submissive ($r = -.57$, $p < .01$) symmetrical units coded and positively with the proportion of neutralized symmetrical transacts ($r = .55$, $p = <.01$). These moderate correlations also indicate the same distinctive pattern revealed by the analysis of variance results.

Exploratory Hypotheses I, 1a and I, 2b, respectively, stated that stability would be positively and negatively related to the proportion of (→→) and (↑↑) transacts coded in the dyads verbal interchanges. Neither of these hypotheses were substantiated. A moderate negative correlation between the dyad's stability score and the percent of the symmetrical transacts coded was found ($r = -.44$, $p = <.01$). This modest correlation indicates a tendency for the less stable couples to have a slightly greater proportion of their interaction symmetrical in nature.

The pattern that emerges from these findings on the types of symmetrical transacts suggests that rigidity relates to the ease or predictability of who is in control when the couple discusses various topics. The more flexible couples transmit more messages: (a) aimed at determining who shall have the right to control their interaction, as well as (b) more messages which suggest an avoidance of

control considerations or mutual submission to interaction control. The more rigid couples, however, do not seem as concerned about control aspects, possibly because their pattern is relatively more fixed and predictable so that each partner "knows" his role, the role of the other and the implicit "rules" of their transactional pattern. However, this predictability might be at the expense of adaptability to changing situations. The above interpretation is much more suggestive than conclusive, but it is consistent with the data and the definitions of these types of transactional patterns.

Table 21 reports the sources of variation in the proportion of transitory configurations observed in the couples' verbal interchanges. Significant main effects were observed for both the stability and rigidity dimensions. The couples higher on both these dimensions exhibited more transitory units than those lower on these transactional characteristics. However, a Scheffe´ analysis revealed that these main effects are due to the slightly more transitory configurations observed in the HS-HR group (62.2%) and the considerably fewer transitory transacts coded (52.8%) in the LS-LR group. The percent of transitory messages coded in the HS-LR and LS-HR groups were 59.7% and 59.1% respectively.

The couples' scores on both these transactional characteristics were moderately and positively correlated

with the proportion of transitory units coded. These correlations were r = .54 (p = <.01) with stability and r = .41 (p = <.01) with rigidity. These moderate correlations along with the results from the analysis of variance indicate that the more stable and more rigid couples manifest more transitory transactional configurations in their typical communication patterns than do those couples lower on these two dimensions.

TABLE 21.--Analysis of variance results on the proportion of transitory transacts.

	Mean Square	df	F-ratio	Probability
a. Proportion of transitory transactional units observed in the dyad's interchange:				
Stability	0.0104	1	6.93	.05
Rigidity	0.0079	1	5.27	.05
Interaction	0.0013	1	0.87	ns
Within	0.0015			
b. Proportion of transitory transactional units observed where the husband was one-up and the wife was one-across (↑→):				
Stability	0.0008	1	0.53	ns
Rigidity	0.0086	1	5.73	.05
Interaction	0.0013	1	0.87	ns
Within	0.0015			
c. Proportion of transitory transactional units observed where the husband was one-across and the wife was one-up (→↑):				
Stability	0.0007	1	0.23	ns
Rigidity	0.0021	1	0.67	ns
Interaction	0.0001	1	0.03	ns
Within	0.0031			

TABLE 21.--Continued.

	Mean Square	df	F-ratio	Probability
d. Proportion of transitory transactional units observed where the husband was one-down and the wife was one-across (↓→):				
Stability	0.0007	1	0.33	ns
Rigidity	0.0194	1	9.24	.01
Interaction	0.0001	1	0.05	ns
Within	0.0021			
e. Proportion of transitory transactional units observed where the husband was one-across and the wife was one-down (→↓):				
Stability	0.0016	1	0.47	ns
Rigidity	0.0006	1	0.17	ns
Interaction	0.0003	1	0.08	ns
Within	0.0034			

Significant rigidity effects were also found on two of the four types of transitory configurations. The more flexible couples had significantly more transacts where the husband was one-up and the wife was one-across (↑→) than did the more rigid couples. A Scheffe' analysis showed that these two low rigidity groups differed significantly from each other. The HS-LR group had 15%, while the LS-LR group had 13% of their discussion coded as (↑→). Both of these groups differed from the high rigidity couples who had just under 11% of their discussion coded as this configuration.

The other transitory unit that differentiated the

high and low rigidity dyads was the one where the husband is one-down and the wife is one-across (↓→). Here the high rigidity couples had more of their discussions coded in this manner than the more flexible couples (19.4% and 14.3% respectively).

Summary of Section 3

The following significant differences were observed in the profile analysis of the couples' transactional communication patterns.

1. The unstable, flexible (LS-LR) couples had the most complementary transacts coded in their verbal interchanges. The complementary configuration which was most observed in this group was where the husband was one-up and the wife was one-down (↑↓).

2. The stable, flexible (HS-LR) couples exhibited the second largest percentage of complementary units. Their most frequent complementary configuration was also where the husband was one-up and the wife was one-down (↑↓).

3. The unstable, rigid (LS-HR) couples had the second fewest complementary transacts coded in their discussion with the two types of complementary units observed with approximately the same relative frequency.

4. The stable, rigid (HS-HR) couples transmitted the fewest proportion of complementary transacts with their most frequent configuration being the one with the husband one-down and the wife one-up (↓↑). These first four

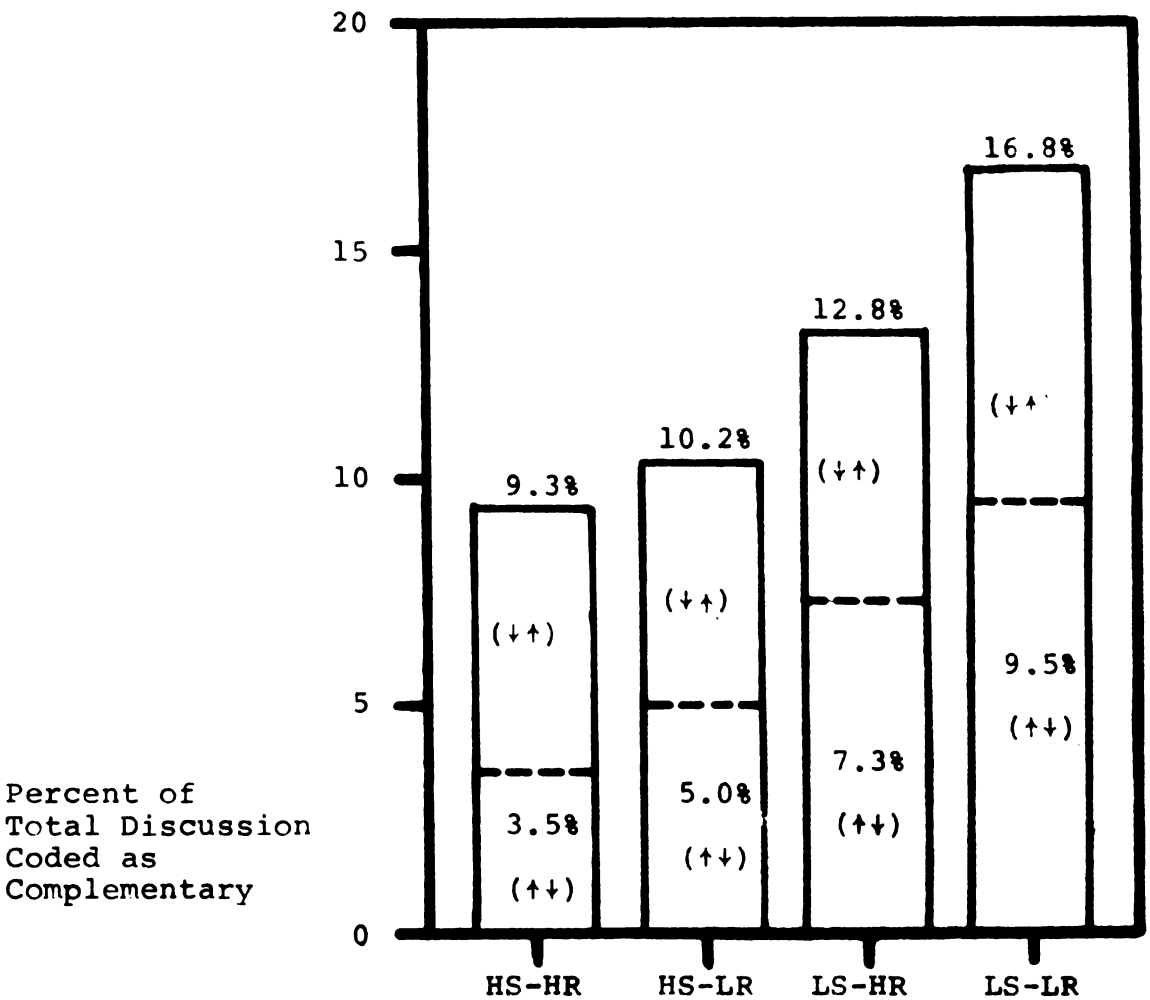
findings are summarized in Graph 2.

5. There was no difference between the four transactional groups on the average percent of their discussions which were symmetrical pairs of messages. However, a significant rigidity effect was found on each type of symmetrical configuration. The more flexible dyads had: (a) more competitive symmetrical transacts; and (b) more submissive symmetrical transacts observed in their verbal interchanges than did the more rigid couples. The more rigid dyads, on the other hand, had (c) more neutralized symmetrical units coded in their discussion than did the less rigid, more flexible marriage partners. Scores on the stability dimension differentiated the high rigidity couples with the LS-HR couples using the neutralized pairs of messages proportionately more than the HS-HR couples. These rigidity main effects are displayed in Graph 3.

6. The majority of all transacts were of a transitory nature. However, the stable, rigid and the unstable, flexible couples, respectively, had the largest and smallest percent of transitory units coded in their interactions.

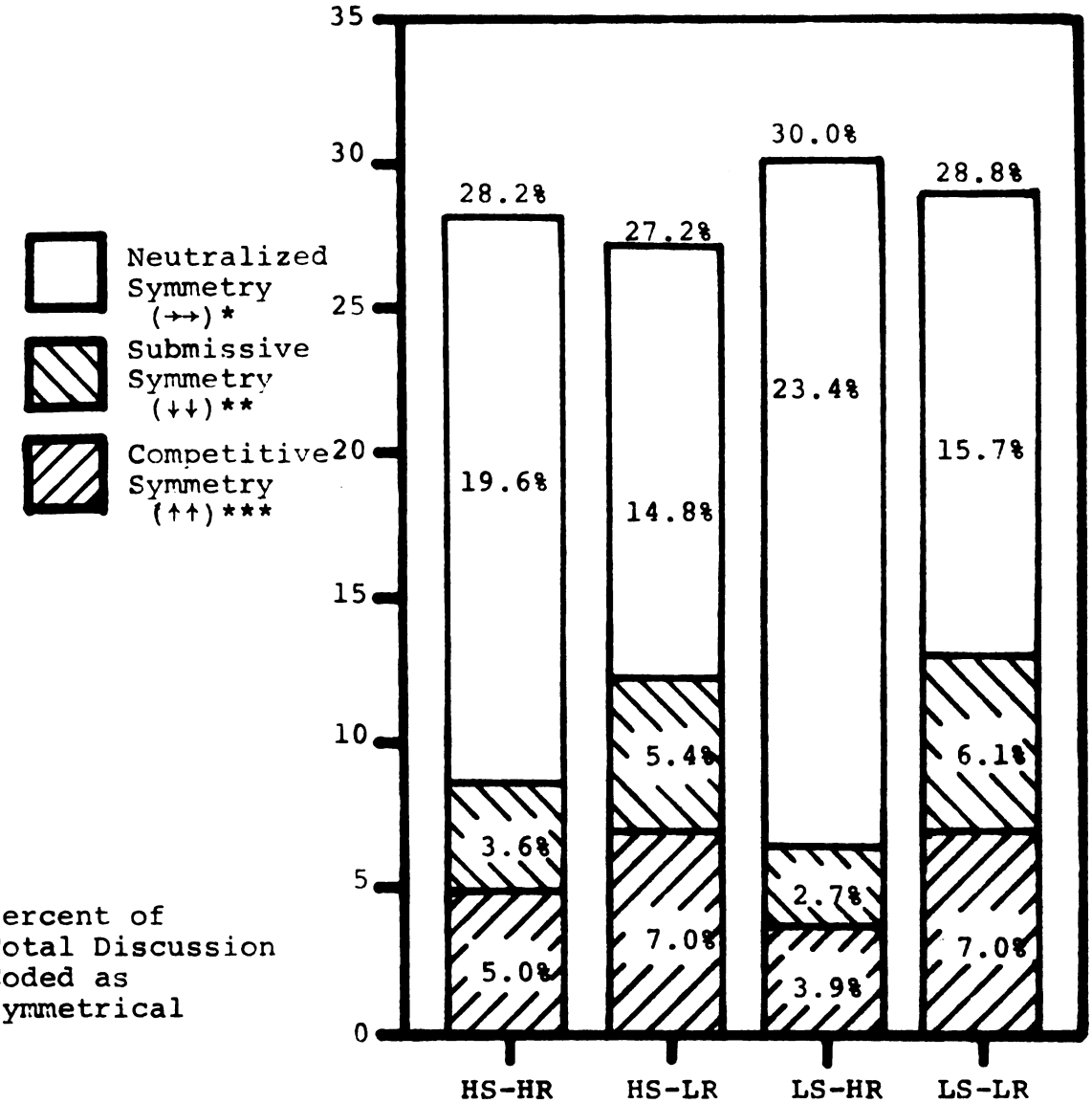
a. The more flexible couples were coded in the transitory unit where the husband was asserting control and the wife was attempting to neutralize this control assertion more often than the rigid couples (↑→). Furthermore, the HS-LR couples had significantly more (↑→) transacts coded than did the other flexible but less stable couples, the LS-LR dyads.

Graph 2. Percent of each group's discussions which were complementary in nature.*



* Each of these proportions are significantly different from each other with the exception of the percentage of total complementary transacts coded in the two high stability groups (i.e. HS-HR and HS-LR).

Graph 3. Percent of each group's discussions which were symmetrical in nature.

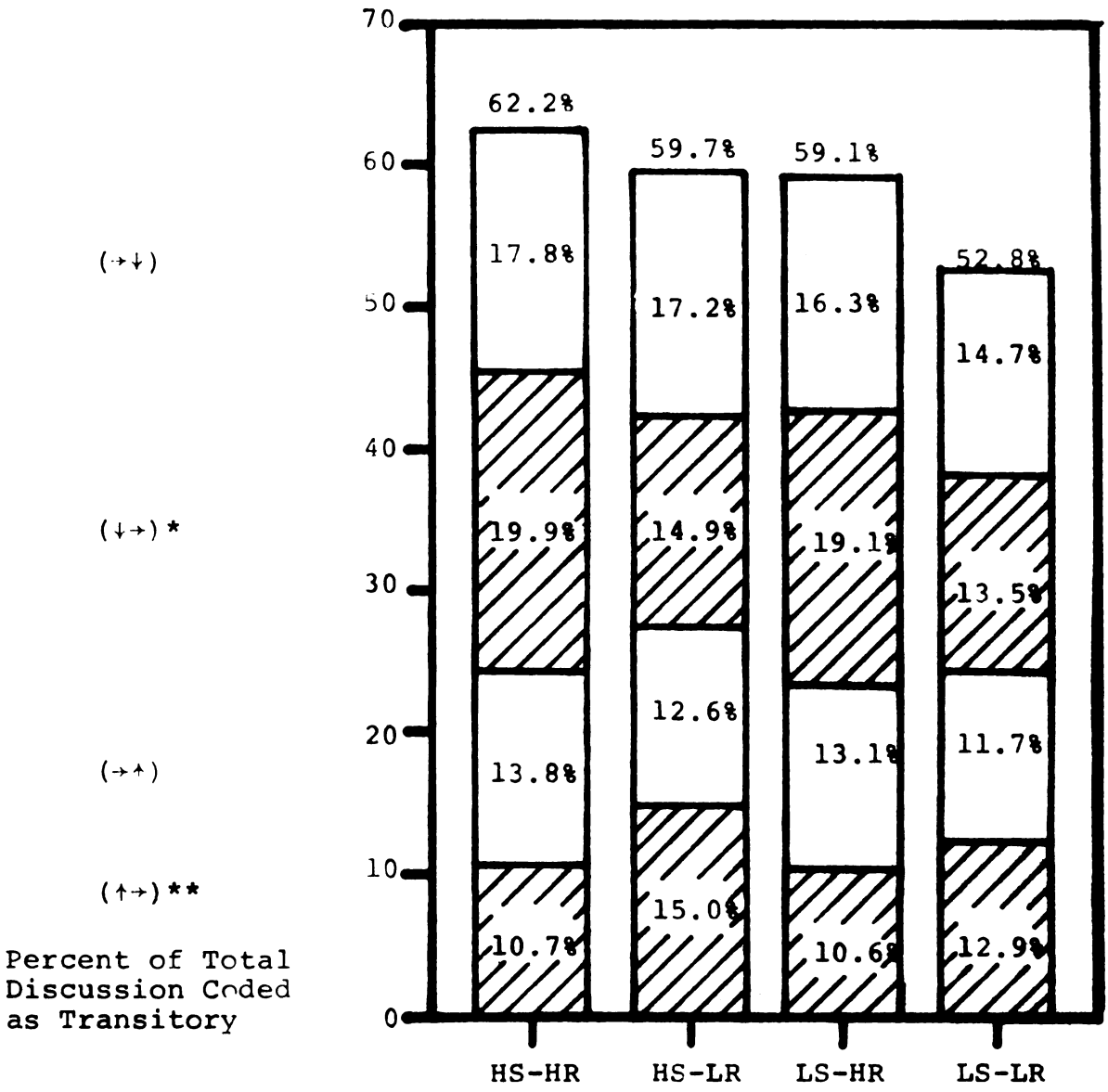


* The rigid couples exhibited a higher proportion of (→→) transacts than the flexible couples with the dyads ranked in the following order: (LS-HR)>(HS-HR)>(LS-LR= HS-LR).

** The flexible couples had a greater proportion of their discussion coded as (↓↓) than the rigid couples.

*** The flexible couples had a greater proportion of their discussion coded as (↑↑) than the rigid couples.

Graph 4. Percent of each group's discussions which were transitory in nature.



* The high rigidity couples had proportionately more of these transacts coded in their discussions than did the less rigid couples.

** Low rigidity couples had proportionately more of these transacts coded in their discussions than did the more rigid couples.

b. The more rigid couples, on the other hand, were observed more often than the flexible couples in the configuration where the husband was submitting to his wife's control, but the wife was transmitting a non-demanding type of message (↓→). These differences in the percentages of transitory units coded in the couples' discussions are shown in Graph 4.

Section 4: Analysis of Long Sequences

The number, length and types of long sequences observed in the couples' discussions are the focus of this section. A long sequence was defined earlier as five consecutive transacts of exactly the same configuration (see page 33 in Chapter II). The research interest here concerned yet another possible measure of indexing the flexibility and the adaptability of the dyad's transactional pattern. Of the 45 couples included in this study, only 37 had long sequences observed in their verbal transcripts. The analysis of variance of the couples were run over the total sample and on only those couples who exhibited one or more long sequences. By excluding those dyads who did not have a long sequence in their discussions, two couples from the HS-HR, two from the HS-LR, three from the LS-HR and one from the LS-LR groups were eliminated from analyses. The small cell sizes (8, 11, 9 and 9 respectively) and the limited total sample size (37) obviously make any conclusions tentative. But again, the emphasis of this exploratory study

is on isolating potentially fruitful means of indexing and classifying transactional patterns for future research and theory construction.

Quantitative Differences

There were no differences between these four groups on the average number of long sequences observed (Table 22) nor on the average number of different types of long sequences identified in their verbal interchanges (Table 23).

TABLE 22.--Means and analysis of variance results on the number of long sequences observed in the groups' discussions.

	Mean Square	df	F-ratio	Probability	Rigidity: High	Rigidity: Low
a. Number of long sequences observed (N = 45):						
Stability	0.366	1	0.43	ns		
High					3.0	3.5
Low					2.8	2.5
Rigidity	0.011	1	0.01	ns		
Interaction	0.189	1	0.22	ns		
Within	0.855					
b. Number of long sequences observed (N = 37):						
Stability	0.469	1	0.47	ns		
High					3.8	4.2
Low					3.8	2.8
Rigidity	0.081	1	0.08	ns		
Interaction	0.511	1	0.52	ns		
Within	0.989					

TABLE 23.--Means and analysis of variance results on the number of different types of long sequences observed in the groups' discussions.

	Mean Square	df	F-ratio	Probability	Rigidity High	Rigidity Low
a. Number of different types of long sequences observed (N = 45):						
Stability	0.0012	1	*	ns		
High					1.8	1.7
Low					1.4	2.0
Rigidity	0.0552	1	0.38	ns		
Interaction	0.1190	1	0.83	ns		
Within	0.1433					
b. Number of different types of long sequences observed (N = 37):						
Stability	0.0049	1	0.04	ns		
High					2.2	2.0
Low					1.9	2.2
Rigidity	0.0016	1	0.01	ns		
Interaction	0.0841	1	0.67	ns		
Within	0.1259					

*Less than .01.

Another measure which might possibly identify a rigid or inflexible pattern was the percent of the couple's total discussion contained within long sequences. To compute this proportion, the total number of transacts was divided into the number of transacts contained within one or more long sequences. For instance, couple Number 283 had 250 transactional units coded in all four of their discussions. Long sequences were observed in Topics II and III and were eight and nine transacts in length respectively. Thus, 17 of their

250 transactional units were in long sequences for a proportion of .07. This index was computed for each couple and an analysis of variance was run over these proportions.

Although there was no difference observed between couples in the total sample, a significant rigidity effect did emerge in the analysis of only those marriage pairs who exhibited a long sequence (Table 24). Those couples with higher scores on the rigidity dimension had about 9% of their total discussion contained within one of more long sequences while those pairs lower on this characteristic had slightly over 6%. A Scheffe' analysis revealed that this rigidity effect is primarily due to the higher proportion observed in the LS-HR group. Just over 10% of these couples' total discussion was contained within one or more long sequences. The average percentage for the other three groups was 6.6%. While the HS-HR group did have the second highest proportion (.078), this was not significantly different from the low rigidity groups. Thus, of those dyads who exhibited a long sequence, the typical Low Stability-High Rigidity couple used and maintained this frozen pattern of interaction proportionally more than the other three types of couples.

Since this index is compounded by the overall number of messages transmitted by the couple, another index of long sequences was constructed. This index refers to the average length of each long sequence observed in the dyads' interchanges. To use couple Number 283 again as an illustration,

they had two long sequences of eight and nine transacts each. The average length of their observed long sequences, then, would be 8.5 transacts. This average length index was computed for each couple and an analysis of variance was run on these averages to determine any differences in the average absolute length of the long sequences observed within these four transactional groups.

TABLE 24.--Means and analysis of variance results on the proportion of transacts contained within long sequences.

	Mean Square	df	F-ratio	Probability	Rigidity High	Rigidity Low
a. Percent of total discussion contained within the long sequences observed (N = 45):						
Stability	0.0005	1	0.08	ns		
High					5.1%	4.5%
Low					5.8%	4.8%
Rigidity	0.0010	1	0.16	ns		
Interaction	0.0001	1	0.02	ns		
Within	0.0062					
b. Percent of total discussion contained within the long sequence observed (N = 37):						
Stability	0.0011	1	0.48	ns		
High					7.8%	6.3%
Low					10.1%	5.9%
Rigidity	0.0114	1	4.96	.05		
Interaction	0.0023	1	1.00	ns		
Within	0.0023					

There was no difference in the average absolute length of the long sequences observed between these four transactional groups. However, there is a slight trend in the data which suggests that the high rigidity couples tend to have slightly longer long sequences, when such a frozen pattern is observed, than those couples lower on this dimension. The means and source of variation are given in Table 25.

TABLE 25.--Means and analysis of variance results on the average length of the long sequences observed.

	Mean Square	df	F-ratio	Probability	Rigidity High	Rigidity Low
a. Average length of the dyad's long sequence (N = 45):						
Stability	0.0196	1	0.03	ns		
High					4.8	4.9
Low					4.6	4.7
Rigidity	0.0121	1	0.02	ns		
Interaction	0.0001	1	*	ns		
Within	0.5551					
b. Average length of the dyad's long sequence (N = 37):						
Stability	0.0182	1	0.20	ns		
High					6.0	5.8
Low					6.2	5.3
Rigidity	0.3080	1	3.38	ns		
Interaction	0.1460	1	1.54	ns		
Within	0.0910					

*Less than .01

Qualitative Differences

The previous analyses all dealt with quantitative differences between the four groups on the number and length of the observed long sequences. Another way of studying these frozen patterns is to identify their configurational types. In other words, what were the qualitative differences between these groups in the transactional configurations of their long sequences? Each long sequence was identified as either complementary, symmetrical or transitory and an analysis of the frequency of each type within each group was conducted. This analysis did reveal significant differences between the four transactional groups ($X^2 = 22.25$, $df = 6$, $p = .001$). Table 26 displays the percentage of each transactional type observed within each of the four groups.

This qualitative difference in the long sequences observed in the four groups is due to: (a) the greater proportion of complementary long sequences observed in the LS-LR group; (b) the proportionately fewer symmetrical long sequences observed in the HS-LR group; (c) the greater percentage of transitory long sequences observed in the HS-LR group; and (d) the lower percentage of transitory long sequences manifested by the LS-LR couples.

None of the long sequences observed within the HS-HR group were of a complementary nature. There was only one complementary long sequence observed in the LS-HR group, three in the HS-LR group and six of the ten observed were in the

TABLE 26.--Percent of long sequences observed that were transitory, symmetrical or complementary.

	Rigidity					Stability			Rigidity		
	High Stability		Low Stability								
	High	Low	High	Low	Total N	High	Low	Total N	High	Low	Total N
Complementary	0%	3%	7%	24%	10	4%	12%	10	2%	13%	10
Symmetrical	23%	18%	2%	20%	19	11%	19%	19	20%	8%	19
Transitory	77%	79%	91%	56%	106	85%	69%	106	78%	79%	106
Total N	30	34	46	25	135	76	59	135	64	71	135
	Degrees of freedom = 6					Degrees of freedom = 2			Degrees of freedom = 2		
	Chi-square = 22.248					Chi-square = 5.453			Chi-square = 8.979		
	Probability = .001					Probability - between .10 and .05			Probability = .02		

LS-LR group. These six represented 24% of all the long sequences observed in the LS-LR dyads which is considerably more than the proportion of complementary long sequences sustained in the other three types of couples.

Of the ten complementary long sequences observed, six were of the configurational type where the wife is one-up and the husband is one-down (↓↑). Of these six, four were observed in the LS-LR group suggesting that these wives are slightly more combative or punitive than the wives in the other three groups. This, however, is a highly impressionistic interpretation based on a few data points.

With the exception of the HS-LR group, approximately one-fifth of all the long sequences observed were of a symmetrical nature. Only one couple in the HS-LR group manifested a symmetrical long sequence and this represented only 2% of the total number of long sequences counted in this group. This type of couple, then, even though their discussions were typically longer than the other three types (see Table 15) and they exhibited more long sequences than the other three types (Table 26), seem to avoid symmetrical frozen interaction sequences.

Of the 19 symmetrical long sequences observed, 13 were of the neutralized symmetrical type (→→), four represented status struggles (↑↑), and two were submissive symmetrical configurations (↓↓). Six of the 13 neutralized symmetrical long sequences were observed in the HS-HR group,

four in the other high rigidity group (i.e. LS-HR), and only three were observed in the discussions of the low rigidity dyads. This suggests that the more rigid couples are three times more likely to sustain a long sequence implying a mutual avoidance of control than the flexible couples. Competitive symmetrical long sequences, representing extended control struggles, were only observed in the unstable couples, with each containing two. The two submissive or mutual avoidance of control sequences were observed in the HS-HR and the LS-LR groups.

The vast majority of all the long sequences observed were of a transitory configuration(79%). However, 91% of all the long sequences observed in the HS-LR couples' discussions and just over one-half (56%) of those observed in the LS-LR couples' discussions were transitory.

The single, most frequently observed long sequence was where the husband was one-down and the wife was one-across (↓→). The exact reverse (→↓) of this unit was the next most commonly observed. These two types represented, respectively, 39% and 30% of the transitory long sequences and just over half of all long sequences observed. Thus the majority of long sequences were of the configuration where one member is submitting to the other and the other person is not demanding control, but is, relatively speaking, one-up in relation to the submissive message of the other.

The remaining 31% of the transitory long sequences

were where one member was asserting control of the discussion and the other was not accepting or attempting to neutralize the demand aspect of the other's message. There was no difference between these four groups in the types of transitory long sequences observed in their communication patterns ($X^2 = 9.32$, df = 9, p = <.50).

Summary of Section 4

Based on the analyses of the long sequences counted in the dyads' discussions, the following conclusions seem warranted.

1. Of those couples who exhibited long sequences (i.e. 37 of the 45 in the sample), proportionately more of the LS-HR dyads' discussions were contained within these frozen interaction patterns than the other three groups (Table 24).

2. There is a slight tendency for the long sequences observed in the high rigidity dyads to be longer than the sequences observed in the low rigidity dyads (Table 25).

3. The unstable, flexible dyads are more likely than the other three groups to sustain a complementary long sequence, and less likely to exhibit a transitory one. The stable, flexible couples, on the other hand, are less likely than the other three transactional groups to sustain a symmetrical and more likely to exhibit a transitory long sequence (Table 26).

4. The rigid couples maintained three times more neutralized symmetrical long sequences than did the flexible couples.

5. The unstable couples manifested four competitive symmetrical long sequences while the stable couples did not sustain any of these extended status struggles.

Section 5: Differences in Typical Response Patterns

The focus of this section is on what types of messages tend to follow what other types of messages. In other words, given that the husband has tried to assert control of the interaction, how is the wife likely to respond? Will she fight for control by also transmitting a one-up message? Is she likely to submit to her husband's assertive control maneuver, or will she try to neutralize his demand for control by responding with a one-across message? These questions were the basis for the following analyses.

In Section 2, individual profiles were reported for the husbands and wives in the four transactional groups showing their typical message pattern. Section 3 reported the results of the transactional profiles of the four groups which centered on the couples' typical proportion of the nine transactional configurations. This section goes back to an individual person perspective. Here, however, the research interest is on which control maneuvers were the

typical responses to given control messages. Table 27 reports the typical husband's responses to his wife's messages, and Table 31 shows the average wife's responses to her husband's preceding control maneuvers.

Sex Differences Within the Four Groups

Within the four groups, there was only one significant difference between husbands and wives on their typical response to their spouses' preceding control message. This difference was in the LS-HR couples and concerned the average proportion of one-across messages given as responses to one-up control messages. The husbands in the LS-HR group responded with a neutralizing, non-demanding message to their wives' demand for interaction control more than their wives reacted in this way to the husbands' assertions of control (correlated $t = 2.65$, $df = 11$, $p = <.025$, one-way). Sixty percent of the LS-HR husbands' responses to their wives' one-up messages were this one-across, neutralizing reaction, while only 45% of the wives' responses were one-across to their husbands' one-up messages. This indicates that the husbands in the LS-HR couples are more likely to respond in a non-accepting manner (i.e. one-across) to their wives' control assertions than the LS-HR wives are to their husbands' demands for interaction control. Neither the LS-HR husband nor wife is likely to challenge the one-up control maneuver of the other by also asserting a one-up message (14% and 19% respectively). But the data suggest

a tendency for the typical LS-HR wife to submit more (i.e. one-down) to her husband's control assertion (35%) than the typical LS-HR husband (25%) was willing to submit to his wife's demand for control (correlated $t = 1.68$, $df = 11$, $p = <.10$, one-way).

Although there was only one significant difference observed between the sexes within the groups in their typical response modes to given control statements, several other tendencies are suggested by the data. The typical HS-HR wife is slightly more willing (27% and 20%) than her husband to challenge her spouse's one-up message (correlated $t = 1.63$, $df = 9$, $p = <.10$, one-way). Her husband, on the other hand, is somewhat more likely to respond submissively (43% and 34%) to her non-demanding message than she is to his one-across statement (correlated $t = 1.67$, $df = 9$, $p = <.10$, one-way).

The typical HS-LR husband was possibly more willing to demand control after hearing his wife's one-across statement than she was to respond assertively to his neutralizing message (correlated $t = 1.55$, $df = 12$, $p = <.10$, one-way). Thirty-five percent of the HS-LR husband's responses to his wife's one-across messages were one-up, while only 28% of the wife's responses to his neutralizing messages were one-up. The last difference between the sexes suggested by the data was also in the HS-LR couples. The typical husband in this group was somewhat more willing to issue a one-up

response to his wife's one-down message (23% and 16% respectively) than she was to his (correlated $t = 1.67$, $df = 12$, $p = <.10$, one-way). These possible sex differences within transactional groups are reported not as conclusive findings but rather as examples of the kinds of comparisons that ought to be run and as hypotheses for future research on transactional patterns within marriage dyads.

Differences in the Husbands' Typical Responses

This part of Section 5 deals with differences in the typical response modes issued by the husbands in the four groups to their wives' preceding statements. In other words, given the wife has asserted a one-up message, do the husbands in the four groups behave differently in terms of the control direction of their response? These comparisons are based on the total number of the wives' messages which were responded to by the husbands. For example, couple #215 was classified in the unstable, rigid (LS-HR) group. Of the wife's 99 stimulus messages, 31 were coded as one-up. The majority of the husband's responses to these 31 one-up statements were one-across (52%), but 16% of his verbal reactions were also of a one-up nature and 32% of his responses were submissive (one-down).

Forty-four of the wife's 99 stimulus messages were of a non-demanding, one-across nature. The husband followed 50% of these messages with a one-across statement, 11% with a demand for control (i.e. one-up) and to 39% of his wife's

one-across statements he issued a submissive, one-down message. The remaining 24 messages transmitted by his wife were one-down. Husband #215 transmitted a one-up message to 25% of these, a similar submissive message to 8%, and a non-demanding statement was made to 67% of her one-down messages.

These response frequencies were counted for each husband, turned into proportions, summed within groups and the means of the groups were compared with a 2 x 2 analysis of variance. The results of these analyses are given in Tables 28, 29, and 30. The average response proportions for the husbands to their wives' preceding statements are shown in Table 27.

The flexible, less rigid husbands responded more often than the more rigid males with a one-up message to their wives' preceding one-up statement. The less rigid males were more apt to challenge the demand for control issued by their wives than were the males in the more rigid couples. (See Table 28, Part a) Furthermore, a Scheffe' analysis revealed that the LS-HR husbands were less likely to challenge their wives' demand for control than were the HS-HR husbands (14% and 20% respectively). Thus the pattern of responses to the wives' one-up statements shows that the more flexible, less rigid husbands challenged about 27%, the HS-HR husbands challenged about one-fifth, and the unstable, rigid husbands only challenged about one-seventh or 14% of their wives' demands for interaction control.

TABLE 27.--Mean percentages of the husbands' one-up one-down and one-across responses to their wives' one-up, one-down and one-across stimulus messages.

	Rigidity			
	High Stability		Low Stability	
	High (%)	Low (%)	High (%)	Low (%)
Wife One-up (↑):				
Husband One-up (↑)	20	14	26	27
Husband One-across (→)	53	60	46	45
Husband One-down (↓)	26	25	27	27
Wife One-across (→):				
Husband One-up (↑)	21	22	35	28
Husband One-across (→)	36	45	32	35
Husband One-down (↓)	43	32	33	36
Wife One-down (↓):				
Husband One-up (↑)	13	17	23	32
Husband One-across (→)	73	69	59	46
Husband One-down (↓)	14	13	18	23

The more rigid husbands tend to respond in a neutralizing, non-accepting, one-across manner to their wives' one-up statements more frequently than the less rigid, more flexible husbands. However, this result is only suggested by the data and was not significant ($F = 3.91$, $p = <.10$). No difference existed between the husbands on the proportion of responses which submitted to their wives' control demands, as about 26% of all the husbands' responses were one-down.

TABLE 28.--Analysis of variance results for the differences in the proportions of the husbands' one-up, one-across and one-down response messages to their wives' preceding one-up messages.

	Mean Square	df	F-ratio	Probability
a. Differences in the proportion of one-up responses made by husbands to their wives' preceding one-up messages:				
Stability	0.0066	1	0.75	ns
Rigidity	0.0576	1	6.54	.05
Interaction	0.0100	1	1.14	ns
Within	0.0088			
b. Differences in the proportion of one-across responses made by husbands to their wives' preceding one-up messages:				
Stability	0.0027	1	0.21	ns
Rigidity	0.0499	1	3.91	.10
Interaction	0.0091	1	0.71	ns
Within	0.0128			
c. Differences in the proportion of one-down responses made by husbands to their wives' preceding one-up messages:				
Stability	0.0006	1	0.05	ns
Rigidity	0.0061	1	0.14	ns
Interaction	0.0006	1	0.05	ns
Within	0.0113			

As is shown in Table 29 only one significant difference existed in the husbands' responses to their wives' one-across statements. The less rigid, more flexible husbands issued proportionately more one-up statements to their wives' one-across messages than did husbands in the more rigid

TABLE 29.--Analysis of variance results for the differences in the proportions of the husbands' one-up, one-across and one-down response messages to their wives' preceding one-across messages.

	Mean Square	df	F-ratio	Probability
a. Differences in the proportions of one-up responses made by husbands to their wives' one-across messages:				
Stability	0.0044	1	0.78	ns
Rigidity	0.0520	1	9.29	.01
Interaction	0.0059	1	1.05	ns
Within	0.0056			
b. Differences in the proportions of one-across responses made by husbands to their wives' preceding one-across messages:				
Stability	0.0151	1	2.70	ns
Rigidity	0.0179	1	3.19	ns
Interaction	0.0037	1	0.66	ns
Within	0.0056			
c. Differences in the proportions of one-down responses made by husbands to their wives' preceding one-across messages:				
Stability	0.0065	1	1.27	ns
Rigidity	0.0030	1	1.27	ns
Interaction	0.0175	1	3.43	ns
Within	0.0051			

dyads. A Scheffe´ analysis revealed a difference between the two low rigidity husbands. The HS-LR husbands transmitted one-up responses to 35% and the LS-LR husbands responded in this way to just 28% of their wives' one-across

messages. Both of these groups differed from the husbands in the two more rigid groups who responded with a one-up message to just over one-fifth of their wives' one-across messages.

Although not systematically different, the husbands in the LS-HR group were the most likely to transmit a one-across response to their wives' neutralizing messages. The LS-HR husbands made a one-across statement to 45% of their wives' one-across messages, while the other husbands responded this way to just over one-third of their wives' neutral, non-demanding messages.

The HS-HR husbands transmitted proportionately more one-down responses to their wives' one-across statements than did the other husbands. This, however, was also not a significant difference between these four groups. The HS-HR husbands issued a one-down, submissive message to 43% of their wives' one-across, non-demanding statements, while husbands in the other three groups responded in this manner to about one-third of their wives' one-across messages.

A significant rigidity effect was observed on all three possible response modes made by the husbands to their wives'one-down messages (Table 30). The less rigid, more flexible husband issued proportionately more one-up and one-down response statements than the more rigid husband to his wife's preceding submissive message. The rigid husband, on the other hand, made proportionately more non-demanding

responses to his wife's one-down messages than did his less rigid, more flexible counterpart. On each of these results, a Scheffe´ analysis revealed that scores on the stability dimension differentiated the two flexible groups of husbands.

TABLE 30.--Analysis of variance results for the differences in proportions of the husbands' one-up, one-across and one-down response messages to their wives' preceding one-down messages.

	Mean Square	df	F-ratio	Probability
a. Differences in the proportions of one-up responses made by husbands to their wives' preceding one-down messages:				
Stability	0.0305	1	3.11	ns
Rigidity	0.1110	1	11.33	.01
Interaction	0.0062	1	0.63	ns
Within	0.0098			
b. Differences in the proportions of one-across responses made by husbands to their wives' preceding one-down messages:				
Stability	0.0291	1	2.67	ns
Rigidity	0.1464	1	13.43	.01
Interaction	0.0057	1	0.52	ns
Within	0.0109			
c. Differences in the proportions of one-down responses made by husbands to their wives' preceding one-down messages:				
Stability	0.0014	1	0.15	ns
Rigidity	0.0404	1	4.30	.05
Interaction	0.0119	1	1.27	ns
Within	0.0094			

The LS-LR husbands transmitted a one-up response to 32% and the HS-LR husbands transmitted a demanding response to only 23% of their wives' one-down messages. Both of these groups differed from each other and from the more rigid husbands, who responded in this way to just 15% of their wives' submissive messages. This same order was observed in the husbands' one-down responses. The LS-LR husbands issued a submissive response to 23% and the HS-LR husbands responded submissively to just 18% of their wives' one-down messages. Again, both of these groups differed from each other and from the more rigid husbands. These latter two groups gave a submissive answer to about one-seventh of their wives' submissive, one-down stimulus messages.

The more rigid, less flexible husbands, on the other hand, answered just over 70% of their wives' one-down messages with a non-demanding message. This was significantly more than either of the less rigid groups, who again differed significantly from each other. The HS-LR husbands answered 59% and the LS-LR husbands just 46% of their wives one-down, submissive messages with a one-across, non-demanding statement of their own.

Differences in the Wives' Typical Responses

In the first part of Section 5, the wives' messages were held constant and analyses run on the husbands' responses. The second part of this section reverses that

perspective. Here the husbands' messages were held constant and analyses run on the wives' responses to determine any differences across the four groups. The wives' average proportional frequencies for each type of control response to their husbands' preceding control messages are shown in Table 31. The sources of variation are given in Tables 32, 33, and 34.

TABLE 31.--Mean percentage of the wives' one-up, one-across, and one-down responses to their husbands' one-up, one-across, and one-down stimulus messages.

	Rigidity			
	High Stability		Low Stability	
	High (%)	Low (%)	High (%)	Low (%)
Husband One-up (↑):				
Wife One-up (↑)	26	19	24	24
Wife One-across (→)	49	45	45	42
Wife One-down (↓)	25	35	30	33
Husband One-across (→):				
Wife One-up (↑)	27	22	28	23
Wife One-across (→)	38	39	33	37
Wife One-down (↓)	34	37	38	39
Husband One-down (↓):				
Wife One-up (↑)	15	19	16	28
Wife One-across (→)	69	69	60	47
Wife One-down (↓)	16	10	23	24

As can be seen in Tables 32 and 33 there were no differences in the control directions of the wives' typical responses to their husbands' one-up and one-across statements. Significant main effects, however, were observed in the wives' reactions to the one-down statements issued by their husbands (Table 34).

The unstable wives transmitted proportionately more one-up statements than their more stable counterparts to their husbands' one-down, submissive messages. However, this main effect was due solely to the LS-LR wives who responded with a demanding one-up message more often than the wives in the other three groups (28% and 17% respectively.

The pattern of the wives' neutralizing one-across responses to their spouses' one-down statements was exactly the same as the husbands. Wives in the more rigid groups answered about 70% of their husbands' one-down messages with a non-demanding statement. This proportion was significantly greater than that of the wives in the less rigid, more flexible couples. Scores on the stability dimension differentiated the flexible wives as it did their spouses, with the HS-LR women giving a one-across response to their husbands' preceding one-down message more often than the LS-LR wives (60% and 47% respectively). These latter groups were significantly different from each other and from both of the high rigidity groups.

TABLE 32.--Analysis of variance results for the differences in the proportions of the wives' one-up, one-across and one-down response messages to their husbands' preceding one-up messages.

	Mean Square	df	F-ratio	Probability
a. Differences in the proportions of one-up responses made by wives to their husbands' preceding one-up messages:				
Stability	0.0119	1	1.24	ns
Rigidity	0.0015	1	0.16	ns
Interaction	0.0117	1	1.22	ns
Within	0.0096			
b. Differences in the proportions of one-across responses made by wives to their husbands' preceding one-up messages:				
Stability	0.0086	1	0.87	ns
Rigidity	0.0078	1	0.79	ns
Interaction	0.0008	1	0.08	ns
Within	0.0099			
c. Differences in the proportions of one-down responses made by wives to their husbands' preceding one-up messages:				
Stability	0.0211	1	1.48	ns
Rigidity	0.0058	1	0.41	ns
Interaction	0.0093	1	0.65	ns
Within	0.0143			

The pattern of the wives' one-down responses to their spouses' one-down messages was similar but not exactly the same as that of the husbands. The less rigid wives answered just under one-fourth of their husbands' submissive

statements with a submissive message of their own. This was proportionately more than the more rigid wives who, unlike their spouses, differed significantly from each other. A Scheffe´ analysis showed that the HS-HR wives answered more of their husbands' one-down messages with a one-down statement than did the LS-HR wives (16% and 10% respectively). The pattern of responses that emerged suggests that the less rigid wives (HS-LR and LS-LR groups) responded to one-down messages with the same proportional frequency. Women in the more rigid couples, however, differed from their more flexible counterparts and from each other with the HS-HR wives responding in this way proportionately more than the LS-HR women.

TABLE 33.--Analysis of variance results for the differences in the proportions of the wives' one-up, one-across and one-down response messages to their husbands' preceding one-across messages.

	Mean Square	df	F-ratio	Probability
a. Differences in the proportions of one-up responses made by wives to their husbands' preceding one-across message:				
Stability	0.0125	1	1.52	ns
Rigidity	0.0009	1	0.11	ns
Interaction	0.0001	1	0.01	ns
Within	0.0082			

TABLE 33.--Continued.

	Mean Square	df	F-ratio	Probability
b. Differences in the proportions of one-across responses made by wives to their husbands' preceding one-across messages:				
Stability	0.0032	1	0.80	ns
Rigidity	0.0049	1	1.22	ns
Interaction	0.0008	1	0.20	ns
Within	0.0040			
c. Differences in the proportions of one-down responses made by wives to their husbands' preceding one-across messages:				
Stability	0.0007	1	0.07	ns
Rigidity	0.0052	1	0.53	ns
Interaction	0.0001	1	0.01	ns
Within	0.0099			

TABLE 34.--Analysis of variance results for the differences in the proportions of the wives' one-up, one-across and one-down response messages to their husbands' preceding one-down messages.

	Mean Square	df	F-ratio	Probability
a. Differences in the proportions of one-up responses made by wives to their husbands' preceding one-down messages:				
Stability	0.0407	1	4.33	.05
Rigidity	0.0155	1	1.65	ns
Interaction	0.0063	1	0.67	ns
Within	0.0094			

TABLE 34.--Continued.

	Mean Square	df	F-ratio	Probability
b. Differences in the proportions of one-across responses made by wives to their husbands' preceding one-down messages:				
Stability	0.0183	1	1.54	ns
Rigidity	0.1100	1	9.24	.01
Interaction	0.0179	1	1.50	ns
Within	0.0119			
c. Differences in the proportion of one-down responses made by wives to their husbands' preceding one-down messages:				
Stability	0.0056	1	0.54	ns
Rigidity	0.0802	1	7.79	.01
Interaction	0.0123	1	1.19	ns
Within	0.0103			

Summary of Section 5

The analyses reported in this section concerned: (a) holding the wives' messages constant and studying how the husbands' responses varied; and then (b) viewing the husbands' messages as stimuli and studying the responses of the wives. Significant rigidity effects were observed in five of the nine analyses run on the husbands' typical responses to their wives' preceding messages. One stability and two rigidity main effects were observed on the wives' typical responses. On all seven rigidity main effects, scores on the stability dimension further differentiated

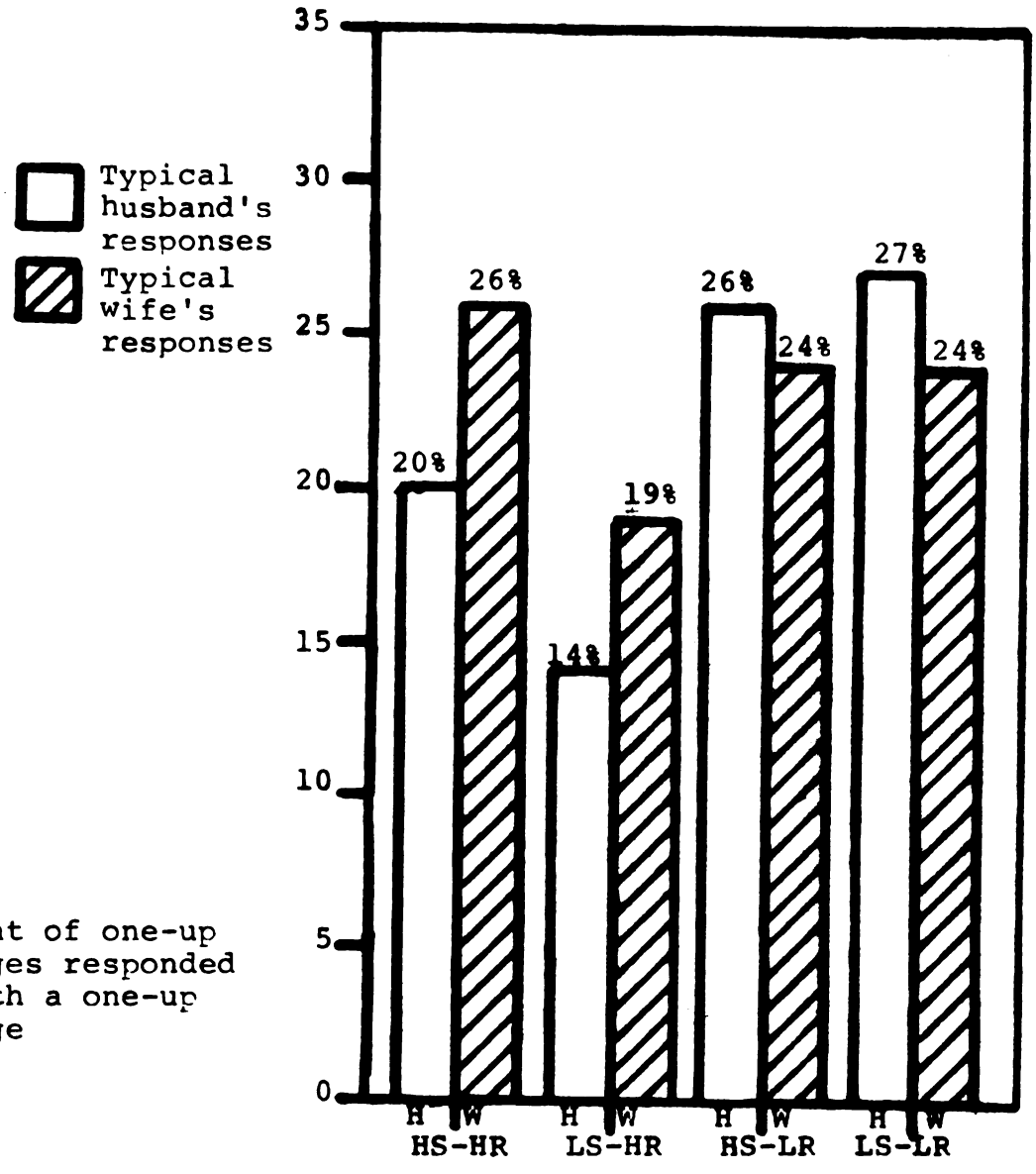
the respondents. Based on these analyses, the following conclusions seem warranted.

1. The flexible husbands challenged their wives' demand for interaction control more often than the more rigid husbands. But within the high rigid groups, husbands in the stable dyads challenged their wives more often than did those in the unstable couples (See Table 28). There were no differences between the wives on this proportion, as all women challenged between one-fifth and one-fourth of their husbands' demands for control. These percentages are displayed in Graph 5.

2. Husbands in the flexible couples also asserted control demands after their wives had transmitted a neutral message more often than the men in the high rigid groups. Within the low rigidity couples, husbands in the high stability dyads asserted this demand for interaction control more often than the less stable males (Table 29). Again, no systematic difference was observed in the wives' one-up responses to their husbands' neutral messages as approximately one-fourth of all husbands' one-across statements were followed by a one-up assertion for control by the wives (Graph 6).

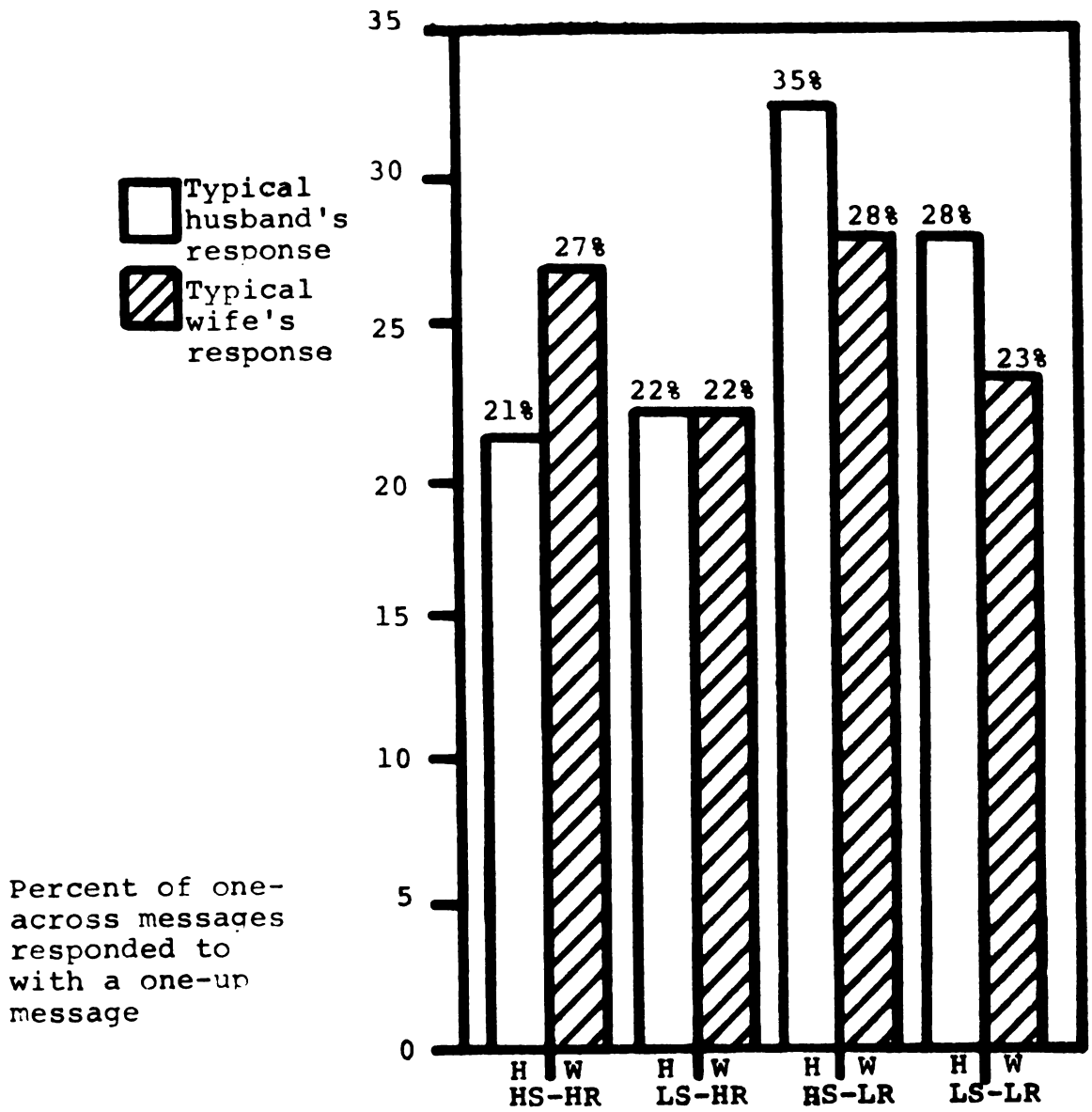
3. Husbands in the flexible couples also asserted demands for interaction control after their wives had transmitted a one-down, submissive message more often than the men in the high rigidity couples. The unstable, flexible

Graph 5. Differences in the way husbands and wives challenged their spouses' demand for control by responding with a one-up message.*



* There were significant differences in these percentages for the husbands only with the groups ordered in the following way: (LS-LR = HS-LR)>HS-HR>LS-HR.

Graph 6. Differences in the way the husbands and wives asserted interaction control after their spouses had transmitted a neutral, one-across message.*



* Here too, there were only significant differences in these percentages for the husbands with the groups ordered in the following way: HS-LR > LS-LR > (LS-HR = HS-HR).

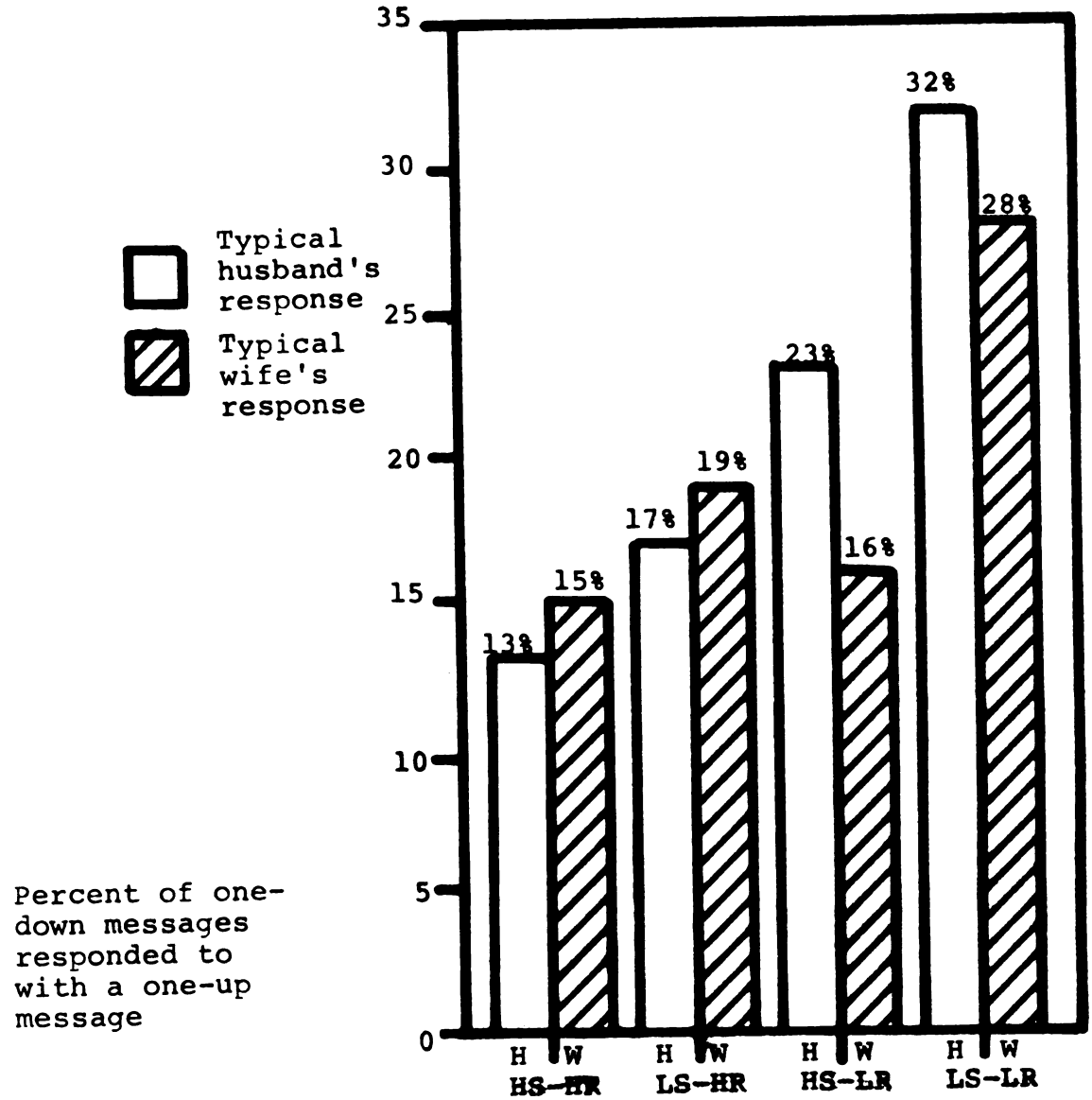
husbands demanded control after a submission even more often than did the stable, flexible husbands (Table 30). The latter finding was also true for the women, as the unstable, flexible wives demanded control after a submissive message from their husband more often than any of the wives in the other three groups (Table 34). These percentages are shown in Graph 7.

4. Husbands in the flexible couples also transmitted a submissive message after their wives had just made a submissive, one-down statement more often than the husbands in the rigid groups. Here, too, the unstable, flexible husbands did so more than those in the stable, flexible dyads.

The wives in the flexible groups also responded with a submissive message after such a statement had been made by their husbands more often than the wives in the rigid couples. But wives in the rigid, stable dyads responded submissively to a submissive message more often than the women in the rigid, unstable couples. These percentages are displayed in Graph 8.

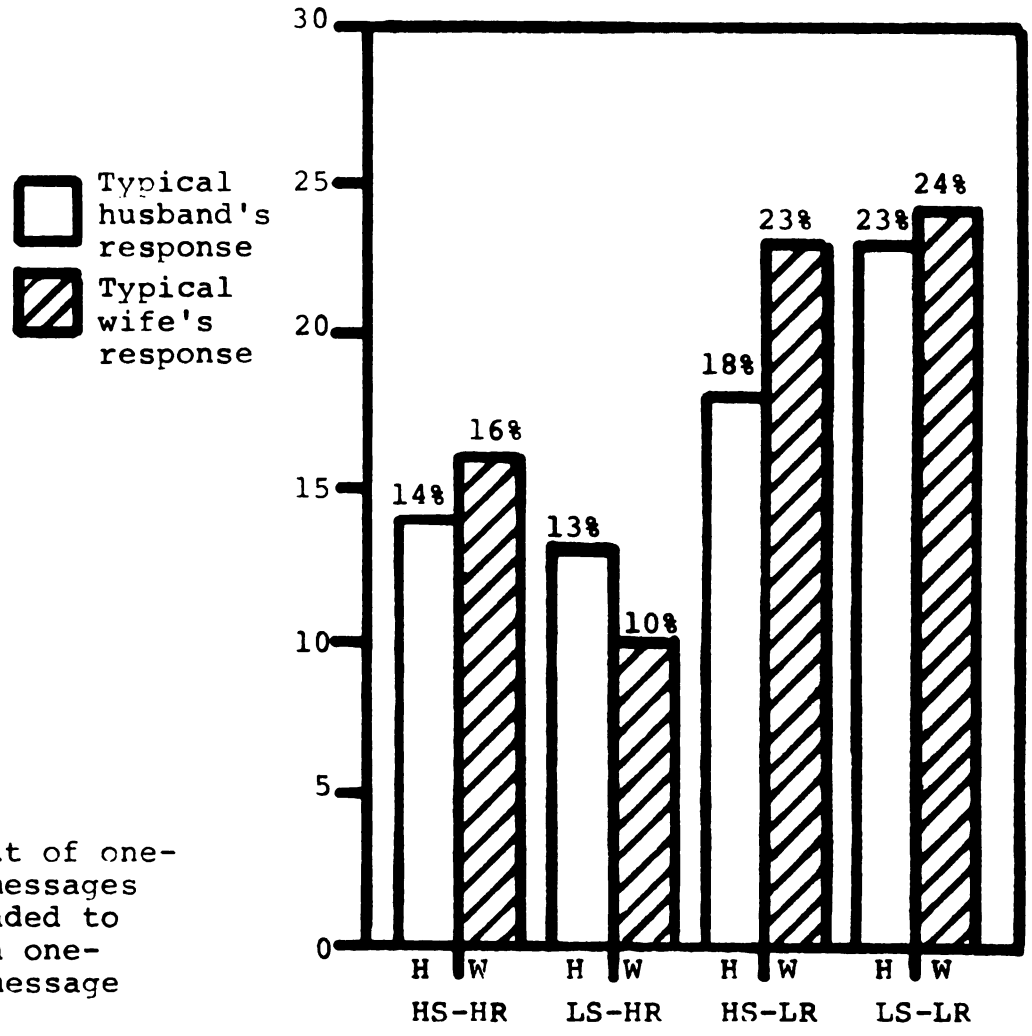
5. Both the husbands and the wives in the more rigid couples answered their spouses' one-down message with a non-demanding one-across statement more often than their more flexible counterparts. Furthermore, both the husbands and wives in the stable, flexible couples responded in this manner more often than those in the unstable, flexible dyads (Graph 9).

Graph 7. Differences in the way husbands and wives asserted interaction control after their spouses had transmitted a submissive, one-down message.*



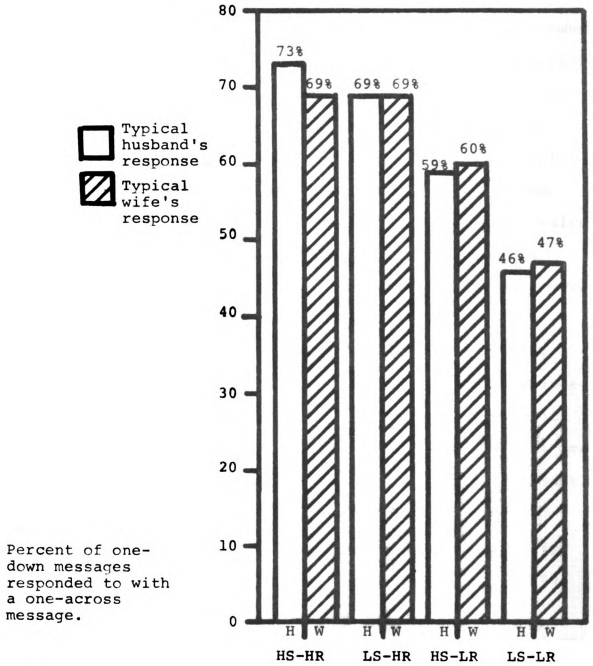
* There were significant differences in their percentages for both the husbands and wives. The ordering of the groups of husbands was LS-LR > HS-LR > (LS-HR = HS-HR), and the ordering of the wives was LS-LR > (LS-HR = HS-LR = HS-HR).

Graph 8. Differences in the way husbands and wives responded submissively after their spouses had transmitted a submissive, one-down message.*



* There were again significant differences in these percentages for both the husbands and wives. The ordering of the groups of husbands was LS-LR>HS-LR>(HS-HR = LS-HR), and the ordering for the wives was (LS-LR = HS-LR)>HS-HR>LS-HR.

Graph 9. Differences in the way husbands and wives responded in a non-demanding fashion after their spouses had transmitted a submissive, one-down message.*



* Here too, there were significant differences in these percentages for both the husbands and wives with the pattern of these differences being the same for both. The ordering for the groups was as follows: (HS-HR = LS-HR) > HS-LR > LS-LR.

Summary of Chapter III

The major findings of this exploratory analysis of transactional communication patterns will be summarized in two parts. The first concerns the differences found between stable and unstable dyads, and the second focuses on differences between rigid and flexible couples. In both parts, the hypothesized relations with that transactional characteristic are first reviewed and then other significant findings are listed. Table 35 shows the results of the predicted differences between the stable and unstable pairs and Table 36 summarizes the findings for the rigid and flexible couples. Before turning to these findings, however, two important results should be emphasized.

First, the two proposed dimensions of stability-instability and rigidity-flexibility were found to be independent measures ($r = .02$) of transactional communication patterns. This is not to state unequivocally that they are valid transactional dimensions, but rather: (a) to assert that the data substantiate the conceptualization of independence; and (b) to emphasize that empirical support was found for the existence and identity of these dimensions, thereby implying some degree of face validity.

Second, neither of these dimensions was related to the demographic information collected (Table 3). This, too is considered to be positive evidence for the face validity of these dimensions as relational communication concepts

since these scores were not compounded by demographic characteristics.

Stability-Instability

As can be seen in Table 35, only three of the 10 hypothesized measures significantly differentiated the stable and unstable couples. The stable couples had more of their interaction coded as transitory and reported being more satisfied with their interspousal communication than did the unstable couples. The unstable dyads, on the other hand, more often reported the marital relationship as that which they liked most about their marriage. Correlational evidence was found for two other hypotheses. The proportion of neutralized symmetrical transacts was negatively and the number of support statements transmitted was positively related to the dyad's scores on the stability dimension. Both of these correlations were low, however, and represent only 9.6 and 10.8 percent, respectively, of common variance with the pair's stability score.

TABLE 35.--Summary of the findings on the hypothesized relations with stability.

A. The stable couples were predicted to have a larger score than the unstable on the following measures:		
	Hypothesis	Findings
I, 1a.	Proportion of neutralized symmetrical configurations (→→).	Not substantiated ($F<1.00$); slight negative correlation ($r = 0.31$, $p = <.05$).

TABLE 35.--Continued.

I, 1b.	Length of long sequences observed.	No evidence of relation ($F<1.00$).
I, 1c.	Proportion of transitory configurations.	Significant difference between four groups ($F = 6.93$, $p = <.05$; $r = .54$, $p = <.01$); couples ranked in following order (HS-HR) > (HS-LR = LS-HR) > (LS-LR).
II, 1a.	Individual's marital satisfaction score.	No evidence of relation ($F<1.00$).
II, 1b.	Stating marriage relationship as liked most about one's marriage.	Significant difference ($X^2 = 4.21$, $p = <.05$) but in opposite direction: unstable more than stable couples mentioned more often as most liked.
II, 1c.	Dyad's communication satisfaction score.	Not substantiated ($F = 2.17$).
II, 1d.	Dyad's summed score of communication satisfaction scales.	Significant difference ($F = 7.09$, $p = <.01$; $r = .40$, $p = <.01$).
III, 2.	Proportion of support statements transmitted.	Not substantiated ($F = 1.44$); slight positive correlation ($r = .33$, $p = <.05$).

B. The unstable couples were predicted to have a larger score than the stable couples on the following measures:

	Hypothesis	Findings
I, 2a.	Number of different types of long sequences.	No evidence of relation ($F<1.00$).
I, 2b.	Proportion of competitive symmetrical configurations (↑↑).	No evidence of relation ($F<1.00$; $r = .03$).

The stable and unstable dyads were found to be significantly different on five other measures. These five findings are listed below. The first three concern differences in the self-report and conversational data, the fourth difference was observed in the transactional profiles, and the last difference found was in the typical wife's response patterns.

1. The stable couples had a larger number of topics discussed frequently in their conversations than did the unstable couples ($F = 5.17$, $p = <.05$).

2. The stable couples reported being more satisfied with their interspousal communication than did the unstable couples ($F = 7.99$, $p = <.01$; $r = .29$, $p = <.05$).

3. The stable couples manifested more interaction in their discussions as they had more transacts coded but did not talk any longer than the unstable couples ($F = 7.03$, $p = <.05$; $r = .45$, $p = <.01$).

4. The unstable couples had proportionately more complementary transacts coded in their discussions than the stable couples ($F = 4.17$, $p = <.05$; $r = -.19$).

5. Wives in the unstable couples were more likely to demand control by asserting a one-up message after their husbands had transmitted a submissive, one-down message than were wives in the stable couples ($F = 4.33$, $p = <.05$; $r = .20$).

The couple's stability score was also correlated

positively with the number of successful talkovers ($r = .36$, $p = <.02$), the number of unsuccessful talkovers ($r = .42$, $p = <.01$), and negatively with the proportion of the dyad's interaction which was symmetrical in nature ($r = -.44$, $p = <.01$). These correlations are low to moderate and represent 12.9, 17.6 and 18.4 percent of common variance with scores on the stability-instability dimension of transactional communication patterns.

Rigidity-Flexibility

Only two of the ten hypothesized differences between the rigid and flexible couples were substantiated. The flexible couples had a larger proportion of their interaction coded as complementary and had more competitive symmetrical transacts observed in their discussions than did the rigid couples (Table 36).

TABLE 36.--Summary of the findings on the hypothesized relations with rigidity.

A. The rigid couples were predicted to have a larger score than the flexible couples on the following measures:

	Hypothesis	Findings
I, 3a.	Number of long sequences observed.	No evidence of relation ($F<1.00$).
I, 3b.	Proportion of complementary configurations.	Significant difference ($F = 19.75$, $p = <.001$) but in opposite direction; flexible couples had a larger proportion than rigid couples: couples were ranked in following order. (LS-LR) > (HS-LR) > (LS-HR = HS-HR).

TABLE 36.--Continued.

II, 2e.	Length of marriage in years.	No evidence of relation ($F<1.00$, $r = .01$).
II, 2d.	Number of topics discussed once a month or less.	Trend ($F = 3.99$, $p = <.10$) but in opposite direction, with flexible couples having more topics discussed infrequently; couples ranked as follows, (LS-LR)> (HS-LR = LS-HR = HS-HR).

B. The flexible couples were predicted to have larger scores than the rigid couples on the following measures:

	Hypothesis	Findings
I, 4a.	Proportion of competitive symmetrical configurations (↑↑).	Substantiated ($F = 10.38$, $p = <.01$; $r = -.59$, $p = <.01$).
I, 4b.	Number of different types of long sequences observed.	No evidence of relation ($F< 1.00$).
II, 2a.	Amount of time spent talking with spouse.	No evidence of relation ($F< 1.00$).
II, 2b.	Person's marital satisfaction scores.	Not substantiated ($F = 2.25$).
II, 2c.	Dyad's communication score.	No evidence of relation ($F< 1.00$).
III, 1.	Proportion of successful talkovers.	Not substantiated ($F = 1.47$; $r = -.22$).
III, 2.	Proportion of support statements transmitted.	No evidence of relation ($F< 1.00$; $r = .13$).

The exploratory hypotheses did not tap the possible usefulness of this rigidity-flexibility measure, as couples' scores on this dimension differentiated their scores on

several other measures. These other findings listed below are grouped according to the type of dependent variable measured.

Self-report Data:

1. Members of the rigid couples agreed on their reported levels of marital satisfaction more often than the flexible dyads' members. ($X^2 = 4.28$, $p = <.05$).

2. Wives in the rigid couples were more accurate (i.e. displayed more understanding) in their predictions of their husbands' reported level of marital satisfaction ($X^2 = 4.28$, $p <.05$).

Individual Profiles:

3. Husbands in the flexible couples transmitted more one-up messages than did husbands in the rigid dyads ($F = 23.82$, $p = <.001$; $r = -.65$, $p = <.01$).

4. Husbands in the rigid couples transmitted more neutralizing, one-across messages than did husbands in the flexible pairs ($F = 15.20$, $p = <.001$; $r = .64$, $p = <.01$).

5. Wives in the rigid parriage pairs transmitted more neutralizing one-across messages than did their more flexible counterparts ($F = 9.64$, $p = <.01$; $r = .53$, $p = <.01$).

6. There was a tendency for wives in the flexible couples to transmit more one-down submissive messages than wives in the rigid couples ($F = 3.93$, $p = <.10$; $r = -.26$, $p = <.10$).

Dyad Profiles:

7. The flexible couples had more complementary transacts (↑↓) observed in their discussions where the husband was one-up and the wife was one-down than did the rigid marriage partners ($F = 19.20$, $p = <.001$; $r = -.58$, $p = <.01$). All four groups differed from each other on this measure with the couples ranked as follows: (LS-LR) > (HS-LR) > (LS-HR) > (HS-HR).

8. The flexible couples had more submissive symmetrical transacts (↓↓) coded in their discussions than did the rigid couples ($F = 16.17$, $p = <.001$; $r = -.57$, $p = <.01$).

9. The rigid couples had more neutralized symmetrical transacts (→→) coded in their discussions than did the flexible dyads ($F = 12.79$, $p = <.01$; $r = .55$, $p = <.01$). Stability scores further differentiated the marriage pairs with the couples ranked as follows: (LS-HR)> (HS-HR) > (HS-LR = LS-LR).

10. The rigid couples had more transitory configurations observed in their interaction than the flexible couples ($F = 5.27$, $p = <.05$; $r = .41$, $p = <.01$). Stability scores were also related to the proportion of transitory units coded and the couples were ranked as follows: (HS-HR) > (HS-LR = LS-HR) > (LS-LR).

11. The rigid couples had more transitory units (↓→) coded where the husband was one-down and the wife was one-across than did the flexible couples ($F = 9.24$, $p = <.01$; $r = .31$, $p = <.05$).

12. The flexible couples, however, had more transitory units (↑→) observed in their interactions where the husbands were one-up and the wives were one-across ($F = 5.73$, $p = <.05$; $r = -.29$, $p = <.05$). The flexible couples were further differentiated by their stability scores with the couples ranked as follows: (HS-LR) > (LS-LR) > (HS-HR = LS-HR).

Long Sequence Data:

13. Considering only those couples in the sample who exhibited a long sequence, the rigid dyads had a greater proportion of the interaction contained within long sequences than the flexible couples ($F = 4.96$, $p = <.05$). However, this main effect was due to the unstable, rigid pairs, as the couples were ranked in the following manner: (LS-HR) > (HS-HR = HS-LR = LS-LR).

14. Again, considering only those 37 couples who sustained a long sequence, the flexible couples had more long sequences of a complementary nature and fewer of a symmetrical nature than the rigid couples ($X^2 = 8.97$, $p = <.02$).

Husband's typical response profiles:

15. The flexible husbands challenged their wives' assertions of control more often than husbands in the rigid dyads, as they issued more one-up responses to their wives' preceding one-up messages. ($F = 6.54$, $p = <.05$; $r = 0.47$, $p = <.01$). The stability dimension further differentiated

the husbands with the groups ranked as follows: (LS-LR = HS-LR) > (HS-HR) > (LS-HR).

16. There was a tendency for the rigid husbands to respond with a neutralizing or leveling one-across message to their wives' demand for interaction control more often than husbands in the flexible groups ($F = 3.91$, $p = <.10$; $r = .48$, $p = <.01$).

17. Husbands in the flexible couples were more likely to respond to their wives' neutral one-across message with a demand for control than were husbands in the rigid dyads. ($F = 9.29$, $p = <.01$; $r = -.36$, $p = <.02$). Stability scores further differentiated the flexible husbands with the couples ranked as follows: (HS-LR) > (LS-LR) > (LS-HR = HS-HR).

18. Husbands in the flexible couples were also more likely to demand control by responding with a one-up message after their wives had transmitted a submissive one-down statement than were husbands in the rigid dyads ($F = 11.33$, $p = <.01$; $r = -.56$, $p = <.01$). Here too, stability scores further differentiated the flexible husbands with the couples ranked as follows: (LS-LR) > (HS-LR) > (LS-HR = HS-HR).

19. Husbands in the flexible couples were more likely to respond submissively to their wives' one-down submissive messages than were husbands in the rigid dyads ($F = 4.30$, $p = <.05$; $r = 0.24$, $p = <.10$). Stability scores

again differentiated the flexible groups with the groups ranked as follows: (LS-LR) > (HS-LR) > (HS-HR = LS-HR).

20. Husbands in the rigid dyads, however, were more likely to issue a non-demanding one-across message to their wives' preceding submissive one-down message than were husbands in the flexible couples ($F = 13.43$, $p < .01$; $r = .53$, $p = < .01$). Stability scores further differentiated the flexible husbands with the groups ranked as follows: (HS-HR = LS-HR) > (HS-LR) > (LS-LR).

Wives' typical response profiles:

21. Wives in the rigid couples were more likely to respond with a non-demanding statement to their husband's one-down submissive message than were wives in the flexible couples ($F = 9.24$, $p = < .01$; $r = .49$, $p = < .01$). Stability scores further differentiated the flexible wives with the groups ranked as follows: (HS-HR = LS-HR) > (HS-LR)> (LS-LR). This was exactly the same pattern found in the husbands' responses.

22. Wives in the flexible dyads however, were more likely to issue a submissive response to their husbands' preceding one-down submissive messages than were wives in the rigid couples ($F = 7.79$, $p = < .01$; $r = -.47$, $p = < .01$). Stability scores further differentiated the rigid couples with the groups ranked in the following manner: (HS-LR = LS-LR) > (HS-HR) > (LS-HR). This same main effect was also observed in the husbands' response profiles.

CHAPTER IV

SUMMARY AND IMPLICATIONS

The results of this exploratory study are encouraging and represent a first step toward the development of a theory of communication relationships based on the transactional communication patterns observed within verbal messages. The data substantiate the claim that transactional patterns can be discerned and that these differences make a difference. However, the extent of these differences has only been tapped. Like most exploratory studies, this analysis raised considerably more questions than it answered. Several potential avenues of empirical investigation and theoretical speculation are implicit and explicit within these findings. The purpose of this chapter is to discuss the strengths and weakness of this study and to suggest fertile directions for future research. First, a description of the four types of couples studied will be presented. Secondly, the Ericson and Rogers' (1973) transactional coding scheme will be evaluated. Finally, specific propositions and suggestions for subsequent studies will be stated.

Conceptual Implications

The intent of this exploratory study was to describe transactional communication patterns within normal marital dyads. The couple's relationships as manifested through their verbal interchanges were the focus of analysis. The research emphasis was on classifying the married partners' structural communication patterns and then identifying other differences between these transactional types. To this end, the results of this study are encouraging. Differences in communication transactional patterns which make empirical differences were found. However, from a theoretical standpoint, where one is attempting to establish a set of causal relations, the shortcomings of this approach are readily apparent.

This study was conceptually inductive and pretheoretic. Therefore, a set of covariations and not causal explanations have been reported. Future studies should concentrate on the dyad's relations to its environment. These subsequent studies of transactional communication should describe the situational and informational inputs to, and consequent outputs from, the dyadic system. By focusing on environmental inputs and outputs concommitantly with a thorough relational description, more general causal relations may be ascertained. In other words, if other environmental information (like degree of indebtedness, condition of children, visits to marriage counselor, number of

extramarital sexual relations, family leisure time activity, etc.) were collected simultaneously with the transactional data, a stronger set of predictive and potentially explanatory hypotheses could be created. This set of hypotheses would aid both the theoretician and the practitioner in studying marital dyads in particular, and interpersonal communication in general. To help direct these future studies, the transactional covariations established in this analysis will be reviewed.

The notion of a "fluid" relational pattern suggested by Sluzki and Beavin (1965) represented the conceptual basis of this analysis. They state that a fluid communication pattern would be one where the marriage partners fluctuate interaction control in an adaptive, functional manner. The fluidity notion indicated two dimensions for classifying transactional communication patterns within a marital dyad, rigidity-flexibility and stability-instability. The rigidity aspect was defined in terms of the degrees of randomness observed in the couples' use of the nine configurations used in Ericson and Rogers' (1973) transactional coding scheme. It was reasoned that this measure would tap the amount of alternation in who controls the couples' interactions. The stability dimension centered on the consistency with which the couples were observed in the three major structural types of configurations. This measure was intended to tap the couples' own norms concerning the

predictability and appropriateness with which different control maneuvers were transmitted. On the basis of these two transactional dimensions, the couples were classified into four groups for analysis: stable, rigid; unstable, rigid; stable, flexible; and unstable, flexible.

These dimensions were found to be independent and to successfully differentiate the couples' scores on a variety of self-report information and other transactional data. The degree of stability observed in the couples' verbal interchanges was positively related to the degree of satisfaction with their interspousal communication reported by the dyads' members. The rigidity dimension appears to covary with the degree of marital satisfaction reported by the respondents. This latter hypothesis is tentative, however, because of the imprecision with which marital satisfaction was measured.

The implied independence of these two satisfaction evaluations, at first glance, may appear surprising. A moment's reflection, however, will suggest that an individual can be relatively satisfied with how he communicates with his spouse without necessarily being satisfied with other (like sex, affection, child care, degree of indebtedness, condition of home, future goals, etc.) dimensions of his marriage. In other words, an individual could be relatively satisfied with one of the means through which marital and personal goals are reached without being satisfied with the level of attainment achieved.

In addition, an individual's satisfaction with any given relationship is partly a function of the relationship's characteristics and partly determined by comparison judgements with other similar relationships. In other words, the degree of satisfaction reported by an individual with his marriage would be influenced by factors within the marriage as well as factors external to the marital relationship. Even though an individual might be relatively dissatisfied with his interspousal communication, he could still be relatively satisfied with his marriage per se because he perceives it or is told to perceive it by significant others as good or better than other marriages involving those with whom he associates and compares himself. Therefore, these two satisfaction evaluations could well be independent assessments, as they may be based on different information. This is not to imply that these measures won't interact, but rather to emphasize that by defining them as independent, based on different information, the relative effects of each can be more accurately determined and measured.

If the transactional dimensions of rigidity and stability do covary with the reported levels of marital and communication satisfaction, respectively, then other differences between these four groups might be suggestive of how these evaluations are determined. The following few pages will review the significant relations and descriptive characteristics observed between the four relational groups.

Stable, Rigid Couples

The husbands and wives classified in the stable, rigid group reported discussing more topics frequently and fewer topics infrequently in their typical conversations than did the unstable couples. Along with the stable, flexible couples, these pairs reported the highest level of satisfaction with their interspousal communication. While 70% of these dyads reported being "very satisfied" with their marriage, only 55% of the stable, rigid individuals stated that the marital relationship was the most liked and 63% reported relational and/or personal aspects as the least liked part of their marriage. Comparing these percentages to Gurin et al. (1960), the "most liked" data suggests that these couples are generally satisfied with their marriage, while the "least liked" responses indicate a general level of marital dissatisfaction.

Even though the majority of these individuals felt that some part of their marital relation was the least liked aspect of their marriage, they understood each other better than the other four groups. All the wives and 90% of the husbands in the stable, rigid dyads accurately predicted their spouses' reported level of marital satisfaction.

Husbands in the stable, rigid couples transmitted fewer one-up and more non-accepting, non-demanding one-across control maneuvers than the flexible groups of husbands. They also challenged their wives' one-up control maneuvers and

responded with one-up movements to their wives' one-down statements less than the flexible husbands. Of the four types of husbands, the stable, rigid were the most likely to respond submissively to their wives' non-demanding statements. They were the only husbands who tended to respond submissively more often than their wives to one-across statements. Lastly, when their wives issued a submissive message, they responded with a neutralizing, non-demanding control movement more often than the flexible husbands.

The wives in the stable, rigid group were the only ones to issue significantly more one-up statements than their husbands. These wives transmitted fewer submissive, one-down messages than the flexible groups of wives. Furthermore, this was the only group in which there was a tendency for the wife to challenge her husband's demands for interaction control more often than he challenged hers. When their husbands communicated a submissive, one-down message, these wives responded with a non-demanding, one-across statement more often than the flexible groups of wives. Lastly, the wives in the stable, rigid pairs were, relatively speaking, in a one-up position to their husbands more often than their husbands were in a one-up position to them.

Compared to the other types of couples, these dyads exhibited the highest proportion of transitory and the

lowest proportion of complementary transacts. Like the stable, flexible couples, the stable, rigid couples exhibited no competitive symmetrical long sequences. This type of long sequence would represent extended control struggles or relational arguments over who has the right to define the dyad's relationship. They were the only couples to have more complementary transacts where the wife was one-up than the reverse configuration (i.e. more (↓↑) than (↑↓) were observed). Their single most frequent transactional unit was where the husband was one-down and the wife was one-across (↓→). They were coded in neutralized symmetrical configurations more often than the flexible couples. These two types of transacts (i.e. (↓→) and (→→)) accounted for just under 40% of the typical stable, rigid dyad's transactional profile.

The transactional communication pattern of the stable, rigid couples is one where the wife controls the interspousal communication. The rigid dyads used proportionately fewer one-up control movements than the flexible dyads. Although there are occasional status struggles, these individuals are not likely to challenge each other's one-up messages. The interaction in the rigid couples appears to be more smooth than the interaction in the flexible couples. By smooth is meant that there are fewer one-up to one-down and one-down to one-up movements than in the flexible dyads. The rigid couples tend to move

from one-up to one-across, a neutralizing non-accepting maneuver, or from one-down to one-across, a non-demanding, less aggressive type of control movement.

Unstable, Rigid Couples

The dyads classified in the unstable, rigid group spent the longest time discussing the four topics and had the second largest number of silences observed in their discussions. However, these couples exhibited the least amount of interaction of the four groups as they had the fewest number of transacts coded in their interchanges (mean = 167). Of the couples who sustained a long sequence, the unstable, rigid group had the largest percentage of their discussions contained within these frozen interaction patterns. These results suggest a less dynamic interactional pattern characterized by longer individual messages with fewer verbal exchanges between the spouses than in the other groups. Moreover, these dyads reported less satisfaction with their interspousal communication than did the stable couples.

Nevertheless, these couples appear to understand each other fairly well as 75% of the couples agreed on their reported marital satisfaction levels and 67% of the unstable, rigid members accurately predicted their spouses' reported level. Also, the unstable, rigid dyads appear relatively satisfied with their marriage as: (a) 58% of the couples reported being "very satisfied"; (b) 67% of these husbands

and wives stated the marital relation was the most liked; and (c) 70% reported situational aspects as the least liked aspect of their marriage. Following Gurin et al. (1960), this pattern of most and least liked aspects suggests that the unstable, rigid couples are relatively happy and satisfied with their marriages.

The husbands in the unstable, rigid dyads had a larger proportion of neutralizing, one-across and a smaller proportion of one-up control maneuvers observed in their messages than the flexible husbands. These men challenged their wives' one-up statements by responding with a one-up movement less than any other group of husbands. In addition, these men were the most likely to attempt to neutralize their wives' one-up maneuvers and to respond in a non-demanding manner to their wives' preceding one-across movements. Finally, these husbands were the only ones to respond respond with a neutralizing statement to their wives' one-up messages more than the wives responded in this way to theirs.

The wives in the unstable, rigid dyads transmitted more one-across and fewer one-down statements than the wives in the flexible couples. They responded submissively to their husbands' one-down movements less than any other group of wives. These wives were also more likely than the flexible wives to respond in a non-demanding manner to their husbands' one-down statements.

When compared to the flexible couples, the unstable,

rigid dyads had: (a) fewer submissive symmetrical transacts; (b) fewer competitive symmetrical transacts; and (c) fewer transitory transacts where the husband was one-up. The neutralized symmetrical transact (→→) was the single most frequently observed and these dyads were in this configuration more than any other group. The transitory unit where the husband is one-down was their second most frequently coded transact and these two configurations (i.e. (→→) and (↓→) represented over 42% of their transactional profile.

Stable, Flexible Couples

These dyads should represent the fluid transactional pattern suggested by Sluzki and Beavin (1965). As conceived and defined, a stable, flexible communication structure attempted to operationalize a functionally adaptive, alternating relational pattern. This group, therefore, was the center of interest in this exploratory study.

These dyads had the largest number of transacts coded (mean = 305) and the lowest average number of silences observed in their verbal interchanges. They exhibited the most interaction in their discussion, therefore, since all groups spent statistically the same length of time discussing the four assigned topics.

As did the stable, rigid couples, the stable, flexible dyads reported: (a) more satisfaction with their interspousal communication; and (b) more topics discussed

frequently in their typical conversations that did the unstable groups. Unlike the stable, rigid group, however, only 54% of these couples: (a) reported being "very satisfied"with their marriage; (b) agreed on their reported levels of marital satisfaction; and (c) accurately predicted their spouse's reported satisfaction level. Even though these pairs reported that they were satisfied with their ability to talk things over, they displayed less agreement and understanding of their partners' evaluations of the marriage than did the rigid couples. Only the unstable, flexible couples were lower on these measures of agreement and understanding.

The husbands and wives in the stable, flexible group stated less than any other group that relational aspects were the most liked (28%) and the least liked (20%) of their marriage. Comparing the above findings to Gurin et al.'s (1960) results, the first percentage suggests that these couples are not very happy and the second one implies that they are relatively happy with their marriage. These low percentages suggest that relationship concerns are not as salient or relevant to the stable, flexible couples as they are to the other dyads. Whether this possible lack of saliency is due to some dissatisfaction with their marriage or to relatively more important situational characteristics because their relationship is fairly secure is yet to be empirically determined.

The ability to "talk things out" can potentially

solve relational ills, as well as cause problems within a couple. Assuming that a couple's channels of communication are relatively open, then they are more apt to be used to relieve tensions and stresses as well as share joys and happiness. The mere possibility that things can be talked out assures that they will be talked out. Because interspousal communication is satisfactorily perceived, a greater number of problem areas or potential problem areas may be discussed. Feeling relatively able to communicate, the individuals may be more apt to discuss or point out issues which are either troublesome or could become troublesome to their relationship which can't be solved by talking them over. Put another way, good interspousal communication may be a necessary but not a sufficient condition for a satisfactory marriage. The capacity and willingness to discuss issues may imply to the individuals that certain things need to be discussed, and thereby cue them to believe that something in their marital relationship is not as satisfactory as others. Furthermore, just "talking things out" may increase the individual's awareness of personal and/or relational problems that cannot be solved or alleviated by simply talking about them. This speculative interpretation about the possible detrimental effects of relatively satisfying dyadic communication patterns need to be empirically tested.

The husbands in the stable, flexible dyads

transmitted more one-up and fewer one-across control maneuvers than the husbands in the rigid couples. Their wives also transmitted fewer one-across, neutralizing messages, but these women issued more one-down control maneuvers than the wives in the rigid dyads. This was the only group where the husband transmitted significantly more one-up control movements than the wife. Finally, there were tendencies in this group only for the husband to respond with a one-up statement after his wife had either submitted control or had issued a non-demanding message, more than she responded in this way to his one-down and one-across control movements.

The typical responses of the husbands and wives to their spouses' preceding statements revealed several differences from the rigid couples. Husbands in the flexible dyads were more likely to: (a) challenge their wives' movements toward control; (b) respond submissively to their wives' one-down movements; (c) move toward interaction control after their wives had issued a submissive message; and (d) move toward interaction control after their wives had transmitted a neutral one-across statement. Both the husbands and wives in the stable, flexible couples were less likely to respond in a non-demanding manner to their spouses' preceding one-down movements than were the individuals in the rigid couples. Like their husbands, the wives in the stable, flexible dyads were more apt to respond submissively to their spouses' one-down movements than were the wives in

the rigid couples. When the stable, flexible couples sustain a long sequence, the chances are 9 in 10 that it will be transitory and only 1 in 50 that it will be symmetrical.

The transactional profiles of the stable, flexible dyads reveal that they had the second largest proportion of transitory and complementary units coded in their discussions. They were in a neutralized symmetrical configuration less than the rigid couples and were the only group in which this transact (→→) was not one of the two most frequently observed configurations. The transitory configuration with the husband one-up was their second most frequently observed configuration. These dyads had the largest proportion of these transitory units observed in their discussions. Their most frequently observed configuration was also transitory with the wife one-down. These two most frequently observed transitory units (i.e. (→↓) and (↑→) represented only 32% of their profile. Considering only those transacts which have structural inequalities (transitory and complementary), the husband was, relatively speaking, in a one-up position to his wife more often than she was to him. The reverse situation was observed in the rigid couples.*

---

*The proportional sum of the following transacts was larger in the flexible couples (↑↓), (↑→) and (→↓) than the sum of the reverse configurations. In the rigid couples, however, the sum of the transacts where the wife is, relatively speaking, one-up was larger, (i.e. sum of (↓↑), (→↑) and (↓→) was greater than the sum of (↑↓), (↑→), and (→↓) in the rigid couples).

The transactional pattern of the stable, flexible couples was one where the husband asserted and maintained interaction control more often than the wife. Thus, the pattern observed in the stable, flexible dyads reflects the more traditional structure described by Heiss (1962). This more traditional pattern is described as one where "the male takes the lead by contributing the major share of ideas, and the female does her part by reacting to his suggestions, by smoothing over the rough spots, etc." (Heiss, 1962, p. 197). The reverse was observed in the rigid couples where the wife controlled the interactional flow and the husband appeared to smooth out their conversation.

When compared to the rigid dyads' profiles, the flexible couples seem to exhibit a less smooth interactional pattern. More one-up to one-down and one-down to one-up movements were observed in the flexible than in the rigid couples' discussions. The overall impression from the flexible transactional profiles is one of more aggressive, one-up control assertions than is observed in the rigid dyads' transcripts. Further, this relatively more assertive pattern is related to lower amounts of interspousal agreement and understanding as measured.

Unstable, Flexible Couples

Compared to the other four groups, the unstable, flexible dyads reported: (a) the largest number of topics

discussed infrequently; and (b) the lowest level of satisfaction with their interspousal communication. Just 30% of these dyads reported being "very satisfied" with their marriage and only 40% of these husbands and wives agreed on their reported levels of marital satisfaction. This was the only group where less than half the wives accurately predicted their husbands' reported marital satisfaction levels and where the husbands were slightly more accurate than the wives. This group ranked the lowest on these measures of agreement and understanding.

Nevertheless, 61% of the persons in the unstable, flexible group stated relational aspects as the most liked part of their marriage. But 53% also reported relational and or personal conditions as the least liked aspect of their marriage. Like the stable, rigid couples, therefore, there appears to be some ambiguity about what is most valued by these individuals in their particular marital situation. Perhaps this is best exemplified by one respondent's answers to these most and least liked questions. He stated that "confinement and lack of security" were the most liked and that "confinement and lack of personal freedom" were the least liked aspects of his marriage.

Husbands and wives in the unstable, flexible group transmitted more one-up and fewer one-across control maneuvers than the individuals in the rigid groups. The unstable, flexible wives also made more one-down, submissive

control movements than did the wives in the rigid couples.

The typical unstable, flexible husband's response pattern shows that he is more likely to: (a) challenge his wife's one-up movements; and (b) move toward interaction control after a neutralizing message by his wife than are the husbands in the rigid couples. More than any other group of men, the unstable, flexible husbands: (a) issued one-up responses to their wives' submissive, one-down messages; (b) responded submissively to their wives' one-down control movements; and (c) were the least likely to respond in a non-demanding, one-across manner to their wives' one-down movement. This pattern of responses to the wives' messages gives the impression of more defensive and/or aggressive and punitive communication behavior by these husbands than is suggested in the patterns of the other groups of husbands.

The wives in the unstable, flexible couples also give the impression of taking advantage of their spouses' one-down position as they responded with: (a) more one-up demands for control and (b) fewer non-demanding, one-across movements to their husbands' submissions of control than did any other group of wives. However, like their husbands,these wives were more apt to respond with a one-down movement to a one-down statement than the wives in the rigid couples.

As a couple, the unstable, flexible dyads sustained

the fewest number of long sequences and had more complementary and fewer transitory long sequences than any other group. The lowest proportion of transitory and the highest proportion of complementary transacts were observed in these couples' verbal interchanges. Thirdly, their discussions contained the lowest proportion of transitory configurations where either member was one-down. This suggests that these individuals are less likely than the rigid couples to use the one-across control movement in a non-demanding manner. Finally, these dyads had the largest proportion of submissive symmetrical transacts coded in their verbal interchanges.

Comparison with Ericson (1972) and Rogers (1972) Data

This study attempted to isolate characteristics of normal marital dyads transactional communication patterns and then look at other behavioral differences between the couples. Ericson (1972) and Rogers (1972), on the other hand, used the transactional data as criterion variables rather than as predictor variables. Therefore, although all three of these studies are based on the same sample of respondents, the approaches utilized are not directly comparable. However, a brief review of their findings which might suggest other useful avenues of research will be reported in this section.

Ericson's (1972) research focuses on the relationships between individual dominance scores and social class

and the proportion of complementary and symmetrical transacts observed in the couples' verbal interchanges. His results showed no relationship between scores on the Edwards Personal Preference Schedule (1959) and the couples transactional communication patterns. He states that individual dominance scores as measured by the EPPS "do not predict relational communication behavior." (Ericson, 1972, p. 172)

The most consistent finding reported by Ericson was that lower-class respondents (measured by the husband's years of education) had a higher proportion of symmetrical and a lower proportion of complementary transacts observed in their discussions than did upper-class dyads. These findings directly contradict Mark's (1970). This contradiction can be primarily explained in terms of the inconsistency in Mark's definition of symmetry discussed in Chapter II.

A second relevant finding reported by Ericson was that couples classified as having high dominance discrepancy scores manifested more symmetrical transacts than couples who had more equivalent dominance scores. Thus Ericson's data, like the results reported here, suggest that symmetrical and not complementary configurations may be indicants of relational or personal strains within the system.

The deviation from randomness score suggested by Haley (1964) was used by Ericson to measure the degree of stability manifested in the couples' transactional patterns.

Stability was defined as the amount of consistency observed in the dyads' verbal interchanges. Ericson (1972), like the other authors discussed in Chapter II, considered the dimensions of rigidity and stability to be identical and used the terms interchangeably. Not only was his conceptualization of stability different from the one advocated here, but Ericson's operationalizations also are not comparable. He analysed only five transactional types and just three of the four topics discussed by the respondents. The five transactional types used to compute the deviation from randomness scores were complementary, transitory and the three symmetrical configurations.

Ericson reported that all couples were relatively consistent in their transactional patterns and that the respondents used fewer transactional configurations (i.e. manifested a narrower range of relational communication) in their discussions of Topic 3. In particular, significantly fewer complementary transacts were observed in the transcripts of Topic 3 than in the transcripts of Topics 2 and 4 (See Appendix B). The third discussion topic concerned the dyad's views and opinions on whether or not both the husband and wife should have independent careers. On the basis of his findings, Ericson suggests that the content of the conversation may affect the relational communication patterns manifested by the interactants. This possible interaction between content and relational

communication aspects was not studied here but should be a concern of future research.

Rogers (1972) focused on the relationship between perceived role discrepancies within the dyad and the couple's transactional communication behaviors. Role discrepancies were assumed to represent strains or stresses within the marriage. The role discrepancy measure was based on the difference between actual role performance and expected role behaviors reported by the dyad's members. The dyad's discrepancy score was the summed difference between the member's responses to Questions 14 and 15 in Appendix A. The former asked who in the marital dyad does do and the latter asked who should do the fifteen tasks listed. The same rigidity score used in this study was also used by Rogers. The measure of role discrepancy was unrelated to the couples' scores on the rigidity-flexibility dimension of communication patterns.

Couples classified in the low role discrepancy category reported: (a) spending more time together in conversation; (b) more marital satisfaction; (c) more topics discussed frequently; (d) more satisfaction with their interspousal communication; (e) had a higher proportion of support messages transmitted; and (f) had more unsuccessful talkovers observed in their verbal interchanges than the high discrepant dyads. These last four indices were positively correlated with the couples' stability scores as measured in this study.

Wives in the low-discrepant dyads transmitted fewer one-up statements than wives in the high discrepant couples. Further, a tendency was found for husbands in the low-discrepant couples to express more one-down submissive messages than the husbands in the high-discrepant classification. Comparing these findings reported by Rogers (1972) to the rigidity-flexibility differences found in this study, we find similar results, although the sex pattern is reversed. Wives in the flexible couples tended to transmit more one-down and husbands in the flexible dyads transmitted more one-up movements than their more rigid counterparts.

Role discrepancy scores were unrelated to the proportion of complementary transacts, but did differentiate the couples on the proportion of symmetrical and transitory configurations manifested in their verbal interchanges. The high-discrepant couples had more symmetrical and fewer transitory units coded than the low-discrepant dyads. Again, the implication is that symmetrical configurations are indicants of relational strains, while complementary units indicate relational agreement. Further, the high discrepant couples had fewer transitory units where the husband was one-down than the low-discrepant dyads. This latter finding also seems comparable to the distinctions between the rigid and flexible couples reported in this study. Here the more flexible dyads were in the transitory configurations with the husband one-down less than the rigid couples.

The similarities between the results reported by Rogers (1972) and the findings observed in this analysis suggest that the role discrepancy measure in combination with the transactional characteristics might predict several behaviors reported by the couples. In other words, the role discrepancy, rigidity and stability measures might collectively account for a larger percentage of the variance on several criterion variables than either could separately. If an increase in precision is the result, then both the theoretician and the practitioner will have been given a significant start in analyzing marital relationships. Such a study is presently being planned.

Evaluation of Transactional Coding Scheme

The transactional coding scheme of Ericson and Rogers (1973) used in this analysis has a bright future in the study of communication as a complex, transactional symbolic process. The promises and limitations of their procedures will be briefly discussed in this section. The emphasis here is on the intent of the coding scheme, what it can and cannot do, and how it might be used in future studies of transactional relationships.

The coding analysis was intended to provide a means of abstracting relational information from the verbalization of interactants by identifying the control implications of individual messages. It appears to have done so and with good levels of reliability (overall reliability

for the three digit code was 0.86). Ericson and Rogers used the Watzlawick et al. (1967) concepts of complementarity and symmetry as a conceptual base but extended these categories to include neutral, non-demanding, non-accepting messages. These latter types of messages were given a one-across control dimension. Transacts including a one-across message were labeled transitory. On the basis of the data analyzed in this study, the majority of relational communication is transitory. Whether this preponderance is the way people communicate or an artifact of their coding system remains to be empirically validated. However, these results are intuitively appealing for not all interpersonal messages are demands or submissions of control. Further studies, through precise sequential analysis with detailed content information, should look more explicitly at when those one-across messages are transmitted and what content they contain.

One-across messages are not non-control maneuvers. From the data analyzed, it is this author's impression that one-across messages have three relational functions depending upon the preceding statement. First, at times one-across movements appear to be less intense demands for interaction control, the difference between an instruction and an order. This possible function is exemplified by the configuration where the first party is one-down (↓→). At other times, one-across messages seem to indicate an

avoidance of control considerations from one or both of the interactants. Neutralized symmetrical (→→) long sequences best characterize this possible usage. Thirdly, one-across statements appear to be active neutralizing attempts of the other's demand for control. Instead of submitting definitional control to another or challenging his control assertion directly, one transmits a less assertive but still not submissive message. The transitory transact where the second party is one-across (↑→) specifies this third possible function of one-across messages. These three potential functions should be a central focus of future studies which should include a breakdown of who,when and with what symbols these possible functions are enacted.

To reiterate, the Ericson and Rogers' scheme was intended to focus on the relational information implicit within messages. In so doing, the codes are relatively weak in providing content information. The content categories (e.g. digits two and three) do not adequately describe the "what" of verbal messages and should not be used for traditional content analysis purposes. However, this is both a strength and weakness of the coding procedure.

The Ericson and Rogers' scheme is relatively "pure" in that it focuses directly on the verbal utterances only and does not attempt to include nonverbal behaviors, although laughing and silences can be coded within this scheme. This single focus is undoubtedly a major

contributor to the high levels of reliability obtained. Moreover, the codes provide communication researchers with a descriptive measure of relational patterns which then can be combined with nonverbal coding schemes to more completely describe transactional communication processes. By combining the information from the Ericson and Rogers' codes with a similar dynamic descriptive tool of nonverbal behavior, a thorough description of any given dyadic encounter could be ascertained.

Returning to the earlier criticism concerning the weakness of the content information, this results from the scheme's focus on relational information and is not a severe problem. The content information is not rich is itself. It is not very comprehensive as over one-third of all messages were coded as assertion-extension. Considerable information concerning the "what" of the messages is lost in this category. This weakness, however, is also easily circumvented and is not a damaging problem because of the richness of the relational information provided. Future researchers should adopt or create more refined and precise content codes to be used in conjunction with the relational information obtained.

One such content information scheme which could be used in combination with the relational information is provided by Miller, Nunnally, and Wackman (1971). These authors grouped couples into four categories depending upon

the disclosure potential and risk demonstrated in the verbal utterances. Miller et al. view the dyadic system as a complex adaptive one and are therefore conceptually consistent with the Ericson and Rogers' scheme. The joint classifications provided by a combination of these two coding procedures should provide a more thorough description of the interaction processes which would be useful in both theory construction and practical diagnostic applications.

Given that communication is an intricate, complex process, a single coding scheme should not be expected to provide us with information about all aspects of that process. Rather, several descriptive tools focusing on different aspects and levels of the process would be both more feasible and useful. The Ericson and Rogers scheme provides communication researchers with a useful descriptive measure of the relational aspects.

The approach to the study of communication taken here views communication as a transactional symbolic process (Miller and Steinberg, 1973). The aspects of the process to be described are, then, the transactional patterns and the verbal and nonverbal symbols transmitted. These two dimensions must be described in ways which allow for change. It is readily apparent that the transactional configurations obtained through the Ericson and Rogers' analysis allow for both immediate, short-run indices and long-run

measures of change. The control direction of each message is provided, literally permitting a blow-by-blow analysis of interpersonal messages. In Appendix D are some examples of the transactional graphs that can be created for a detailed, sequential display of the relational definitions implicit within messages. Longitudinal studies could compare and contrast these graphs to isolate and identify structural changes within the system over time. In conjunction with more refined content information, typical patterns for various topics and situations could be created.

A second crucial criteria for evaluating any scientific descriptive tool is its heuristic value or richness. Here, too, the Ericson and Rogers' scheme seems more than adequate. For one thing, transactional dimensions, like the aspects of rigidity and stability studied here, can be obtained. Another theoretical and methodological advantage is the distinction between relational control aspects and the affective or inclusion content of messages. The latter are most certainly content or "floor" control variables and not relational variables. By piecing out the relational information, more emphasis and precise measures of inclusion can be and should be created for a more complete description of a system's communication.

Transactional configurations may well be related to a variety of communication concepts. For instance, verbal aggression may be related to the proportion of

one-up messages transmitted by a given individual. Low self-esteem or lack of self-confidence may be demonstrated by an individual's tendency to submit to others. Ericson and Rogers' procedure can also be used with groups to give an indicant of the control atmosphere within the group. Leader and follower roles within various types of groups can be more accurately identified and isolated. For instance, the task leader would probably assert definitional control more often than other group members. Or the proportion of competitive symmetrical transacts observed in a group's discussion might indicate the degree of conflict within the group. Another hypothesis might be that the larger the ratio between the leader's one-up messages and the one-up message of members, the more authoritarian the group atmosphere.

Miller and Steinberg (1973) suggest that there are two types of communication control situations, compliance and conflict resolution. One might hypothesize that compliance relationships are characterized by a greater proportion of complementary and one-down transitory configurations. Conflict situations, on the other hand, might be characterized by proportionately more symmetrical and one-up transitory configurations. These few examples should give the reader an indication of the many possible uses of this coding scheme. These kinds of relational findings are possible and should aid communicologists in constructing theories of communication.

In summary, the coding procedures of Ericson and Rogers (1973) appear to have face validity, can be coded with good intersubjective reliability, provide the researcher with a dynamic description of a system's relations and are readily adaptable to several communication concepts. Further studies should substantiate the fruitfulness of their operationalizations of the concepts of complementarity, symmetry and transitory structural patterns.

Conclusions

This last section will focus on the major trends apparent within the data reported. These trends will be explored and extended to suggest some theoretical implications which should serve as working hypotheses for future studies on the transactional patterns of normal marital dyads.

First, the wives in the rigid couples were more accurate in predicting their husbands' reported level of marital satisfaction (i.e. displayed more understanding) than the wives in the flexible dyads. The proportion of one-up and one-across statements transmitted by the husband was strongly correlated with the couple's rigidity score. (The correlations with rigidity were, $r = -.65$, $p < .01$ and $r = .64$, $p < .01$ respectively.) Therefore, the wife's ability to understand her husband appears to be negatively related to the proportion of one-up movements and positively related with the proportion of one-across movements

observed in the husband's messages. These correlations should be related to the amount of agreement between the husband and wife on the definition of the husband's role in the marriage. Agreement on the husband's role has consistently been shown to be positively related with marital satisfaction (Stucker, 1963; Taylor, 1967; and Hurvitz, 1960 and 1965). In other words, it is hypothesized that the less the consensus on the husband's role within the marriage, the more he demands interaction control, and the less understanding and marital satisfaction reported by the marriage pair.

Second, of the four transactional units which shared over 30% of their variance with the couple's score on the rigidity-flexibility dimensions, three were symmetrical. This was found even though the total proportion of symmetrical units coded in the dyad's discussions was unrelated to their rigidity score ($r = .03$). Rigidity scores were negatively related to the proportion of: (a) competitive symmetrical transacts ($r = -.59$, $p < .01$); (b) submissive symmetrical transacts ($r = -.57$, $p < .01$); (c) complementary units with the wife one-down ($r = -.58$, $p < .01$); and (d) positively to the proportion of neutralized symmetrical transacts ($r = .55$, $p < .01$) observed in the couples' verbal interchanges. Based on the reasoning presented above, it is predicted that the degree of consensus on the husband role, the amount of understanding

displayed and the level of marital satisfaction reported by the couple will be negatively related to the proportion of competitive symmetrical, submissive symmetrical, complementary units with the wife one-down and positively related to the proportion of neutralized symmetrical transacts observed in the couple's communication pattern. Each of these transactional units should provide some indication of the degree of marital satisfaction and role consensus existing within the marriage. It should be emphasized that future studies should use a multiple-regression design to more precisely determine the amount of covariation between these transactional units and the measures of consensus, marital and interspousal communication satisfaction.

Third, the degree of rigidity observed in the couple's transactional profile was negatively related to the proportion of complementary units observed in their interaction ($r = -.69$, $p < .01$). Therefore, the more rigid the communication pattern, the lower the proportion of complementary transacts, the more interspousal understanding displayed and the higher the degree of marital satisfaction reported by the marriage partners. It will be recalled that rigidity was conceptually defined as the amount of alternation in who controls the couple's interactional flow, in who has the right to define the relationship. Therefore, it is suggested that the more the uncertainty about who will control the dyad's actions towards various

tasks, the less rigid and the more flexible is the couple's communication pattern. In other words, it is suggested that the proportion of complementary units observed in a dyad's verbal interchanges should be another indicant of the degree of uncertainty or lack of consensus concerning the expected role behaviors of the system's members. The more complementary transacts coded, the more uncertainty and dissensus that exists between the marital partners concerning their expected role behaviors.

Fourth, the stability-instability dimension of transactional communication patterns was positively related to the dyad's reported satisfaction with their interspousal communication. Stability scores were negatively related to the total proportion of symmetrical configurations observed ($r = -.43$, $p = <.01$). Therefore, it is predicted that the fewer the symmetrical units observed in the couple's interaction, the more stable their structural pattern and the more satisfied they are with their interspousal communication.

Fifth, the degree of stability observed in the couple's structural profile was positively related to the proportion of transitory configurations coded ($r = .54$, $p < .01$). Therefore, it is predicted that the more transitory units observed, the more stable the dyad's interaction pattern, and the more likely the marriage pair will report being satisfied with their interspousal communication.

Stability was conceptually defined in terms of the couple's own norm concerning the appropriateness and consistency with which the various control maneuvers are transmitted. If another's control movements can be expected and anticipated with some degree of accuracy, then one can more adequately adjust and adapt his own relational communication towards the other. If the other person's control movements cannot be fairly accurately predicted, then it would be more difficult to both adapt one's own relational communication as well as to interpret and to judge the intentions of the other person's messages. For these reasons, stability should have been and was related to the level of satisfaction reported with the couple's interspousal communication. Moreover, this reasoning suggests that the degree of stability in the dyad's structural pattern might be related to the degree of trust existing between the marriage partners. Given that the amount of consistency in another's control movements is important in judging his intentions, then it seems reasonable to predict that this transactional characteristic will be related to the degree of trust manifested within the dyadic system. Assuming that this relationship is substantiated and that there is a relationship between trust and the frequency of self-disclosing comments (Jourard, 1968, 1971), then stability scores should be related to the amount of openness or self-disclosure observed within a dyad's interaction.

There is an important theoretical as well as practical implication behind the above speculations. The rigidity-flexibility and stability-instability dimensions were unrelated to each other. The former is predicted to be related to the degree of marital satisfaction and the latter was found to be related to the reported degree of satisfaction with interspousal communication. If these relations are further confirmed and if the above speculations on trust and self-disclosure are substantiated, then we will have gone a long way in determining the strengths and limitations of what satisfying communication patterns can and cannot do within a dyadic system. Not all problems can be alleviated by effectively talking them over. However, effective and satisfying communication probably is a necessary but not a sufficient condition for a relatively satisfying marital relationship. By concentrating on what covaries with communication patterns and what does not, we might be able to describe what relational structures are conducive to creating satisfactory interpersonal relationships in systems with a history.

Sixth, the larger the proportion of symmetrical units observed, the more unstable the dyad's interaction and the fewer verbal exchanges observed between the dyad's members. The proportion of symmetrical units observed was negatively related to the total number of transacts coded in this study ($r = -.45$, $p < .01$). This moderate

correlation suggests the following hypothesis: the more structural equality there is in the messages of the system's members, the less effective is that system's ability to process problem-oriented information. This is predicted for three primary reasons. First, the system would tend to not talk as long about the problem of concern. This would decrease the quantity of information processed and thereby decrease the probability or arriving at an effective decision. Second, given that there is an equality in the members' relational movements, there may not be enough discrepancy in the quality of information presented and heterogeneous information has consistently been related to effective problem solution in the small group literature. In other words, informational homogeneity might characterize systems that transmit several symmetrical messages and thereby decrease the probability of effective problem solution. Third, as has been suggested earlier, symmetry appears to indicate a lack of consensus on interaction rules and a lack of agreement on the definition of the relationship. Therefore, since the interactants have had some difficulty in establishing their relational parameters, they will exhibit a less effective style of processing substantive information and thereby decrease the probability of reaching an effective decision. This predicted relation between the rate of symmetrical units transmitted and the effectiveness of the system's decision-making processes is expected to be especially pronounced in small groups.

In summary, the following trends and theoretical notions are suggested as guides for future research and theory construction on transactional communication within marital dyads. The rigidity-flexibility dimension of transactional communication patterns will covary with the degree of role consensus and the level of marital satisfaction reported by the husband and wife. The transactional units which will best indicate the amount of role consensus are the complementary units. The lower the proportion of complementary units observed in the dyad's verbal interchanges, the more role consensus and marital satisfaction reported. The stability-instability dimension, on the other hand, will covary with the degree of consensus on the interactional rules developed within the dyadic system and the members' reported level of communication satisfaction. The transactional units which will best predict a lack of consensus of the system's communication rule structure will be the symmetrical units. The larger the proportion of symmetrical units observed in a system's messages, the less agreement on the system's interaction rules and the less communication satisfaction reported. Transitory configurations will vary positively with both role consensus and rule consensus with a dyadic system.

APPENDICES

APPENDIX A

SELF-REPORT QUESTIONNAIRE

INSTRUCTIONS

This study consists of two parts. First, we would like you to fill our a questionnaire on family communication patterns. In the second part, we would like you and your spouse to discuss a few topics.

PART 1: The questionnaire is to be filled out by each of you. Please do not consult your spouse about any of the questions in the questionnaire until you have completed it. After you have completed your questionnaire, please place it into the envelope, seal it, and give it to the interviewer.

PART 2: When both of you have completed the questionnaire, you will be given three topics to discuss. Two deal with emergency situations and the other deals with a family topic. We would like you to take about ten (10) minutes to talk about the possible alternatives for each topic, and decide what you and your family would do in each situation.

In case you have any questions about any part of the questionnaire, please feel free to ask the interviewer about them.

WE APPRECIATE YOUR COOPERATION IN THIS STUDY AND HOPE THAT YOU WILL FIND IT INTERESTING!

FAMILY QUESTIONNAIRE

The following questions concern the time you spend with other people during the course of a day. We would like you to give a rough estimate of the time you spent, yesterday, with the people listed below. For each question, please check the response that best estimates this amount of time.

1. How much of your time yesterday during waking hours was spent . . .

   a. with your spouse? Count the time you were with one another even though others might have been present.

   ___we didn't spend any time together
   ___1 to 30 minutes
   ___30 minutes to 1 hour
   ___1 to 2 hours
   ___2 to 4 hours
   ___4 to 6 hours
   ___6 to 8 hours
   ___more than 8 hours

   b. with <u>just</u> your spouse?

   ___we didn't spend any time alone
   ___1 to 30 minutes
   ___30 minutes to 1 hour
   ___1 to 2 hours
   ___2 to 4 hours
   ___4 to 6 hours
   ___6 to 8 hours
   ___more than 8 hours

   c. with <u>just</u> one or more of your children?

   ___we didn't spend any time alone
   ___1 to 30 minutes
   ___30 minutes to 1 hour
   ___1 to 2 hours
   ___2 to 4 hours
   ___4 to 6 hours
   ___6 to 8 hours
   ___more than 8 hours

d. with people other than your spouse and children?

___I wasn't with anyone else
___1 to 30 minutes
___30 minutes to 1 hour
___1 to 2 hours
___2 to 4 hours
___4 to 6 hours
___6 to 8 hours
___more than 8 hours

2. a. When you and your spouse were together yesterday, how much time did you spend in conversation? Count the time actually spent talking and listening to your spouse.

___we didn't spend any time
___1 to 30 minutes
___30 minutes to 1 hour
___1 to 2 hours
___2 to 4 hours
___4 to 6 hours
___6 to 8 hours
___more than 8 hours

b. How much time yesterday would you have liked to have talked with your spouse?

___much more
___somewhat more
___about the way it was
___somewhat less
___much less

3. Is the amount of time you spent talking with your spouse yesterday typical of most week days?

___yes--If yes, go to Question 4.

___no-- If no, please estimate the amount of time you spend talking with your spouse on a typical weekday.

___we don't spend any time
___1 to 30 minutes
___30 minutes to 1 hour
___1 to 2 hours
___2 to 4 hours
___4 to 6 hours
___6 to 8 hours
___more than 8 hours

4. Since weekends may be different from weekdays, please estimate the amount of time you spent last Sunday . . .

   a. with your spouse?

   ___we didn't spend any time together
   ___1 to 30 minutes
   ___30 minutes to 1 hour
   ___1 to 2 hours
   ___2 to 4 hours
   ___4 to 6 hours
   ___6 to 8 hours
   ___more than 8 hours

   b. in conversation, talking and listening, to your spouse?

   ___we didn't spend any time
   ___1 to 30 minutes
   ___30 minutes to 1 hour
   ___1 to 2 hours
   ___2 to 4 hours
   ___4 to 6 hours
   ___6 to 8 hours
   ___more than 8 hours

5. How much time last Sunday, would you have liked to have talked with your spouse ?

   ___much more
   ___somewhat more
   ___about the same
   ___somewhat less
   ___much less

6. Was the amount of time you spent talking with your spouse last Sunday typical of most Sundays?

   ___yes--If yes, go to Question 7.

   ___no-- If no, please estimate the amount of time you spend talking with your spouse on a typical Sunday.

   ___we don't spend any time
   ___1 to 30 minutes
   ___30 minutes to 1 hour
   ___1 to 2 hours
   ___2 to 4 hours
   ___4 to 6 hours
   ___6 to 8 hours
   ___more than 8 hours

7. The previous questions dealt with time estimates. Now we are interested in the general kinds of topics you and your spouse talk about. Please indicate how often you and your spouse talk about each of the following topics by checking the appropriate columns.

	Once a day or more	Once or twice a week	Once or twice a month	Less than once a month	Never talk about it
a. your job(s)					
b. your feelings toward each other					
c. your children					
d. family leisure time activities					
e. care of the home					
f. financial matters					
g. friends					
h. relatives					
i. local community events e.g., church, P.T.A., elections, committees, etc.					
j. national and international events					
K. PLEASE SPECIFY OTHER TOPICS BELOW					

8. a. What just you and your spouse talk, who starts most of the conversations between you?

___My spouse does more than I
___I do more than my spouse
___Each of us about the same
___Don't know, can't say

b. When just you and your spouse talk, how much of the time do you talk in comparison to him/her?

___Much more
___Somewhat more
___About the same
___Somewhat less
___Much less

c. When just you and your spouse talk, whose interests or concerns do you talk about?

___Mainly talk about what my spouse wants to discuss
___Mainly talk about what I want to discuss
___Split about evenly between his/her interests and mine

d. When just you and your spouse talk, who usually ends or stops the conversation?

___My spouse usually ends them
___I usually end them
___Split about evenly between us, depends on topic
___Usually ended by outside interference or interruptions

9. In general, how satisified are you with the communication between you and your spouse?

___Very satisfied
___Somewhat satisfied
___About as satisfied as dissatisfied
___Very dissatisfied
___Somewhat dissatisfied

10. When husbands and wives talk to one another different kinds of feelings may result. Listed below are some of the ways that you may have felt when talking with your husband. Please indicate with the appropriate number (1-5), how often you have had the feeling mentioned in each of the statements.

1	2	3	4	5
Always	Often	Now and then	Seldom	Never

a. ___In a conversation with my husband, I am uncomfortable during a period of silence.

b. ___I am satisfied with our ability to talk things out together.

c. ___My husband does not listen to me when I'm talking.

d. ___I find it difficult to express my true feelings to my husband.

e. ___I know my husband's feelings and emotions from his gestures and facial expressions.

f. ___I avoid talking about certain subjects with my husband because it may be unpleasant to us.

g. ___When we're talking, my husband understands me and how I feel.

h. ___My husband encourages me to express my concerns.

i. ___I can anticipate what my husband is going to say before he says it.

j. ___My husband's manner of speaking is irritating.

k. ___My husband lets me know how he feels about what I'm saying.

l. ___In our conversations, I don't understand how my husband feels.

m. ___I find other people more interesting to talk to than my husband.

n. ___It's easy to talk to my husband about any problem or complaint.

o. ___I feel dissatisfied with my husband's ability to express his feelings and emotions in words.

*For husband's form of questionnaire, the word "husband" was replaced with "wife."

11. Each of us receives information from many sources. We are interested in how you learn about different types of events. Listed below are several ways you may have learned about them. Please check all your sources of information for the following types of events (e.g., school events, community events, etc.) You may have more than one answer for each event.

SOURCES OF INFORMATION	SCHOOL EVENTS	COMMUNITY EVENTS	NATIONAL & INTERNATIONAL EVENTS	NATURAL & CIVIL DEFENSE PREPAREDNESS
Co-workers				
Neighbors				
My Spouse				
My Children				
Newspapers/ Magazines				
TV or radio				
Delivered in Mail				
Never received				

12. Now, considering just your own immediate family, who tends to bring the most information about these same events to the attention of the other family members.

FAMILY MEMBER WHO BRINGS MOST INFORMATION	SCHOOL EVENTS	COMMUNITY EVENTS	NATIONAL & INTERNATIONAL EVENTS	NATURAL & CIVIL DEFENSE PREPAREDNESS
My Spouse				
Myself				
My children				
All of us about the same				
None of us				

13. Earlier, we mentioned "delivered in mail" as one way of learning about events. We are now interested in finding out who looks at, and what your family does with the third class mail (Like advertisements, public information announcements) that is delivered to your house.

a. In your family, who is usually the first person to look at this type of mail?

Advertisements (store ads, magazine ads, special offers)	Public Information (School events, community notes, civil defense literature, etc.)
___My spouse	___My spouse
___Myself	___Myself
___My children	___My children
___No one in particular	___No one in particular

b. Who else in the family looks at it?

Advertisements	Public Information
___My spouse	___My spouse
___I do	___I do
___My children	___My children
___No one in particular; depends on material	___No one in particular; depends on material

c. What is usually done with this type of mail?

Advertisements	Public Information
___Thrown away immediately	___Thrown away immediately
___Kept for a short time	___Kept for a short time
___Kept for future reference	___Kept for future reference

d. How often is this material discussed with other members of the family?

Advertisements	Public Information
___Often	___Often
___Seldom	___Seldom
___Never	___Never

14. Each family works out its own way of doing things. We would like to ask you about how certain things are done in your family. Please indicate, by using the number of the appropriate response below (1-6), how you and your spouse divide up some of the family jobs.

1	2	3	4	5	6
Husband Almost Always	Husband More than Wife	Both About the Same	Wife More than Husband	Wife Almost Always	Neither One

a. ___Who does the grocery shopping?

b. ___Who prepares the meals?

c. ___Who repairs things (appliances, furniture, toys) around the house?

d. ___Who disciplines the children?

e. ___Who gets up at night, if necessary, with the children?

f. ___Who helps the children with their homework?

g. ___Who decides on the family budget?

h. ___Who makes complaints, if necessary, to salesmen, service repairmen or landlord?

i. ___Who selects the family car(s)?

j. ___Who plans what to do on a Saturday night?

k. ___Who decides what people you will invite to the house?

l. ___Who keeps in touch with relatives?

m. ___Who shows affection for the other spouse?

n. ___Who takes the initiative to make up when there's been a disagreement?

o. ___Who tries to see the other's point of view when there is a difference of opinion?

15. We would now like to ask you how you feel these family jobs should be done. In your family, who do you think should be responsible for doing the following things, regardless of whether that person actually does them or not. Please indicate below, by using the number of the appropriate response (1-6), your own preference as to how these jobs should be divided up between yourself and your spouse.

1	2	3	4	5	6
Husband Almost Always	Husband More than Wife	Both About the Same	Wife More than Husband	Wife Almost Always	Neither One

a. ___Who do you think should do the grocery shopping?

b. ___Who do you think should prepare the meals?

c. ___Who do you think should repair things (appliances, furniture, toys) around the house?

d. ___Who do you think should discipline the children?

e. ___Who do you think should get up at night, if necessary, with the children?

f. ___Who do you think should help the children with their homework?

g. ___Who do you think should decide the family budget?

h. ___Who do you think should make complaints, if necessary, to salesmen, service repairmen or landlord?

i. ___Who do you think should select the family car(s)?

j. ___Who do you think should plan what to do on a Saturday night?

k. ___Who do you think should decide what people you will invite to the house?

l. ___Who do you think should keep in touch with relatives?

m. ___Who do you think should show affection for the other spouse?

n. ___Who do you think should take the initiative to make up when there's been a disagreement?

o. ___Who do you think should try to see the other's point of view when there is a difference of opinion?

16. Now, we would like to ask you to react to a number of pairs of statements about things that you may or may not like; about ways in which you may or may not feel. This is not a test. It is an attempt to find out how people feel about themselves. Therefore, there are no right or wrong answers. For each pair of statements, choose the statement you think best describes the way you feel. CIRCLE the letter of that statement. Some choices may be difficult; nevertheless, choose the one that best describes how you feel. (If neither statement accurately describes how you feel, choose the one which you consider to be less inaccurate). For example, in the sample item below you might choose item (a) if you feel that statement describes you best.

Example: (1) (a) I like to tell amusing stories and jokes at parties.
b I would like to write a great novel or play.

Please select one statement in each pair by circling the letter of the one you choose.

(1) a I feel timid in the presence of other people I regard as my superiors.
b I like to supervise and to direct the actions of other people whenever I can.

(2) a I like to be called upon to settle arguments and disputes between others.
b I like to avoid responsibilities and obligations.

(3) a I like to tell other people how to do their jobs.
b I feel like getting revenge when someone has insulted me.

(4) a I like to show a great deal of affection toward my friends.
b I like to be regarded by others as a leader.

(5) a I like to sympathize with my friends when they are hurt or sick.
b I like to be one of the leaders in the organizations and groups to which I belong.

(6) a When with a group of people, I like to make the decisions about what we are going to do.
b I like to predict how my friends will act in various situations.

(7) a I like to put in long hours of work without being distracted.
b I like to be regarded by others as a leader.

(8) a I like to tell other people how to do their jobs.
b I like to ask questions which I know no one will be able to answer.

(9) a I get so angry that I feel like throwing and breaking things.
b I like to tell other people how to do their jobs.

(10) a When serving on a committee, I like to be appointed or elected chairman.
b I would like to write a great novel or play.

(11) a I like to be one of the leaders in the organizations and groups to which I belong.
b I like to be able to do things better than other people can.

(12) a I like to do things in my own way without regard to what others may think.
b I like to supervise and to direct the actions of other people whenever I can.

(13) a I like to be called upon to settle arguments and disputes between others.
b I like to be regarded as physically attractive by those of the opposite sex.

(14) a When serving on a committee, I like to be appointed or elected chairman.
b When I am in a group I like to accept the leadership of someone else in deciding what the group is going to do.

(15) a I like to be able to persuade and influence others to do what I want to do.
b I like to think about the personalities of my friends and to try to figure out what makes them as they are.

(16) a I like to keep my letters, bills, and other papers neatly arranged and filed according to some system.
b I like to be one of the leaders in the organizations and groups to which I belong.

(17) a I like to write letters to my friends.
b I like to argue for my point of view when it is attacked.

(18) a I like to be called upon to settle arguments and disputes between others.
b I like my friends to do many small favors for me cheerfully.

(19) a When with a group of people, I like to make the decisions about what we are going to do.
b I like my friends to sympathize with me and to cheer me up when I am depressed.

(20) a I like to be regarded by others as a leader.
b I like to keep my letters, bills, and other papers neatly arranged and filed according to some system.

(21) a I like to do things with my friends rather than by myself.
b I like to argue for my point of view when it is attacked by others.

(22) a When I am in a group, I like to accept the leadership of someone else in deciding what the group is going to do.
b I like to supervise and to direct the actions of other people whenever I can.

(23) a I like to argue for my point of view when it is attacked by others.
b I like to experience novelty and change in my daily routine.

(24) a I like to tell other people how to do their jobs.
b I like to be the center of attention in a group.

(25) a I feel depressed by my own inability to handle various situations
b I like to be able to persuade and influence others to do what I want.

(26) a I like to engage in social activities with persons of the opposite sex.
b When with a group of people, I like to make the decisions about what we are going to do.

(27) a I like to be able to persuade and influence others to do what I want.
b I like to finish any job or task that I begin.

(28) a When serving on a committee, I like to be appointed or elected chairman.
b I like to try new and different jobs--rather than to continue doing the same old things.

Finally, we would like to ask you just a few more questions about yourself.

17. What is your age? _____ years

18. Please circle the last grade completed in schools.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 1 2 3 4 1 2 3 4 5 6
Grade School High School College Graduate School

19. What is your present occupation?_____

20. Approximately, what is your family's yearly income?

___less than $3,000
___$3,000 to $5,999
___$6,000 to $7,999
___$8,000 to $14,999
___over $15,000

21. How long have you been married? _____years

22. Is this your first marriage? ____yes ___ no

23. How would you describe your satisfaction with your marriage?

1	2	3	4	5
Very Satisfied	Satisfied	Somewhat Satisfied	Somewhat Dissatisfied	Dissatisfied

6
Very
Dissatisfied

24. How satisfied do you think your spouse is with your marriage?

1	2	3	4	5
Very Satisfied	Satisfied	Somewhat Satisfied	Somewhat Dissatisfied	Dissatisfied

6
Very
Disatisfied

25. What about your marriage do you like the least?_____

_____

_____

_____

26. What about your marriage do you like the most?_____

_____

_____

_____

THANK YOU AGAIN FOR YOUR COOPERATION

APPENDIX B

INTRODUCTORY LETTER AND INTERVIEWER INSTRUCTIONS

MICHIGAN STATE UNIVERSITY EAST LANSING · MICHIGAN 48823

COLLEGE OF COMMUNICATION ARTS · DEPARTMENT OF COMMUNICATION · CABLE: COMMDEPT

March 6, 1972

A study is now underway concerning family communication. We are interested in learning how husbands and wives talk about different issues that come up in their daily lives. In order to gain a better understanding of family opinions, we are asking many families to participate in this study. We would like your permission to talk with both you and your spouse, if you have children under twelve years of age. Couples who are willing to participate in this study will receive ten dollars ($10) for their time.

This study is being done by the Department of Communication at MSU. The findings will be placed in a report so that no individual's or family's views can be identified. We want to assure you that your opinions will remain totally confidential.

In order for the findings to show a true picture of different families' viewpoints, your participation is very important to us. You are part of a random sample and your cooperation is essential to the value of this study.

If you have any questions about the study, feel free to ask the person bearing this letter, or contact me directly at my office phone, 517-355-3478. I think you will find this study interesting and you will be making an important contribution to the understanding of families.

Sincerely,

Richard V. Farace
Director of the Family
Communication Project
524 South Kedzie Hall

RFV:jo

INTERVIEWER'S INITIAL INTRODUCTION

If you recall, you or your husband/wife were interviewed by phone about six weeks ago from Michigan State University concerning your opinions about a number of topics. We sincerely appreciated your cooperation in that phase of the study.

From the large group of persons we spoke to by phone, we have selected a smaller group to represent them in a more meaningful study of family communication patterns. We hope that you and your wife/husband will cooperate further by participating in this part of the study. This letter will explain more about the study .

FIRST-- Greet the person who answers the door. Ask for the male or female head of the household. Introduce yourself by name and say you are working for Michigan State University (East Lansing, Michigan -- Department of Communication).

RESPONDENT DIRECTIONS
QUESTIONNAIRE

(To be given orally by interviewer)

First, we'd like you to fill out this questionnaire. There's a separate one for each of you. Please wait until after you've finished the questions to talk about them.

Perhaps you'd be more comfortable for writing if you sat at the table (if you see an "eating table" readily available). I'll be glad to answer questions for you, if there is anything puzzling about the questionnaire.

If they complain that it will take too long or looks too thick: Most of these pages only require you to check off choices. There's almost no writing involved, so it doesn't take a long time to complete.

If they complain that some of the choices are difficult to make: I know it's difficult to make some of those choices, but don't spend too long on any of them; just choose the one that describes your feelings best, or the one that seems least wrong.

INSTRUCTIONS TO RESPONDENTS
Discussion Topics

(to be given orally by the interviewer)

Thank you for your help with the questionnaires. Would you like to take a short break or should we go on to the discussion?

We'll handle each discussion topic separately. I'll introduce the topic and we'll briefly discuss it to make sure you have no questions.

If there are no questions, I'll start the tape and you may begin talking to each other. While the tape is playing, my attention will be centered on the recording equipment to make sure it's working properly, so I probably won't be looking at either of you.

Please discuss each topic in some depth--as fully as possible--but we'll have to stop you at ten minutes.

(START TOPIC I)

I

To begin with, talk with each other about how you first met, dated and decided to marry.

Some things you might include in the discussion are:

1. Your first impressions or reactions.
2. Your expectations.
3. Your later feelings.
4. Any problems you encountered.
5. Any solutions you worked out.

PROBES--to be used only when essential:

a. when asked for direction,

b. when there has been 15 seconds of silence, less than five minutes discussion AND one of the five discussion areas has been neglected.

1. Tell each other about the problems you may have had.
2. Talk about how you felt during this time.
3. Consider how you handled any problems you had.
4. Try to talk about your first impressions.
5. Discuss any expectations about marriage.

II

Imagine it is a typical weekday and one of you is at home. A Civil Defense alert--a loud wailing siren--is sounded. After turning on the radio, you learn that there has been a nuclear attack. You are warned to prepare for the radiation fallout which will reach your area in about two hours. Your neighbors have also heard the warning and need to find shelter. (A) If your house has a cellar or basement, would you be willing to share it with your neighbors during the disaster? (B) If you don't have a basement, would you be willing to go to someone else's house for protection? Please discuss the possible alternatives and decide on a plan of action.

Some things you might include in the discussion are:

1. Your first impressions or reactions in this situation.
2. Your expectations.
3. Your later feelings.
4. Any problems you encountered.
5. Any solutions you worked out.

PROBES--to be used only when essential:

a. when asked for direction

b. when there has been 15 second of silence, less than five minutes discussion AND one of the five discussion areas has been neglected.

1. Talk about any other problems you might encounter.
2. Tell each other how you might feel in this situation.
3. Consider how you could try to handle any problems you might encounter.
4. Discuss what your first reaction to this situation would be.
5. Try to consider what you might expect to happen under these conditions.

III

Some married couples feel that both the husband and the wife should be able to have independent careers, jobs and interests outside the family. Other couples feel that both should be devoted to the interest of the family, and that the wife in particular should be in the home as a full time homemaker and mother. What are your feelings on this matter and what is your joint conclusion ?

Some things you might include in the discussion are:

1. Your first impressions or reactions to this topic.
2. Your expectations.
3. Your later feelings.
4. Any problems you encountered.
5. Any solutions you worked out.

PROBLES--to be used only when essential:

a. when asked for direction,

b. when there has been 15 seconds of silence, less than five minutes discussion AND one of the five discussion areas has been neglected.

1. Tell each other your expectations regarding this topic.
2. Talk about how you feel about this topic.
3. Consider any problems that might develop in such a situation.
4. Discuss any solutions to such problems.
5. Try to talk about your first reaction to or impression of this topic.

IV

Imagine a tornado watch has been in effect for several hours in your area. You, your spouse, and your children are at home one evening watching television, when a tornado warning is broadcasted indicating the sighting of a tornado. You are told that you have about 15 minutes to prepare and take shelter. What would you and your family do in this situation? Please discuss the possible alternatives and decide on a plan of action.

Some things you might include in the discussion are:

1. Your first impressions or reactions in this situation.
2. Your expectations.
3. Your later feelings.
4. Any problems you encountered.
5. Any solutions you worked out.

PROBLES--to be used only when essential:

a. when asked for direction,

b. when there has been 15 seconds of silence, less than five minutes discussion AND one of the five discussion areas has been neglected.

1. Talk about any other problems you might encounter.
2. Tell each other how you might feel in this situation.
3. Consider how you could try to handle any problems you might encounter.
4. Discuss what your first reaction to this situation would be.
5. Try to consider what you might expect to happen under these conditions.

Interviewer Instructions
Discussion Topics

1. Try to have respondents comfortably seated, at cornerwise chairs in a livingroom, or at a table in an eating area. If it is possible to have a clock visible to the respondents, it would be ideal.

2. Deal with each topic separately. Hand only one discussion topic to the respondent at a time.

3. Spend no more than ten minutes per topic. Stop the topic discussion at the end of that time. Say something like; "I'm sorry folks, the time is up; and we don't want you to have to spend extra time on this, so we'll go on to the next topic now."

4. Do not turn on the recorder until both respondents have had a chance to:

   a. Read the topic from their own copy;
   b. Listen to you emphasize the underlined phrases;
   c. Ask any questions they may have about the topic;
   d. Listen to you direct them regarding some of the general things to consider in their discussion of the topic.

5. Attempt to stay out of their discussion, unless you are asked a question by one of the, or there is a silence of over 15 seconds.

6. Use eye contact only when giving a standard probe for the particular discussion topic.

7. Use the standard probes only when asked, or after about 15 seconds silence, when one of the five general areas of consideration has not yet been mentioned by respondents; and the discussion has not lasted at least five minutes.

8. If the respondents are engaged in a discussion, let them continue. Make no attempt to pull them back to the five areas of consideration, unless they are silent and have not used all the areas. Some of what they say may sound irrelevant. Do not attempt to stop this sort of conversation.

9. Following each topic's discussion, give some sort of verbal reward to the respondents, such as;"Thank you, that was fine;" or "You've both done a good job."

APPENDIX C

INSTRUCTIONS FOR CODERS

RELATIONAL COMMUNICATION CODING SCHEME

DIGIT ONE (Speaker)	DIGIT TWO (Format)	DIGIT THREE (Response)
1 = Wife	1 = Assertion	1 = Support
2 = Husband	2 = Question	2 = Nonsupport
	3 = Talk-Over	3 = Extension
	4 = Noncomplete	4 = Answer
	5 = Other	5 = Instruction
		6 = Order
		7 = Disconfirmation
		8 = Topic change
		9 = Initiation-Termination
		0 = Other

Silence is coded by a 000 code for every period of silence longer than three seconds. Every additional five second period of silence is also coded as 000.

DO NOT CODE LAUGHTER

* *

To illustrate how this scheme may be used to categorize messages, a sample from an interaction is shown below:

. . . . . .

Husband:	But then I don't remember what'd I say to him?	223
Wife:	You explained the wrong ways and the right ways and childbirth and other things.	114
Husband:	Oh, yah, I remember that . . . let's see . . .	211
Wife:	Over in E. Lansing they already have a program in reproduction so he really already knew the right way.	113

. . . . . .

The husband's first message is coded 223 to indicate a question of extension that seeks information about the topic being discussed. The wife's first message is coded as 114 to show that it is an assertion that serves as an answer. The husband's second message is a supportive assertion and the wife's second message is an assertion of extension.

Definitions of Code Categories

DIGIT TWO

"Assertion" Any completed referential statement that may be in either the declarative or imperative form; i.e., a message that has a subject and a verb. Also, words such as "yes," "no," "sure," "Hmmm-mmm," "Uh-uh," and "right" which clearly indicate a control function.

"Question" Any statement that takes an interrogative form.

"Talk-Over" Any interruption or verbal intervention made while the other person is speaking.

"Noncomplete" Any utterance, other than those coded as "talk-overs," that are initiated but are not completed.

"other" Any utterance that is indistinguishable or is not classifiable as to form.

DIGIT THREE

"Support" Any statement giving or seeking acceptance, agreement and/or approval.

"Nonsupport" Any statement or utterance that is a disagreement, rejection, demand, and/or challenge.

"Extension" Any statement that continues the flow or theme of the preceding message, or any statement that is a noncommittal response to a question.

"Answer" Any statement that is a definitive response to a question or at least has substance and/or commitment.

"Instruction" Any statement that is a regulative response to a in the form of a suggestion; it is often qualified or contains an explanation.

"Order" Any statement that is a regulative response but is in the form of an unqualified command with little or no explanation.

"Disconfirmation" Any statement that ignores or by-passes the request of the other individual.

"Topic Change" Any response that has little continuity with previous messages and no response continuity was requested.

"Initiation-Termination" Any statement that either begins or ends an interaction; its use signifies starting and ending points for particular discussions or conversations.

"Other" Any response that is unclear or unclassifiable.

Priority Considerations for Using Categories

DIGIT TWO

1. First, determine if the message should be considered as a talk-over (#3). A talk-over may be a question, assertion, or noncomplete, but an interruptive speech is coded as a talk-over, independent of form.

2. If not a talk-over, the message should be considered as a question (#2).

3. If not a question, it should be considered as an assertion (#1).

4. If not a question, it should be considered as a noncomplete (#4).

5. If it cannot be categorized as any of these, it is coded as "other" (#5). For instance, any message or partial message that is, or follows, an "INDISTINGUISHABLE" or "NONDISTINGUISHABLE."

DIGIT THREE

1. The first consideration should be whether the message initiates or terminates. (Although messages coded in this category can also be coded in other categories--e.g., as an answer, a nonsupport, or a topic change--, the major consideration should be whether the message is an initiation or a termination.)

2. If the message is not an initiation-termination, it should be considered as an answer (#4). The main response function of an answer is to provide information. However, an answer which gives support or nonsupport should be coded according to its control function.

3. If the message is a response switch, it should first be considered a disconfirmation(#7).

4. If the message is not a disconfirmation, it should be considered a topic change (#8).

5. If the message has a regulative function, it should first be considered as an order (#6).

6. If the message is not an order, it should be coded as an instruction (#5).

7. If the message is not codable in any of these categories, it should be considered an extension (#3), a message of support (#1), or a message of nonsupport (#2). NOTE: Coding of any of these three categories should follow this priority scheme; i.e., any indecision between the three should result in a code of (#3), extension.

8. If a message cannot be categorized as any of these, it is coded as an other (#0). Any message or partial message that is, or follows, an "INDISTINGUISHABLE" or "NONDISTINGUISHABLE " should be coded as an other.

Coding of Dual Response Messages

As shown on page one, each message by a speaker is coded with a three digit number. In most cases, these messages will have only a three digit code to indicate who was speaking, what form the message was, and what the message was in response to the other speaker's previous message. In some cases, however, a speaker's message may serve more than just one response mode; it may represent support as well as being

of a regulative nature. In these situations, such a message will receive at least two three digit numbers to categorize its different response functions. For example, in the following sample interaction, the second speaker's message illustrates a situation in which his message is an agreement or support and also a question seeking information.

Speaker 1 (Wife):	I think we should leave now.	115
Speaker 2 (Husband):	Okay, I guess so, but what about bringing the food?	211-223
Speaker 1 (Wife):	Well, we'll have to come back for it.	114

In the next sample interaction, the second speaker's message shows both support and nonsupport of the first speaker's previous message.

Speaker 1 (Husband):	I think we should leave now.	215
Speaker 2 (Wife):	Okay, I guess so, but I don't like you always deciding what time we leave.	111-112
Speaker 1 (Husband):	That's too bad!	212

Sample Interaction

The following example represents the form of interaction that you will possibly code and illustrates both single and dual response messages.

Wife:	That's a very interesting situation, but I really don't know how I'd handle it, what about you, honey?	119-123
Husband:	Well, I think that in the case of an emergency we would probably first tune in the radio and listen for directions and at the same time begin to gather up some food . . .	214
Wife:	[. . . and clothing . . .]	133
Husband:	. . . to the basement . . .	243
Wife:	[We' d have to take blankets . . .]	133
Husband:	. . . where we'd . . .	243
Wife:	[. . .because we'd need the warmth in the basement and besides the children would need it.]	133
Husband:	Right, that sounds about right.	211

In this example, the wife's first message receives two codes--a 119 to indicate an assertion that, arbitrarily, is defined as starting the interaction, and a 133 to show a question that

seeks to extend the discussion of the topic. The husband's first message is an assertion that serves as an answer. The next message from the wife is enclosed in brackets to indicate a successful interruption and is coded 133 to indicate a talk-over in extension. The husband's continuation of his original thought is coded 243 to indicate a noncomplete that is an extension. The wife again comes in with a talk-over in extension and the husband tries to complete his original statement. The wife again successfully talks over and completes her idea. Finally, the husband makes an assertion that supports his wife's previous message.

In some situations, messages which begin as assertions (or talk-overs) may end as questions, or vice versa. For example, note the following interactions:

Wife:	After we met, you asked me to come visit you, right?	113-123
Husband:	Yeah, then, uh, we went home to visit my folks.	211-213

The wife's message is double coded to indicate that she kept the discussion going (113) but then sought information agreement for what she had said (123). The husband provided agreement (211) and then continued the flow of the conversation(213). Words that might frequently turn assertions into questions are "okay?", "right?", and "huh?".

Husband:	And what would you do? I think you should get some blankets, flashlight, and water together, open all the windows and get the kids to the basement.	223-215
Wife:	Shouldn't I also bring some food? Well, oh wait, I could bring some graham crackers for the kids.	123-113

Here, the husband asked a question (223) but didn't allow his wife to answer. Instead, he followed his question with an instruction (215). The wife responded with a question (123) and then followed that with an assertion in extension (113), rather than waiting for her husband to answer her question.

In some cases, one person may have an unsuccessful talk-over followed by another message. For example:

Wife:	I could carry the metal buckets from the garage down to the basement and fill them with water from the water heater.	113

Husband: (They'd be too heavy for you. You'd need . . .). One of the boys would have to help you carry them or you'd trip all over yourself. 232-212

Here, the wife had a message that continued the previous discussion (113), the husband had an unsuccessful talk-over in disagreement or nonsupport (232), and then followed with a statement that was also a disagreement with what the wife had said.

Code Category Examples

DIGIT TWO

Assertion
- "I think, uh, we should talk about the public shelters."
- "It's going to depend on several things."
- "You're the one who has to decide."
- "I'll get it."

Question
- "How old are you?"
- "Right?"
- "Did you listen?"
- "What do you think?"

Talk-over
- Any message or partial message enclosed within brackets [ ] or parentheses ( ) that is a verbal interruption. These messages may take any grammatical form but will be identified by the brackets or parentheses. NOTE: In some cases, a series of three messages may be coded as follows:

H [It would probably be at least two hours]
W (What about . . .)
H [before we could come out of the basement.]

In this sequence, the husband had a successful talk-over, indicated by the [ ], the wife had an unsuccessful talk-over while the husband was talking, indicated by the ( ), and the husband's message was continued, as indicated by the [ ]. Any message within a [ ], like any message enclosed within regular brackets [ ], is considered a successful talk-over. Any message contained within a [ ] is coded as an Assertion or Noncomplete in Extension and is not coded as a talk-over in Extension.

Noncomplete - "Well, ah . . ." Mmm . . ."
- "But what I really thought . . ." "Umm. ."
- ". . . and besides, uh, we, uh . . .""Ah. . "

Other - All messages that do not fit in the previous four categories.

DIGIT THREE

Support - QUESTION FORM - "Are you okay?"
"What do you think?"
- "Could you help me with that?"
- "Can I come too?"

- ASSERTION FORM "Yes, I agree." "Yeah."
"Hmm-mm."
- "Okay, I'll help." "Right."
- "That's a great idea." "Sure."

Nonsupport - QUESTION FORM - "Why would you want to do something stupid like that?"
- "Are you crazy?"
- "I suppose you're smarter?"

- ASSERTION FORM "I don't like it." "uh-uh."
- "We won't do it."
- "That's ridiculous."

Extension - "Furthermore, its the best way to do it."
- "I don't know."
- (NOTE: In order to be coded as an extension, a message has to continue the flow or theme of a preceding message, or be a noncommittal response to a question.)

Answer - "It's forty miles to the nearest public shelter."
- "You have to add water, then oil."
- (NOTE: An answer is a definitive response to a question.)

Instruction - "I think we should go."
- "You have school tomorrow and its time you went to bed."
- "You shouldn't do that because you'll get hurt."
- "You go get it, okay?"

Order
- "Close the door."
- "Go on to the next one."
- "Don't do that."
- "You do it."

Disconfirmation
- (Are you going?) "It's fourteen above in Kalamazoo."
- (What should we do tomorrow night?) "It's raining outside."
- (NOTE: Disconfirmations represent messages that disregard requests or demands of previous messages.)

Topic change
- (The baby's learning to walk now.) "Where's tonight's paper?"
- (I bought a new dress.) "Hey, guess who I saw today at work?"
- (We're eating late tonight.) "Let's go to the hockey game on Saturday."

Initiation
- "Well, to start off with, I think we need to consider what the conditions are."
- "We would probably go to the basement right away."
- (NOTE: An initiation is any message that starts a dialogue or discussion.)

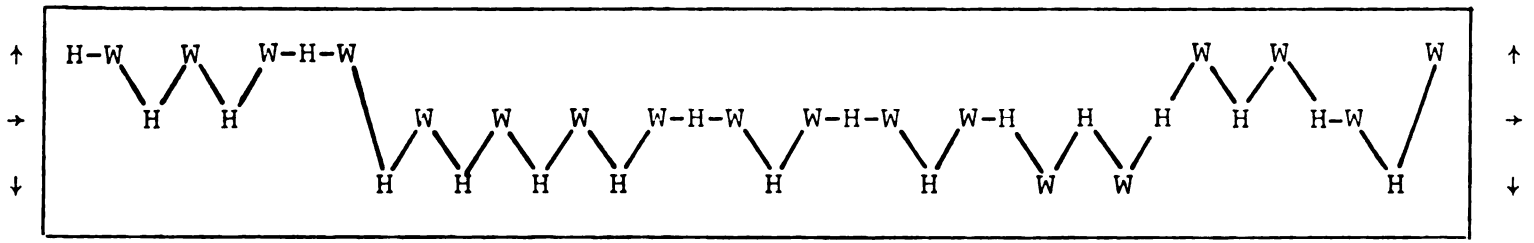
Termination
- "That's about it."
- "There's no more to say."
- (NOTE: A termination is any message that brings a dialogue to a close.)

Other
- Any message with an unclassifiable response mode, i.e., messages or parts of messages labeled as "INDISTINGUISHABLE" or "NONDISTINGUISABLE."

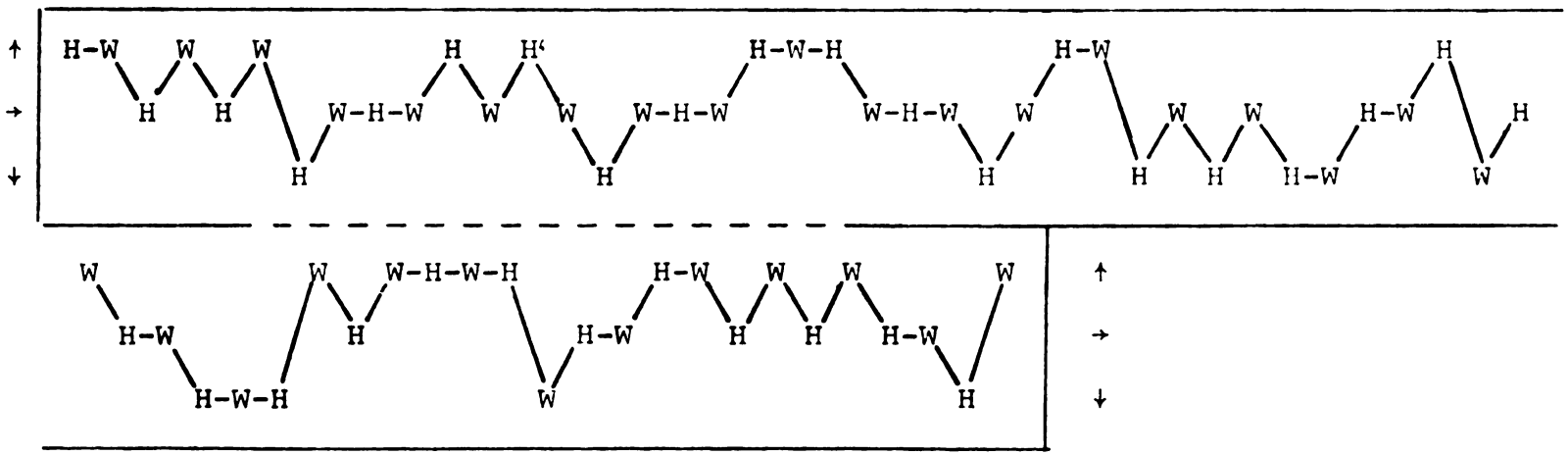
APPENDIX D

TRANSACTIONAL GRAPHS

Dyad #149: Stable, Rigid

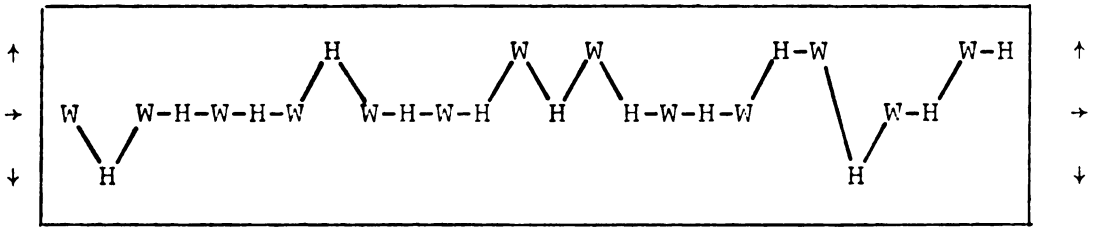


Topic #2; Preparation for Nuclear Attack

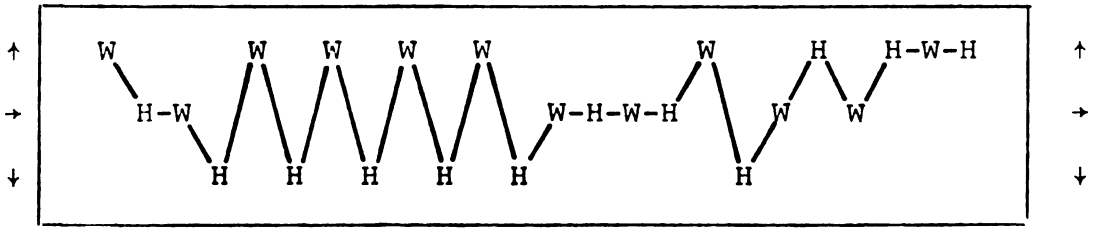


Topic #3; Husband and Wife Independent Careers

Dyad #356: Unstable, Rigid

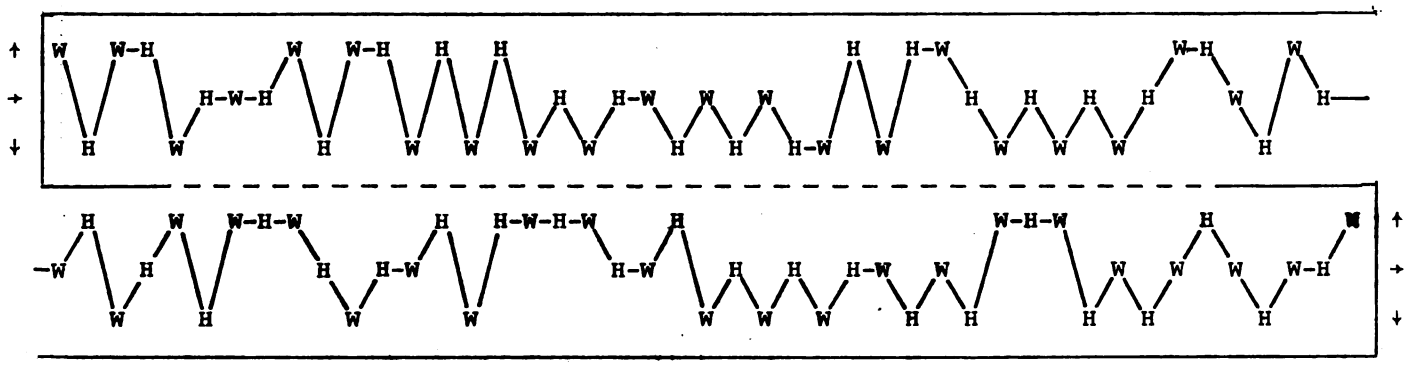


Topic #2, Preparation for Nuclear Attack

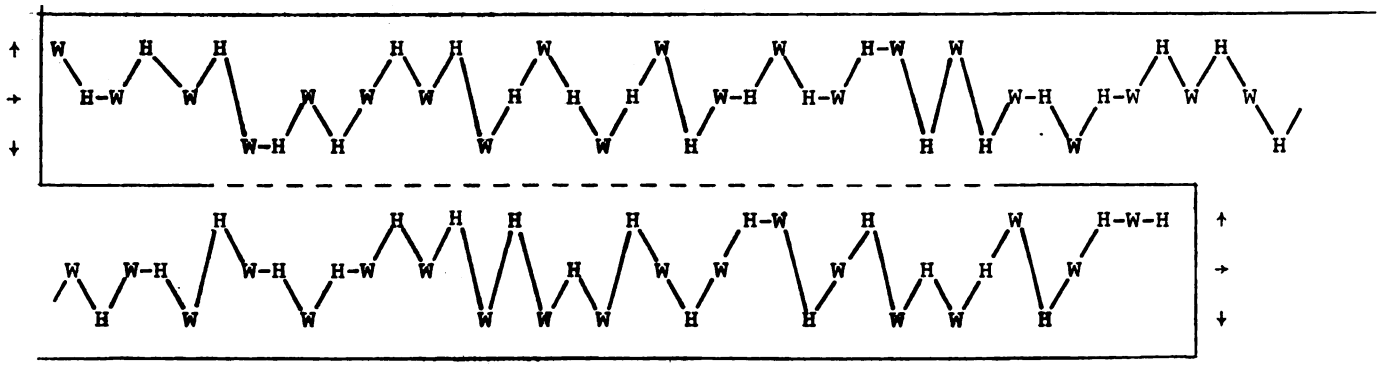


Topic #3; Husband and Wife Independent Careers

Dyad #189: Stable, Flexible

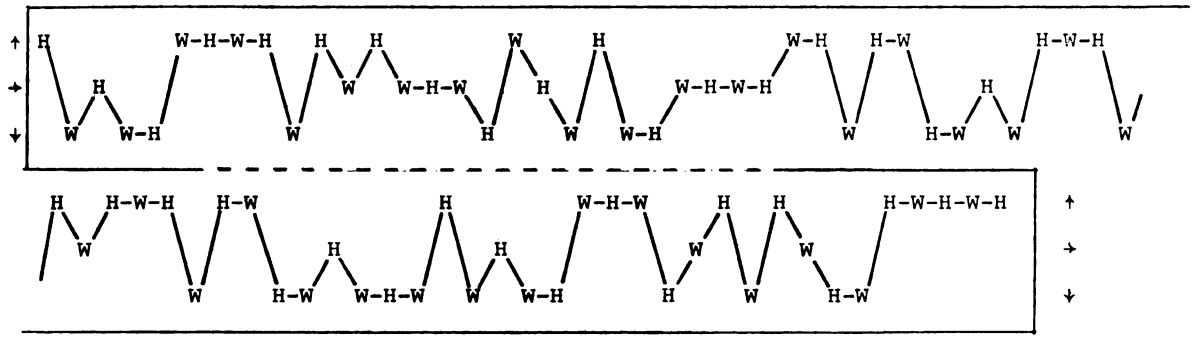


Topic #2; Preparations for Nuclear Attack

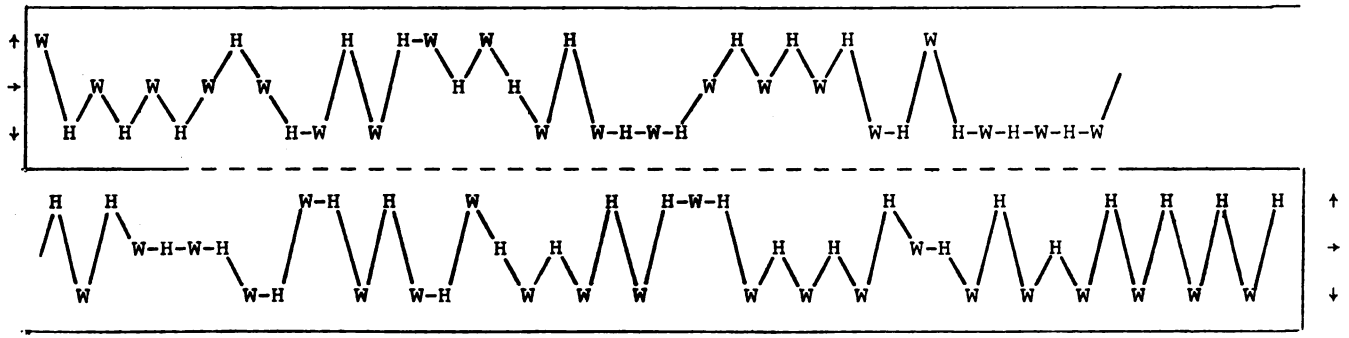


Topic #3; Husband and Wife Independent Careers

Dyad #304: Unstable, Flexible



Topic #2; Preparations for Nuclear Attack



Topic #3; Husband and Wife Independent Careers

BIBLIOGRAPHY

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Argyle, M. Social Interaction. New York: Atherton Press, 1969.

Bailyn, L. "Career and Family Orientation of Husbands and Wives in Relation to Marital Happiness." Human Relations, 23, 1971, 97-113.

Bales, R. G. Interaction Process Analysis: A Method for the Study of Small Groups. Reading, Mass.: Addison-Wesley, 1950.

Barry, W. A. "Marriage Research and Conflict: An Integrative Review." Psychological Bulletin, 73, 1970, 41-54.

Beels, C. C. and Ferber, A. "Family Therapy: A View." Family Process, 8, 1969, 280-318.

Blalock, H. M., Jr. An Introduction to Social Research. Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey: Prentice-Hall, 1970.

Boszormenyi-Nagy, I. and Framo, J. F. (eds). Intensive Family Therapy. New York: Harper & Row, 1965.

Drechler, R. J. and Shapiro, M. "Two Methods of Analysis of Family Diagnostic Data." Family Process, 2, 367-370.

Elizur, A. "Analysis and Treatment of Communication Distortions in Family Life: First Stage." Family Coordinator, 18, 1969, 353-361.

Ericson, P. M. "Relational Communication: Complementarity and Symmetry and Their Relation to Dominance-Submission." Unpublished Ph.D. Dissertation, Michigan State University, 1972.

Ericson, P. M. and Rogers, L. E. "New Procedures for Analyzing Relational Communication." Paper in process for Family Process.

Ferguson, G. A. Statistical Analysis in Psychology and Education. New York: McGraw-Hill, 1959.

Gurin, G.; Veroff, J.; and Feld, S. Americans View Their Mental Health: A Nationwide Interview Survey. New York: Basic Books, 1960.

Haley, J. "An Interactional Description of Schizophrenia." Psychiatry, 22, 1959, 321-332.

_____. "The Family of the Schizophrenic: A Model System." Journal of Nervous and Mental Disease, 129, 1959, 357-374.

_____. "Family Experiments: A New Type of Experimentation." Family Process, 1, 1962, 265-293.

_____. "Research on Family Patterns: An Instrument Measurement." Family Process, 3, 1964, 41-65.

_____. "Experiment with Abnormal Families: Testing Done in a Restricted Communication Setting." Archives of General Psychiatry, 17, 1967, 53-63.

Hays, W. L. Statistics for Psychologists. New York: Holt, Rinehart & Winston, 1963.

Heiss, J. S. "Degree of Intimacy and Male-Female Interaction." Sociometry, 25, 1962, 197-208.

Hicks, M. W. and Platt, M. "Marital Happiness and Stability: A Review of the Research in the Sixties." Journal of Marriage and the Family, 32, 1970, 553-569.

Jackson, D. D. "The Study of Family." Family Process, 4, 1965, 1-20.

_____. (ed). Communication, Family, and Marriage. Palo Alto, Calif.: Science and Behavior Books, 1968.

Jourard, S. M. Disclosing Man to Himself. New York: Van Nostrand, 1968.

_____. The Transparent Self. New York: Van Nostrand, 1971.

Laing, R. D.; Phillipson, H.; and Lee, A. R. Interpersonal Perception: A Theory and a Method of Research. New York: Harper & Row, 1966.

Lederer, W. J. and Jackson, D. D. The Mirages of Marriage. New York: W. W. Norton, 1968.

Lindquist, E. F. Design and Analysis of Experiments in Psychology and Education. Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1953.

Mark, R. A. "Parameters of Normal Family Communication in the Dyad." Unpublished Ph.D. Dissertation, Michigan State University, 1970.

_____. "Coding Communication at the Relationship Level." Journal of Communication, 21, 1971, 221-232.

Meehan, E. J. Explanation in Social Science: A System Paradigm. Homewood, Illinois: Dorsey Press, 1968.

Miller, G. R. and Steinberg, M. "Interpersonal Communication." Mimeo. Michigan State University, Department of Communication, 1973.

Miller, S.; Nunnally, E. W.; and Wackman, D. B. The Minnesota Couples Communication Training Program. Copyright by Miller, Nunnally, and Wackman, 1971.

Mishler, E. G. and Waxler, N. E. Interaction in Families: An Experimental Study of Family Processes and Schizophrenia. New York: John Wiley, 1968.

Mullahy, P. (ed). A Study of Interpersonal Relations. New York: Science House, 1967.

Murrell, S. A. and Stachowiak, J. G. "The Family Group: Development, Structure and Therapy." Journal of Marriage and Family Living, 27, 1965, 13-19.

Murrell, S. A. and Stachowiak, J. G. "Consistency, Rigidity, and Power in the Interaction of Clinic and Non-Clinic Families." Journal of Abnormal Psychology, 72, 1967, 265-272.

Navran, L. "Communication and Adjustment in Marriage," Family Process, 6, 1967, 173-184.

Olson, D. H. "Marital and Family Therapy: Integrative Review and Critique." Journal of Marriage and the Family, 32, 1970, 501-538.

Reynolds, P. D. A Primer in Theory Construction. Indianapolis: Bobbs-Merrill, 1971.

Riskin, J. "Family Interaction Scales." Archives of General Psychiatry, 11, 1964, 484-494.

Rogers, L. E. "Dimensions of Dyadic Systems and Interpersonal Communication." Mimeo. Michigan State University, Department of Communication, 1971.

Rogers, L. E. "Dyadic Systems and Transactional Communication in a Family Context." Unpublished Ph.D. Dissertation, Michigan State University, 1972.

Ruesch, J. and Bateson, G. Communication: The Social Matrix of Psychiatry. New York: W. W. Norton, 1968 edition.

Sager, C. J. et al. "The Marriage Contract." Family Process, 10, 1971, 311-326.

Scheff, T. J. "Toward a Sociological Model of Consensus." American Sociological Review, 32, 1967, 32-46.

Sluzki, G. E. and Beavin, J. "Simetriay Complementaridid: Una Definicion Operacional y una Tipologia de Parejas." Acta Psiquidtrica y Psicologica de America Latina, 11, 1965, 321-330.

Smith, D. H. "Communication Research and the Idea of Process." Speech Monographs, 39, 1973, 174-182.

Sprey, J. "The Family as a System in Conflict." Journal of Marriage and the Family, 31, 1969, 699-706.

Stabenua, J. R.; Tupin, J.; Werner, J.; and Polin, W. "A Comparative Study of Families of Schiozophrenics, Delinquents, and Normals." Psychiatry, 28, 1965, 45-49.

Taylor, A. B. "Role Perception, Empathy and Marriage Adjustment." Sociology and Social Research, 1965, 22-31.

Watzlawick, P.; Beavin, J. H.; and Jackson, D. D. Pragmatics of Human Communication. New York: W. W. Norton, 1967.

Waxler, N. E. and Mishler, E. G. "Experimental Studies of Families." In L. Berkowitz (ed.), Advances in Experimental Social Psychology. New York: Academic Press, Vol. 5, 1970, 249-304.

Winter, W. D. and Ferreira, A. J. "Interaction Process Analysis of Family Decision-Making." Family Process, 6, 1967, 155-172.

_____. (eds). Research in Family Interaction. Palo Alto, Calif.: Science and Behavior Books, 1969.

Wynne, L. C. and Singer, M. T. "Thought Disorder and Family Relations of Schizophrenias." Archives of General Psychiatry, 9, 1963, 191-198.