

Chapter 12

Squares Narratives and Dialogue

Our ultimate device for dealing with complexity and the other is narrative. A realist of an empiricist bent might say that the lions move in reality; in our view they may or may not, because we are not sure what moving in reality means. Movement does appear to be part of what we see, but there is nothing necessary about its appearance. In contrast to the realist view that often underlies lay accounts of complexity, we remain agnostic about external reality. We favor a philosophy, where the observer's knowledge and understanding is constructed by interaction with experience). The experience is laid out in a narrative. Narratives are not about the verity of a situation, but are rather an explicit statement of what the narrator views as important. ... [and] open the opportunity to see meaning... (Zellmer, Allen, & Kesseboehmer, 2007)

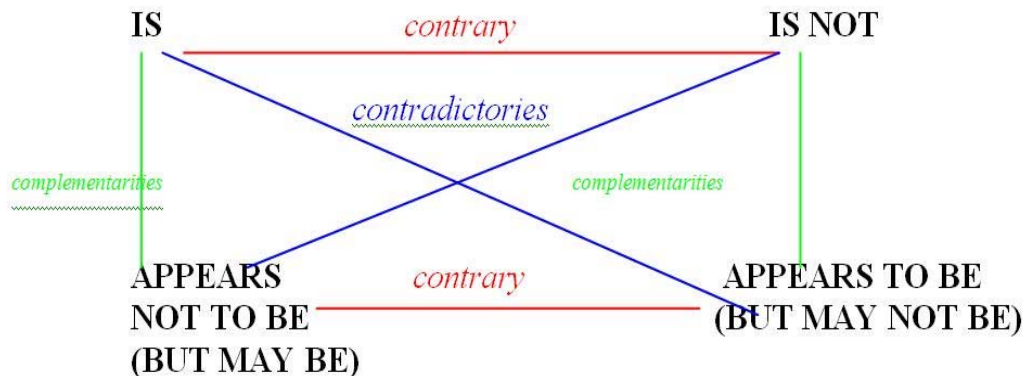
Throughout this text we have been highlighting elements that can be represented on a four pointed diagram and emphasizing, that it is the dialogic phenomena that justifiably are critical, when emergent coherence is to be experienced. As we approach the end of our text, we need to revisit the diagram and its origins so as to position you the reader to be better able to make use of it as a tool.

If you recall the types of homologies described in chapter 8, neither a one to one mapping (A is B) nor a simple three fold function ($r(ab) = x$) adequately capture the ongoing complexity of our daily lives, nor do these formulations provide room for emergence. Our diagrammatic representation of the Rosen modeling relation has three points (essence, reductive representation, and perception) that also omit emergence. So too with the traditional three fold Hegelian logic of thesis, antithesis and synthesis. Conceptual fourfoldness makes it possible to analyze emergence. Neither the one-dimensional logic of connectionism / holisms, nor the 'either / or' of dualism ('A / not-A') nor the logic of the dialectic (thesis > antithesis > synthesis) do justice to emergence. To include emergence we need a fourth point, and to make use of the results we need a fifth (that of the observer and narrative). George Miller (1956) suggested that five was the beginning reaches of cognitive overload and at five we will stop.

Our study of emergence and coherence in organization has produced a four point analysis highlighting the role of (i) self, (ii) group, (iii) environment (Other) and (iv) emergence and an alternate conception of (i) coherence, (ii) homology, (iii) affordance and (iv) emergence. Emergence, as Paul Cilliers (1998) has argued, requires difference. If there is difference, then no closed rational system can do it justice. Not just the elements of the system act and react in relationships of difference, also the logic of acting and reacting display an emergent trajectory. Traditional logic can support elements or identities of difference, but not unpredictable, emergent or dynamic processes of change and alteration. A fourfold field of analysis allows space for interaction and within its bounds there is the possibility to alter and shift emergently. Of course, the exact nature of the emergence is not predictable.

In developing our diagrammatic approach we have made use of Greimas's semiotic square. The 'semiotic square' is characterized by four factors, standing in three different sorts of relationships to one another. Applying the logic of the 'semiotic square' helps us to narratively map coherence and complexity:

For every positive term, let us say for the sake of illustration, "honest," there are two negative terms. One is called a contrary. For example, the contrary of honest is dishonest. A contrary is negative in the sense that it is the opposite of the positive. The other negative is a contradictory. The status of the contradictory is more ambiguous, in that it is not the opposite of the positive quality, but its absence. The contradictory of honest, for example, might be unreliable: not necessarily dishonest, but not reliably honest either. Stories are contests pitting a positive against a negative, but the dynamics of the story are worked out on a battlefield peopled by the contradictories: characters who waver, or are seduced, or repent, or turn out not to be what we thought they were. ... in narrative theory no positive identity can be assumed by any human actor other than by the denial of some other person's identity. To exist as a positive there must be an immanent negative.



(Taylor & van Every, 2000, pp 57-58)

The semiotic square is a dynamic model that portrays a series of transformations wherein: (1) binary oppositions, (2) contrasts in degree, and (3) open relationships confront one another. In this confrontation lies the "dealing with emergence" and openness to context that is crucial to openness to experienced coherence and its narrating.

When we look at the Taylor and van Every diagram of the semiotic square, we label the top left Self and the top right Other. Having done so the diagram now points to a field of relationship, polyphony, dialogue and (inspired by Levinas) ethics. The square becomes a means for seeing the dialogue necessary to accommodate the not quite Self and not quite Other, which is crucial to the emergent. In

the logic of fourfoldness, the four positions in the semiotic square are defined in relationship to one another. One can seize upon any one of the positions, define a second one in juxtaposition to it, and resolve the tension between these two in terms of some third position. A large number of conceptualizations are made immediately possible with the use of the semiotic square. For instance, WebMind was based on the promise of a new innovative technology or technology push. WebMind's R and D group were incapable of producing the technology; and no such software could be produced with the then known methods. WebMind was not so much a tale of technology push (upper left corner), as a hyper real simulacrum (bottom right corner). Now three years later, somewhat poorer but much wiser, the investor sees market applications for the technology that was produced (bottom left corner). What was promised was not produced, but a watered down version of it might sell. By not locking oneself into a promised/produced conflict, but by continually looking for not quite promised/capable of being produced options, it is possible to find new possibilities.

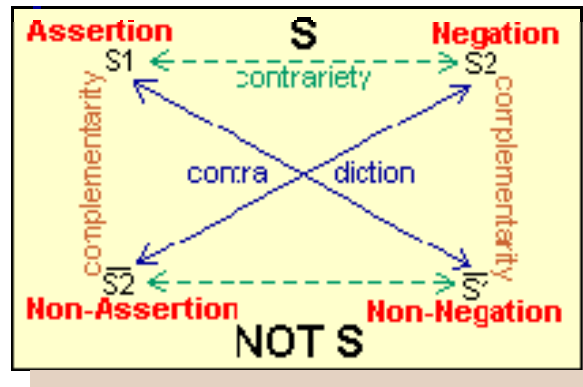
Our diologic square takes its roots from Greimas, the most important modern theoretician of the 'semiotic square.' Greimas worked in the tradition of de Saussure assuming that langue or the structure of language can be studied, but that parole or lived-speech cannot (de Saussure, 1965, 1966; Greimas, 1983, 1966, 2002). The surface phenomena of 'parole' supposedly are too varied, unsystematic and circumstance bound, to be systemized. 'Langue' is defined in terms of elementary structures and laws of communication. Parole or lived experience/speech is incidental, happenstance and serendipitous. We reverse this assumption. We are convinced that in the experience of emergent complexity, parole or concrete interaction can be studied, but that no stable depth level grammar of emergent events exists to be studied. Emergence cannot be modeled in a closed system, but it can be described in an open one. Social complexity theory posits that emergence is not a surface level phenomena answering to depth level hidden laws - there is no 'langue' here to emergence's 'parole'.

The underlying grammar is, instead, reduced to a set of pointers which help participants to articulate their perceptions of the dynamics of which they are a part. The very act of articulation, of course, has the potential to further change the dynamics, leading to further perceptions and articulations in a continual open hermeneutic circle. We are not looking for the depth level truth or the essence of coherence; we are trying to understand coherence as immediate event, action and occurrence. We use our diologic square (dio-logic is the logic of disambiguation) to reveal the social and performative complexity of the parole of coherence - i.e. of 'doing-coherence'. We use the square to reveal emergent processes, even though Greimas used his semiotic square to prioritize structure.

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Though our analysis is most definitely not strictly Greimasian, how he explains the dynamics between the four positions was critical to our thinking and helps establish the need for narrative. Up to now we have set out the differences between the four poles or positions, but not stressed the interactions between them. Greimas sees the four positions as relationships, interactions and processes. Coherence, and resonance are the dynamical products of these relationships.

In the Greimasian analysis, the contrariety between S1 and S2 is defined between a position of assertion (S1) and one of negation (S2). The contrariety between -S2 and -S1 is between a position of non-assertion (-S2) and one of non-negation (-S1). The relationships S1 / -S2 and S2 / -S1 are relationships of complementarity. The relationships S1 / -S1 and S2 / -S2 are characterized by contradiction. The symbols (S1, S2, -S1, -S2) represent the four positions within the system. S1 / S2 represent a binary opposition --- an assertion (S1) is met by its negation (S2), such as in the dualities subject/object, identity/activity or causal/emergent. The lower corners (-S2 / -S1) of the semiotic square represent positions that cannot be accounted for by simple binary oppositions ---- such as the comparison between non-subject and non-object. Différence as defined by -S2 / -S1 is a relationship of opposition and reciprocity, or of distinction and unity.



The meaning of the relationship -S2 / -S1 is not self-evident, fixed or determined. Here, there is openness. The observer has to search for ways to interpret the -S2 / -S1 pair. The two terms together form a 'not-fixed-identity'. The one represents the shadow side of the assertion (S1) --- the assertion that plays the role of the first given, and that brings the semiotic square into play. The other term (-S1) represents the shadow side (S2) of the negation of the assertion (S1). S2 / S1 is the initial polarity or conflict in the system or the binary opposition which generates the relationships of the semiotic square. The shadow side of the original binary opposition is formed by (-S1) or the non-assertion, and (-S2) or the non-negation.

The complex dynamics of the interactions captured in this relation are what interested us and inspired our thought that such a diagram could help in the articulation of emergent coherence. To illustrate: S1 could be 'hot' and S2 'cold'. S1 / S2 are thus binary contraries - equivalent to an 'A / not-A' relationship. If we allow the negative sign distinction to mean "not quite" then -S1 is lukewarm and -S2 is cool. The -S1 / -S2 relationship is certainly not that of binary opposites, and it is problematic to characterize. We can construct another example based on beliefs by labeling S1 as 'He is a Marxist' and S2 as 'He is an ardent Catholic'. The notion of binary opposites holds in some matters, but not in others: -S1 could be: 'He is a Catholic but does not deny the Marxist analysis of social relations'. And -S2 could be: 'He is a Marxist but does not deny the existence of God'. (Rulewicz, 2000) Obviously -S1 and -S2 are not the same, but their differences are dialogic or twined up in relationships to one another.

The horizontal relationships in the semiotic square (S1 / - S2 and S2 / -S1) are a continuum. For instance if S1 is 'individual identity' and -S2 are 'group roles', a continuum between how individuals act and think as separate monads and how they act and think collectively is indicated. The relationship between S1 / - S2 and S2 / -S1 can be complementary. Such a relationship between differing positions is mutually reinforcing. If S1 is 'self' and -S2 is 'world', or S1 is 'I' and -S2 is 'group', the relationships can both be congruous and conflictive. If the S1 / -S2 positions, are at odds with one another, cognitive dissonance and/or conflict is likely. Between S1 / -S2 there are lines of 'implication' --- that is, the factors are related to one another and have something to do with one another. The diagonal terms of S1 / -S1 and S2 / -S2 create contrasting relationships. What is asserted or present is contrasted to what is hidden or only implied. S1 and S2 are 'strong signals' --- that is explicit, forceful and apparent; while -S1 and -S2 are 'weak signals' or emergent, messy and tentative.

It is not the semiotic square itself which has import here. Nor is it the existence of the contraries, contradictories and complementarities that counts. It is the resonance of the pattern of the inter-dynamics which matters. The patterns amount to dialogue about and amongst the elements. This dialogue can produce narrative as its artifact. When resonance about that narrative is observed and attended to, when underlying homology is thus experienced, coherence can be experienced.

The format of the semiotic square forms the basis for our dialogic square. Let us chart one of these squares using the example of the parody song from the front matter. The song is written and recorded by song writers (upper left corner --self). It is picked up by other media and bloggers (lower left corner - - group) whose reactions about the song are then distributed as social commentary (upper right corner - - other/environment). Then there is reaction to the reaction and social commentary on the song writer and on the bloggers who chose to react (emergence -- lower right corner). These reactions to the reactions take the form of a small network feedback loop (notice the line in the song about "*Won't you blog about this song?*"). Isolating any one element may be of interest in and of itself, but the resonance from the song involves dialogue amongst and about all four elements. Listener's (or readers) could relate some element of their own story, to the story in the song, about the song, about the song writers, about the reaction to ... the resonance and the coherence are in the interplay of the relationships and not in any of the individual elements.

Within our dialogic square our text has examined four key concepts (self, emergence, group, other/environment,) mainly through their counterparts (coherence, emergence, homology, affordance). The terms were linked both positively in terms of resemblances, and dialogically in terms of differences. For instance, groups resemble the self in that they have agency, identity and (a sort of) consciousness. But groupthink, group identity and group norms, are all defined in opposition to individual consciousness and responsibility. Other and emergence are both contrary to self, in far as they are self-constituting and operate on aggregation levels higher than the individual. While other is an identity, force, principle or logic alien to self, emergence is characterized by a very open variable logic. The self possesses identity, unicity and specificity; groups possess all of these, but much less so. Organization via the other of rules/law, hierarchy and bureaucracy opposes self; while emergence destabilizes aspects of

the self but often creates moments of change, creativity and innovation wherein the self can come to expression. Thus the fourfold analysis has pointed to numerous tensions, relationships and possibilities.

What both Greimas's semiotic square and our dialogic square do is map relationships and make options visible. The four factors discussed here --- self, group, other/environment, and emergence --- define a complex field of possible ideas, assumptions and possibilities. By making use of the square as a base, its format can be helpful in mapping potential dialogics. One can posit a concrete situation, contextually fill-in any one term, and then examine how the other terms pan out. A whole field of relationships, possibilities and issues becomes immediately discernible. Experimenting with our dialogic square reveals that many discussions of management practice and research operate in force field(s) defined by three or four of the terms:

1. Organizations locked into their own logic (self) and unable to innovate (in the environment unable to be Other) need to become less resistant to change (emergence) for instance by fostering the development of innovative groups (group).
2. Entrepreneurial leadership (self) cannot provide enough management scope as organization grows and changes (emergence), quality control is chosen to bring the organization back under control (standards of Other in the environment).
3. Chaos and adhocracy (emergence) are psychologically untenable and ethically irresponsible (self), without group support and solidarity (group).
4. Bureaucracy (objectified logic of rational Otherness defining an environment) frustrates motivation, involvement and the sense of self-worth (self), organization needs de-bureaucratization, creativity and innovation (emergence).
5. Team work (group) is personally rewarding (self) because it stimulates activity and originality (emergence).
6. Strategy (totally desirable Otherness) has to be embedded in the minds of the organization (group), to achieve change (emergence).
7. Entrepreneurship (self) lets (emergence) effective shared systems develop (Otherness), or it fails.

Statements containing all four factors will always be paradoxical and unstable. They will include individual and the collective processes and objectifying structure(s) of Otherness and the indeterminacy of emergent change. Difference thinking is inevitably unstable --- deconstruction, or trying to think foreground and background, unicity and context, identity and otherness all at once, displays the complexity of things but remains inherently always out of balance. One cannot think self, group, other/context and emergence all at once, and remain consistent. The best we can do often is to tell stories where we are able to provide multiplicities, contingencies and situatedness all at once. Such stories are on a content level often self-inconsistent, but performatively coherent. What is narrated is the 'authentic' voice (more on this later) of the teller, though the told may be unstable, somewhat indefinite and ambiguous. Stories are often not necessarily logical, consistent or rationally continuous. Character (or self) can change, morality (or group) can be unstable in its actions, progress can be discontinuous (providing for emergence) and context (or Other) can change positions.

What is at stake here is lived or experienced coherence and not rational coherence. Social science often makes an a priori choice for theoretical coherence --- whatever is analyzed must be presented as logically consistent. The logical coherence of theories and categories is prioritized above all other criteria. The rational quality of the reductive representation is privileged above all other matters. But often in organization, no logically coherent reductive representation is possible that does justice to events. Circumstances are self-contradictory, the tension between self and non-self, between consistency and inconsistency, between structured and chaotic is indeterminant, undecided and constantly changing. By prioritizing the reductive representation and encoding all experiences with a very limited number of social science concepts (agency, class, gender, self-identity, return on investment, ...) one impoverishes research in very narrow structures of attribution.

The so-called narrative turn in social sciences proposes to take the texts of the researched seriously. Its promise is to break out of the narrow boundaries of the previous mechanisms of attribution and to put 'experience' center stage. But accounts of experience can be hysterical, self-serving, uncritical, hopelessly partial and downright silly. Researchers like Barbara Czarniawska escape the narrative conundrum of what to honor as 'narrative' and what not, by researching character and plot in stories. The narrative has to be a 'story' with a coherent plot and consistent characterization or it is not researched. Yannis Gabriel makes a similar 'move' by limiting himself to stories that he can classify as romances, satires, comedies or tragedies (or mixed genres like romantic comedies, etcetera).

None of this tries to study relationship in situ. The narrative-turn in effect examines literary forms in the texts of whomever is studied. This is clearly ascribed sense-making. By labeling an in-company story of change as "crisis, leading to control via concentration of responsibility, producing mobilization & recovery" one creates a text at great distance from participants, events or experience (Czarniawska ...Organization vol 4 no 1 pp 7-30). This may be excellent attributed coherence, but it is not experiential coherence. And if we map the illustration via the semiotic square, we see that Other (crisis) leads to self (assertion of leadership and authority), leading to group (mobilization). There is no emergence, but ever repeating patterns of self-other-group (in all and any order). The 'stories' are tightly structured around repeating rational patterns. Remapping onto our dialogic square suggests where a future dialogue might go. One sees homologies in the repeating patterns and some of their affordances come in the form of reaction. Channeling the reaction towards an outside force could allow for a diffusion of the crisis and for the possibility of innovation. The template is that of a political ploy -- when in trouble domestically create an external crisis to channel reactants' energy to. The difference is that our dialogic square allows the emergence to be recognized. This allows the resulting narrative to be an open dynamic which is part of the on-going hermeneutic circle rather than a leftover relic from its closed past.

David Boje is the one organizational researcher who has attempted to champion narrative in action with his idea of 'terse' stories -- or bits and pieces of text examined in context. But for instance in his extensive work on Nike he never really lets the actants speak. The narrative is his narrative on injustice, manipulation and conflict. How do Nike employees experience their own situation? Boje writes about

his political concerns about a multinational, and never about insiders circumstantial experiencing. The 'coherence' is in Boje's politics and not in the ethnography.

Furthermore, nearly all the organizational researchers of the narrative turn are interested in stories and not in lived or experienced narrative. That organization hangs together from speech and speech acts seems fairly clear. But we suggest there are far fewer stories than the researchers would have you believe. There are text fragments or 'terse' stories, but story-telling is infrequent. Speech is interactive - -- filled-in by the one and then the other. Most of the time speech has to do with talking to one another and not with story-telling. An organization characterized by a series of monological story-tellings would, we believe, be rather ineffective.

Arthur Frank asserts in the Wounded Storyteller that to really stay with a story, is to experience it resonating one's own life. It is this sense of textual interrelatedness that we wish to explicate. The choice to listen and hear, or for openness, is a moral choice. Not hearing has its advantages --- one just attributes the same old self-serving, safe and familiar categories to everything and anything. It is a self-determined choice to listen. Thus one can choose to listen, it is a possibility. Its potential reward is coherence or positively experienced emergence and its potential cost the confrontation with indeterminacy or negatively experienced emergence. All we can offer you is the possibility of listening, dialogue and relationship --- qualities that Charles Taylor (1991) calls 'authenticity.'

Organizational coherence can be retrospectively mapped via the dialogic possibilities revealed by the square. To do so, one needs to tell narratives encompassing all four dimensions of activity. Self, in relationship to self-and-other, as manifestation of group identity, confronts organizational order, which is in tension with creativity, emergence and dynamism. If all four factors of the dialogic square are acknowledged, then the interactions between the various dimensions can have revealed (but perhaps only momentary) coherence. But if one or more pole is lacking, the field of interaction will be fundamentally flawed.

The conceptual pattern of 3 + 1 can be visualized as follows in a semiotic square:

Experiencing	World /
Subject	Affordances

Heuristics	<i>Emergence</i>
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The experiencing subject (or self) is a product of the assumptions, language and mental structures with which its acts of consciousness are constructed. It is not true that the self IS its heuristics, but everything it can experience depends upon them. Other is what the Self IS NOT --- it is world, material substance(s) and affordances or how circumstances invite response(s). Heuristics are part and parcel of mind or consciousness; they are structures that make awareness possible. World and affordances also make existence possible, but are not part of the experiencing mind but of what is other or outside to it. The relationship(s) between HEURISTICS <> SELF <> WORLD can only be described or modeled from outside the triad and this is the position of the (+1) that is the reflective viewpoint that is on another aggregation level as that of the triad of Heuristics / Self / World that is in and/or close to phenomenal existence. The triad is an homology of consciousness aware of its own assumptions, in contact with circumstance or the surrounding world, and as experienced perceptual openness and awareness. This homology can only be seen and/or understood from a position at some distance from the phenomenal triad. That position we called the MODELLING RELATIONSHIP --- it is the awareness of coherence that is grounded in experiential emergence but as soon as it is categorized or modeled has to be transported to an abstract level of analysis. Homologies are not directly phenomenally perceived --- their elements can be seen, metaphors of their operations can be constructed, but they are pre-conscious or pre-reflective. SELF and HOMOLOGY do not directly, experientially touch one another. When we say that HEURISTICS <> SELF <> WORLD resonate in coherence, we assert an homology that cannot be directly, fully experienced on the level of the SELF.

We call the (+1) EMERGENCE --- that is, it is the nonlinear, not to be understood in terms of the rest, phenomena or principle. We can only point to emergence after it takes place and take account of its potential of coming to take place as a possibility, but not 'as a fact'. We can enumerate what resonates -- that is, what elements come to emerge into coherence, as pre-conscious dynamics and/or as after-the-fact observations. Emergence is never directly experienced but only perceived indirectly as possibility, past-event, likelihood or metaphor. In the modeling relationship the effort can be made to state the homologous relationships that are contributing to emergent coherence. But such statement remains circumstantial, tentative and open.

The semiotic square represents our effort to make the (3+1) logic accessible to further awareness, application and study. Note, however, that the descriptive system developed in this book has four plus one elements --- that is, the four dimensions to the semiotic square plus the consciousness that is following it. We assert that all elements have to be recognized or honored for coherence to be possible and imply that 'coherence' is to a significant degree an alternative word for 'authenticity' when focusing on the observer (or the plus one).

As in ProjectMagi, one can get self and change without order, structure or governance. Or one can get command and control without commitment or creative possibility. Group identity can kill (via group think) emergence. Too much emergence can lead to burn-out and despair. Organizations actually need to reconcile a series of seemingly irreconcilable forces. It is the raw moments wherein all four dimensions are present to one another in some sort of dynamic interaction, that are the moments called coherent.

Narrative and Homology

Contrary to the bulk of organizational science, as studied in the academy; the focus on models, metaphors and labels (the roots of ascribed coherence) are not enough. To understand what appears to be a “coherent experience” as something more than mere disjointed incidents, we need to deconstruct and conciliate the experiences, their descriptions, and their contexts. We need to see and understand the workings of difference and complexification, but also appreciate the synthesizing role of identity, self and Other. We must cohere --- that is, focus on the moments of connectedness wherein for a continuum (however brief) there is relationship, and some sort of unity / unicity. This ‘coming together’ points to common underlying models (homologies) and to the narratives that arise out of them. These narratives are triggered not by the homologies themselves, but by the affordances of the contexts, in which they have been embodied.

The so-called ‘narrative-move’ has changed social studies. Attention is being paid to what people really say and not just to the analytical or rational reconstruction of what they do (behavior). Hereby social studies has come much closer to consciousness, as to what people say (their narratives) which seems to resemble to a larger measure their thoughts.

But the turn to narrative is often interpreted to be the turn to storytelling and storytelling is really very different from everyday speech. Common speech is interactive – it is characterized by short bursts to talk, switching back and forth between two or more participants. In speech, the discourse is co-evolving and socially (collectively) constituted. Storytelling is very different. Storytelling is much more characterized by character (one consistent speaker) and plot (a progression of action following fairly standard models such as epic, comedy, tragedy, etcetera).

Storytelling is profoundly rhetorical --- it is out to convince, move and/or persuade. Stories are most of the time profoundly intentional --- a story is told to make a point or achieve a result. People talking to one another is also intentional, but much more fluid. Natural talk meanders, moves back and forth, engages and disengages. Shared speech is a process of relationship that is much more emergent than is storytelling. Storytelling is championed in business studies as performative --- as a way to get things done, as a motivational tool and as an effective way of providing leadership. Storytelling is a didactic tool that intends to influence the listener. Its goal is not emergent but strategic and purposeful.

Dialogue is a process of speech wherein the interactive potential of verbal relationship plays a major role. In dialogue thoughts are worked out, emotions are worked through and circumstance is interactively verbalized. Dialogue makes use of language’s emergent ability to generate relationship --- be it of agreement or disagreement, inclusiveness or exclusiveness, freedom or unfreedom. Dialogue is a process of verbal resonance, but the relatedness can take a myriad of forms.

Narrative is important to us here in so far as it is dialogic. When narrative is co-constituted and speech is world revealing and circumstantially generative, then shared speech is emergent. Such relationship can

be coherent. Storytelling is a universe of attribution --- an effort is made to ascribe a meaning to a situation, organization, event and/or proposal. The storyteller takes the initiative to influence the story listener. An effort is made to convey a purpose or intent from one to the other.

Narrative is defined as inherently ordering --- it is a 'telling' in the form of a causally linked set of events. Narrative puts the part --- normally a human action or event, into the whole --- i.e. the meaning of the episode. In narrative, the elements are related or connected to the story, which can be the 'whole' but can also merely be the ascribed forcing of circumstance into category. Narratives can connect or relate events to one another.

Narratives contain knowledge and stories ---- which communities of persons negotiate and engage in, to give meaning to their experiences. Narratives comprise practices of self and of relationship, which define existing ways of life. Authoring and re-authoring the structure of the prevailing narratives is a powerful way of establishing, influencing and changing shared meanings and actions.

Narratives based on homologies are similar to the use of "templates" in the innovation literature [c.f.].

Templates represent replicable patterns that may be generalized across variables and products. Unlike surface properties, Templates are "deep" structures that rely on regularities which have been proven successful in other contexts. Products that match templates may be perceived as superior because they elicit "unrecognized familiarity" they rely on regularities that have been proven successful in other contexts (possibly even by the same consumers) but the specific underlying regularities are not noticeable within the new context since they do not resemble the information which the other contexts contain. When structural similarities are revealed, and a distinction is clearly drawn between them and surface properties, analogies from remote and unrelated domains may occur. Such inter-domain analogies may be effective when they are based on similarities embedded among the surface differences. The difficulty in easily applying a dual transfer framework, in which both kinds occur concurrently, is that individuals have limited access to structural properties and they can not distinguish between surface and structural properties. Hofstadter observed "deep' analogies, those that force the generation of new and more general rules, rather than simply providing an occasion for applying rules already learned to a new example. In much the same way, templates seem deep because the analog lacks surface similarities, which are normally observable by consumers. Templates are hidden and can be detected mainly by scientific analysis. Only when they are detected and validated externally, can they guide consumer, in enhancing processing outcomes. (Goldenberg and Mazursky, 2002)

Templates resemble constitutive and generative principles (Fauccioner and Turner, 2000). They afford the possibility of innovation based on emergence. They trigger new thoughts and meanings. Their meaning for innovation can be understood on the basis of Vygotsky's theory of higher order processes.

Vygotsky differentiates between direct relatively unmediated perception, and perception mediated by higher principles. The world of gloms is very unstructured; things hang together almost by happenstance. The universe of narratives is bound by common sense; it is a structured and governed world of perception and action. Via high order principles, fundamental ordering questions can be addressed. From a glom perspective, an organization is a loosely coupled system of activities and events. A narrative of the same organization shows much more order --- it sees hierarchy, notes principles of action, comprehends the social economic environment within which the organization functions. One needs higher order principles to inquire into necessity and fortuitousness, history and human nature, circumstance and (social) ethics. Basic assumptions about history and technology, politics and power, individuality and collectivism are all 'homologous' and only approachable via higher conceptual principles.

Resonance (or echoing) above a certain threshold is a characteristic of coherence. This is recognized in the notion of experienced coherence and retrospectively denied in the case of ascribed coherence. Coherence is not a base case. Incoherence is.

How does incoherence give birth to synchrony? ... view incoherence as an equilibrium state and then calculate its stability. Incoherence was not a single state; it was a family of infinitely many states. The strategy was reminiscent of the artist's concept of negative space: To understand the object, understand the space around it. Just as the theories suggest, oscillators are incoherent below a threshold. The forces they exert cancel each other out. They remain incoherent even as the coupling between them is increased; the coherence does not grow gradually. Then suddenly, once the coupling exceeds a certain threshold synchrony breaks out cooperatively. (Strogatz, 2003)

Before there can be music, there is 'white noise'. Before there is complex social order there is the horde and anarchy of the tribe. As Michel Serres has explored, order is imposed on disorder, silence on noise, structure on chaos, sociability on (relative) anarchy. The processes of biological and social complexification involve adding energy (i.e. will, desire, determination) in order to achieve higher order. But higher order is both a process of complexification and of simplification. In higher order more elements are coordinated, made purposeful, directed. The collection of sub-elements is very complex; the collective order is often very simple. Complexification takes the multiple and creates the singular. Many different individuals become one organization, many technologies are integrated into one machine and many ideas are smelted into a single policy. Such phase transitions are themselves often emergent in their contingency (such as a traffic jam or the "failure" of the millennium bridge, or of the steel superstructure of the World Trade Center), even if they are not emergent when viewed as an abstract category. Again we encounter the difference between the experience of coherence (contingent phase transition) and the abstractness of ascription. Emergence is denied in ascribed coherence and embraced in experienced.

Metaphors, stories, and memories involve (re-)presentation. A metaphor re-presents one thing in terms of another and influences thought. A memory re-presents an experience encountered in the

past. A story narrates a past, present or future event. All three contain truths and fictions, thoughts and emotions; and all three overlap. Memories are stories, stories consist of memories, and both are often expressed through metaphors. The fusion of memory, metaphor and story, enables the creation of meaning. Via 'meaning' one sees personal relevance in a specific affordance, or set of affordances. When we are exposed to metaphors, stories, and memories, we don't passively absorb their messages. Instead, we create their meaning by mixing information, memories and ideas. (G. Zaltman, 2003). "Metaphors do not exist as words in memory, but as networks of abstract understandings that constitute part of our mental imagery" (Mitchell, 1994).

Mitchell's observation is not quite right. Metaphors (and models and labels) are tokens which can create networks of meaning in the form of narratives and stories. Recognizing this evocative quality, and then giving primacy to the stories so evoked, is vastly different from the traditional management science approach of giving preferred status to the metaphor/model/label, and allowing it to stand for the supposed object which is being metaphorized, modeled, or labeled. Our repeated emphasis on the hermeneutical structure of understanding echoes the contrast between contextualism and nominalism. All understanding is contextual --- linked to the circumstances and assumptions, prior descriptions and intellectual commitments of the participants. But this is not mere nominalism --- understanding is historical, situational and emergent, but it is not random happenstance or merely willed.

Homologies link two or more (perhaps disjoint) items via an underlying logic or model. Each homologue has many differences from the others. But, the models on which homologies are based, are still just models. What matters are the stories and narratives told, as triggered by attention to the affordances of those models in context. Dialogue to reveal the coherent adjacent possibles will evoke stories from participants. It is these stories and narratives that have the potential to evoke the resonance experienced as coherence.

Ascribed coherence examines the match between model and suggested use. The London Subway map fares well from the perspective of subway management. Experienced coherence, however, examines the map relative to how it is enacted. It looks at the stories told by the users. It recognizes that maps do not have much meaning to a foreigner who has no mental image of the city. Nor strangely do these maps have much meaning for those who possess detailed mental knowledge of the city. When one of the authors surveyed London cab drivers (who are required to possess "the knowledge" a very detailed understanding of London's drivable streets) they often expressed dismay at the unintelligibility of the abstract subway map. The decontextualized model was devoid of meaning. Indeed the meaning of the map is dependent upon the user providing context to it (as in the Karl Weick 1979 story of the lost group rescuing themselves with the wrong map). Maps derive meaning from the network of stories and narratives that attend to their affordances.

Traditional management practices and teachings focus on the maps and their ascribed coherence, measured against some predefined objective. Models/metaphors/labels are indexical – they stand for the imagined object. Like identical shadows that can be cast by very different objects, the indexical quality of these objects is the Achilles heel that threatens interpreter and audience alike. A reliance on

shallow indexicals is a curse of modern management theory and practice. Shallow indexicals may have ascribed coherence, but lacking the underlying rigor of homology, they and their affordances seldom can trigger resonance above the critical threshold to generate experienced coherence.

Experienced coherence focuses instead on practice, on the narratives of life. Stories and narratives sometimes resonate above a critical threshold and produce coherence. That coherence is contemporaneous not retrospective, participatory not judgmental, open to emergence not resistant to it and rooted in an embrace of complexity not its exclusion.

Complexity science suggests that weak signals may be revelatory of underlying foundations, boundaries and constraints that operate as the container within which self-organization occurs. A complexity theory of organization is one that pays attention to the affordances and to their networks of containing forces. When the container is enabling, and the networks are strong, experiential coherence can not only occur, but can be seen to be self-reinforcing. When the container is restricting, and the networks are weak, self-organization has far more limited possibilities. We may hope for the former but we are often stuck with the latter.

Narrative is constructed by a series of three linked protocols that may be learned even by those of us who lack the storyteller's knack. The first of these sorts the elements of a story into foreground and background. The narrative that serves the purposes of the author is set entirely in the foreground. The background may change over the course of the narrative and may influence the people and events to whom the author asks us to attend. It does not, however, claim our imaginative engagement and understanding. The second protocol prescribes that narratives, unlike life itself, must have a beginning and an end. We do not need to know about events before the beginning in order to grasp the purposes of the narrative. Events after the end of the narrative are similarly irrelevant if they do not add to the cogency of the account. The third protocol guides authors and narrators in endowing individuals and social entities with recognizable identities, grounding the interactions of the protagonists in their characters, memories, and aspirations. (Mandelbaum, 2003)

Bruner (1990) suggests a slightly different set of protocols or processes:

First, the sequential order of narrative provides structure. It is this internal structure, or plot, that gives the narrative its meaning, one that has nothing to do with a reality, true or false, outside of its self. The meaning of the narrative lies in its overall configuration or plot and each event, happening, or mental state takes its meaning from the overall configuration. In order to make sense of the constituent aspects of the narrative one must grasp the overall plot. Narratives are inextricably interwoven truth and possibility. Second, narratives display sensitivity to what is ordinary and what is exceptional in human interaction. The negotiation of meaning between people is made possible by this

feature of narrative. Narrative achieves its meaning by identifying deviations from the ordinary in a comprehensible form. As they interact with each other in a group, each person takes it for granted that others will behave appropriately in a given situation, the norms for such appropriateness having been established by their history of interacting with each other. In other words, the habits, or practices developed in the past create expectations for current and future action. When people behave in what is taken to be the normal, ordinary way, there is no need for further explanation. It is simply taken for granted and if pressed for an explanation, people normally reply that such actions are what everybody does or is supposed to do. However, deviations from these expected actions, or ways of speaking, trigger a search for meaning that is usually provided by a story giving an account of an alternative world in which the unexpected action makes sense, that is, provides reasons for the behavior. Third, narrative mediates between cultural norms and unique individual beliefs, desires and hopes. It renders the exceptional comprehensible. It provides a means of constructing a world and identifying its flow as well as regulating the affects of people. (Stacey, 2003)

Thus, the danger that only those aspects that “fit” some preconceived picture are acknowledged in the narrative. Then, coherence is but coincidence, and strategy is but collective illusion. We may rely (all too much) on such illusions.

Consider, if you will, the concept of ‘search’ as it relates to the Internet. Present technology relies heavily on taxonomies (list of words and meanings), keywords, and “tags” (labels). At times, such tags and keywords may be sufficient to allow the searcher to find desired material. At other times, the reliance upon pre-cast relationships and mappings between documents and tags means that relevant material is overlooked or never seen. The tag that would have indicated relevance was never placed on the material and the material itself was not examined just the keywords and tags. The same process applies to managerial dictums and models. When we accept the constraints imposed by the models and narratives we are limiting ourselves to the equivalents of keywords and tags. Escape from the boundaries of the container can be a heavy cognitive burden.

There are other ways. One can emphasize a pre-figured closed system of the hermeneutics that leads to the narrative --- and then narrativity becomes a restrictive and conservative concept. One can, alternatively, attend to the affordances of the narrative process. What is it in society and organization that invites story-telling; what do people accomplish via narratives and by innovating with their narratives? One can see narrative as the near unending repetition of storylines or patterns; but one can also see narrative as collective inventiveness and emergent sense-making. It is again the distinction between the narrative and narrativity --- as in the difference between organization (object) and organizing (process). The emergent quality of narrative activity is what interests us when narrativity joins the process thinking of social complexity theory. Boje’s concept of dialogic narrativity, in fact, resembles our concept of resonance.

The theorists obviously disagree about the implications of the narrative process. Are metaphors helpful or dangerous, necessary or treacherous, democratic or authoritarian? This debate spills over into the consideration of the hermeneutic circle. We see with the help of concepts and paradigms that we use to understand our circumstances and ourselves. But does that mean that we always just see more of the same, as long as our assumptions do not change? How flawed is our vision --- how far do we slip into self-fulfilling prophecies wherein we just re-see our own assumptions, over and over again?

It is narrative that allows resonances to happen. Homologies are observed. Dynamic patterns and patterns of processes do recur. It is the attending to the recurrence which creates the affordance of coherence. And, in a positive feedback loop, it is the affordances of that coherence which can further the next recurrences of the pattern and their being attended to, and so on.

A narrative is not about the reality of a situation. Rather, the point of a story is to lay out in the open what the narrator suggests is important. Narratives are not about being objective, but are instead displays of subjectivity. Clearly in a narrative there is representation. There is also compression down to just what the narrator considers significant enough for it to be included in the story (Cronon,1992). If modeling is representation, and analogy is compression, then a narrative is the outcome of the Rosen modeling relation. A narrative is the representation of a compression, which is integrated at a higher level of analysis. The beauty of a narrative is that it can rise above a model. While complexity is something that cannot be modeled, one can still tell a story about it directly. . The narrative is an expression, not of the verity of anything, but of the values that are shifting as the story unfolds.

In a constructivist world there is never a blank slate, and everything is always built on how past experience opened our minds. If all our independent experiences depend on our individual construction events, then it indeed is a puzzle that we can agree on much at all. The power of science comes from the capacity of its narratives to convince us that something is general, and we should agree on it. And this agreement arises even when the story is quite long and encompasses inconsistencies. Furthermore, we seem to be able to agree even when there is no logical necessity in the outcome. The unity in all this comes from narratives simultaneously addressing multiple variables. As the narrator finishes dealing with one part of the story, the narrator and listener have been made open to appreciate some new part of the story. The narrator/listener has been constructed into something new and more open. This newly constructed person can then appreciate some new part of the story based on a different local model. This process is asymmetrical. Once the narrator/listener has been constructed, the process is irreversible. Once you understand, you are changed forever. Narratives make us aware. (Zellmer, Allen, & Kesseboehmer, 2007)

We developed the dialogic square as a means of eliciting and articulating the narratives which we have found to resonate and contribute to coherence. With any of the squares' four elements one can conduct analysis. With subsets of the elements, one can create mappings and categories and find or not find retrospective ascribed coherence. But to have experience, to deal with and even perhaps guide emergent coherence, one needs narrative. Only narrative can function to represent the ongoing complexity of the current situation while leaving itself open to emergence and adjacent possibles. The inclusion of emergence is part of what distinguishes narrative from model -- it is the why we care when Zellmer et al state that "narratives make us aware."

Awareness is a large part of preparedness -- of the sagacity required to allow miracles and nasty surprises to have serendipity as one of their affordances. To such potential sagacity we now turn.