A Grounded Analysis of the Sensemaking Process of Korean Street-Level Fire Service Officials

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A GROUNDED ANALYSIS OF THE SENSEMAKING PROCESS OF KOREAN STREET-LEVEL FIRE SERVICE OFFICIALS

By

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To the Memory of My Father (Sun-Pyo Jeong)
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ABSTRACT

This is a study to critically explain how Korean street-level fire service officials make sense of problematic working situations in which they find themselves. The study wanted to three interrelated questions. First, how do Korean street-level fire service officials, through the process of conscious meaning construction, enact their problematic situations and adjust their meanings to the enacted situations? Second, how do the officials consciously draw upon existing institutional practices in the constructions of meaning and develop these institutional practices through such meaning constructions? Third, how do they, through social interactions with others, accomplish the meanings of problematic situations? My answers to these questions were drawn from a grounded analysis of forty five sensemaking episodes that I collected from individual interviews.

To clarify the ways in which my research participants had handled their unstructured working situations, the analysis included a multi stage iterative process. First, I examined their personal stories of the situations. Second, I developed codes inductively from their stories. Third, I generated theoretical assertions of the process in which they had constructed particular meanings of the problematic situations before them. As patterns and anomalies emerged, I used data to validate them in an iterative way, going back and forth between theory and data. Finally, the analysis concluded with a grounded model of the meaning construction (sensemaking) process.

On the basis of such a data analysis, the study shows Korean street-level fire service officials’ sensemaking process as one in which they consciously update the initial working relationship that they have to the physical things in their world of work, or actively construct a new dimensional working relationship with the physical things in-relation-to the social encounterers in the field of their work.
CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Five Characteristics of the Study

This is a study to explain how the participants in an organizational network structure problematic situations that they encounter in their work. The study’s results are derived from a grounded analysis of the actual working experiences obtained from Korean street-level fire service officials.

The study has five characteristics. First, as indicated in the above “problematic,” the research investigates how organizational actors handle puzzling and troubling situations in which their ongoing activities are interrupted (Weick, 1995; Baez and Abolafia, 2002). Accordingly, the study does not focus on routine situations in which organizational members behave simply in habitual ways. Instead, the research places focus on non-routine situations in which organizational participants have movement away from habit and toward the exercise of conscious control over conduct (Hewitt, 1976, p.111). My study does not ask how individuals in organizations cope with normal situations that are not surprising (Louis, 1980, p.239). Rather, my research inquires how organized actors cope with surprising situations in which “active thinking” (Louis and Sutton, 1991, p.56) is triggered by any reasons.

Second, as implied in the opening reference to “structure,” the study analyzes a process of generating, recreating or reaffirming meanings, one in which individual actors wish to secure their “provinces of meaning” (Ranson, Hinings and Greenwood, 1980). The research considers individuals’ conscious effort to handle their problematic situations from the standpoint of “sensemaking,” a process by which individuals produce and acquire a sense of order that allows them to coordinate in ways that have mutual relevance (Weick, 2000, p.26). In this context, my study examines the ways in which the members convert problematic situations into intelligible situations (Weick, 2000, pp.4-5) by laying down symbolic and material records (Smiricich and Stubbart, 1985, pp.726-727).
Third, as connoted in the earlier use of “network,” my research views the organization as “a dynamic web of human interactions” (Huber and Daft, 1987, p.151). The organization consists of people in association. Such association exists necessarily in the form of people acting toward one another and thus engaging in social interaction (Blumer, 1969, p.10). In this respect, the organization is the very interactions. The organization is not possible without interactions. If interaction activities stop, the organization disappears (Weick, 1995, p.75; Schall, 1983, p. 560).

In terms of sensemaking in organizations, therefore, we can say that organizational daily work is an endless chain of interactions between the self and others. Through such interactions, my “here and now” and their “here and now” are incessantly exchanged, by which my new “here and now” is continuously constructed and reconstructed under the context of imperfectly- shared-our “here and now” (Berger and Luckmann, 1967). In this context, my study highlights the sociality of individuals’ sensemaking in organizations and recognizes social interaction as a formative mechanism of meaning construction.

Fourth, as entailed in the term “explain” in the opening sentence, this paper investigates how organizational actors cope with problematic situations by relating their experiences in these situations to the sensemaking perspective. Consequently, my research is not a mere “description” that presents what has happened in a real organized setting without any theoretical framework. Nor is this study, on the other hand, a “classification” that merely relates data to a theoretical perspective in a compulsive, deductive, a priori way (Brockriede, 1974, pp.169-171). In the study, my “sensemaking (meaning construction)” perspective is the one that is selectively, inductively and inferentially driven and elaborated from the process of studying the participants’ experiences in problematic situations. Unlike a description or a classification, therefore, it can be said that this paper shows the result of active interaction between the collected data and a theoretical perspective drawn from the data. ¹

The fifth characteristic is related to the fourth. As mentioned in the phrase above, “a grounded analysis,” my research is a qualitative analysis of the ways in which the participants make sense of their problematic situations. The grounded theory approach is a qualitative research method that uses a systematic set of procedures to develop an inductively grounded analytical theory about a phenomenon (Strauss and Corbin, 1990, 1998; Glaser, 1990; Charmaz, 1990).

¹ Brockriede sharply differentiates an “explanation” from a “description” and a “classification.” For a more detailed understanding of these concepts, see Brockriede (1976).
Analysis in grounded theory is composed of a series of coding procedures by which data are broken down, conceptualized, and put back together in new ways (Strauss and Cobin, 1990, p.57). In a nutshell, the process of analyzing data (coding) in the grounded theory approach is for a researcher to make relationships by bringing connections and patterns to data so that the data become meaningful for him or herself. By constructing such relationships through the coding procedures, I attempt to make sense of how the participants make sense of their problematic situations. In this sense, this paper can be said to be my sensemaking of my subjects’ sensemaking.

**Rationale for the Sensemaking Perspective**

The rationale for studying sensemaking in an organizational world stems from the sober consideration of one important fact: In any organization at any moment somebody is thinking (Weick, 1979, p.43). Thinking or minded behavior is a process that individuals interact with themselves by using significant symbols (Reynolds, 1987, pp.63-64). That is, thinking is a replying to self, a conversation (Mead, 1982, p.46). By virtue of this internal communication (interaction) process, individuals can make indication to themselves of some things in their surroundings (Blumer 1978, p.98), through which they form their own “my images of the things and work on them” (Pondy and Mitroff, 1979, p.9). “To work on the images” means that people act toward the things on the basis of the meanings (images) that the things have for them (Blumer, 1969, p.2). This reminds us that that humans do not respond to the situations that play upon them, but to the meanings which they assign to the situations. In other words, people do not merely react to the surroundings (situations). Instead, people construct or build up their actions (Blumer, 1978, p.98) in the light of interpretations, which are derived from a process of self-interaction (thinking). “To work on the images” also implies that individuals externalize their interpretations via concrete activities (Porac, Thomas and Baden-Fuller, 1989, p.398).

People act, and in doing so impose the ascribed meanings on the environments that subsequently impinge on them (people). In the processes of acting out and of real-izing their ideas (Weick, 2000, p.195), individuals create the materials that become the constraints and opportunities they face (Weick, 1995, p.31). That is, people actively create or enact their own environments by making real the ideas that they have in their heads (Weick, 2000, p.195). There is not some impersonal “they” who puts these environments in front of passive people. Instead, the “they” is
people who are more active (Weick, 1995, p.31). That is to say, there is not some kind of monolithic, singular, fixed environment that exists detached from and external to people (Weick, 1995, p. 31). Rather, people construct the environments that impinge on them (Weick, 2000, p.179).

Taken together, human beings have a thinking ability, an ability to converse with themselves. People can, by virtue of this ability, create their own “my ideas (meanings)” about the environmentally situated information and map out their actions on the basis of those ideas. Also, individuals actively enact realities they inhabit (Isabella, 1990, p.91) by real-izing their ideas through actions, and in doing so they become very much a part of their own environments (Weick, 1995, p.31).

The sensemaking perspective for organizational research starts from this all significant fact: Organizations are “human systems” (Pondy, Frost, Morgan and Dandridge, 1983, p.4) that are composed of thinking actors, who invest meanings in the out world situations, and actively play upon them (the situations) that play upon them: Many organization theories have forgotten that they are dealing with human organizations (Pondy and Mitroff, 1979, p.17).

Based on Boulding’s classification of systems (Table 1.1) by their level of complexity (1956), real organizations are surely at level eight, collectivities of individuals who are self-conscious (thinking). Nevertheless, most current theoretical schemes of organizations are still at Boulding’s level one to four (Scott, 1998; Daft and Weick, 1984; Pondy and Mitroff, 1979), which downplay participants’ high capacities to conceptually vest meanings in their organizational lives and to actively real-ize their realities (meanings). Organizations are not merely disembodied structures in which individuals either play the role of “in-place metering devices” designed to register various abstract organizational properties such as complexity and formalization (Pondy and Mitroff 1979, p.17), or passively respond to environmentally-stimulated requirements or determinants. Organizations are neither mere control systems nor simple transformation processes. Organizations are more than those (Daft and Weick, 1984, p.293), because their components are capable of reflexive thought. In this context, the sensemaking perspective investigates the meaning construction side of organizational life that “mindless conceptions of organization” (Pondy and Mitroff, 1979, p.17) have for the most part failed to grasp.
Table 1.1: Boulding’s Hierarchy of System Complexity

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Framework: systems comprising static structure, such as the arrangements of atoms in a crystal or the anatomy of an animal.</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>Clockworks: simple dynamic systems with predetermined motions, such as the clock and the solar system.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td>Control systems: systems capable of self-regulation in terms of some externally prescribed target or criterion, such as a thermostat.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.</td>
<td>Open systems: systems capable of self-maintenance based on a throughput of resources from their environment, such as a living cell.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.</td>
<td>Blueprinted-growth systems: systems that reproduce not by duplication but by the production of seeds or eggs containing preprogrammed instructions for development such as the acorn-oak systems or the egg-chicken system.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.</td>
<td>Internal-image systems: systems capable of a detailed awareness of the environment in which information is received and organized into an image or knowledge structure of the environment as a whole, a level at which animal function.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7.</td>
<td>Symbolic-processing systems: systems that possess self-consciousness and are capable of generalizing or abstracting information into ideas (meanings), and symbols that stand for them. Humans function at this level.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8.</td>
<td>Social systems: multicephalous systems comprising actors functioning at level 7 who share a common social order and culture. Social organizations operate at this level.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9.</td>
<td>Transcendental systems: systems composed of the “absolutes and the inescapable unknowables.”</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(Scott, 1998, pp.83-84; Pondy and Mitroff 1979, pp.6-10)

Research Questions and Method

Sensemaking is a self conscious meaning construction (Gioia, 1986). Meaning arises from reflection (Weick, 1969). Reflection is the act of directing attention to, and in doing so, of singling out some lived (elapsed) experiences from the (individual’s) stream of experience (Schutz, 1967; Weick, 1969, 1995). The (individual’s) stream of experience is an unbroken stream of living experience, a “coming –to-be and passing –away that has no contours, no boundaries, and no differentiations” (Schutz, 1967, p.47). The stream of experience has no meaning in itself (Schutz, 1967, p.xxiii), because one can not be aware of, and therefore, “can not find any clearly differentiated experiences” (Schutz, 1967, p.47) to construct any meanings while still immersed in the stream. Instead, meaning emerges only when, by the act of reflection,
one “steps outside the stream” (Weick, 1969, p.64) and thereby looks at some discrete and separate experiences in the stream.²

The act of reflection is likely be provoked when the individual experiences something “out of ordinary” in his or her stream of experience (Pounds, 1969; Kilman and Mitroff, 1979; Louis and Sutton 1991). In this context, the following question that arises is a major topic of conversation in the field of organizational sensemaking³: How do individuals in organizations make sense of problematic situations in which their ongoing flow of experience is interrupted? Oddly enough, however, few scholars in the field have attempted to investigate empirically how individual actors in real organizational settings deal with their interruptions.

In association with the above topic, four central propositions guide the research. First, the process of sensemaking is a continual input-output cycle in which the subjective thinking (noticing and interpretation) of situations is objectified via “doing” (action) (Berger and Luckmann, 1967; Daft and Weick, 1984; Porac, Thomas and Baden-Fuller, 1989 ; Thomas, Clark and Gioia, 1993). Second, the “action” aspect of sensemaking is connected to a given situation, and by virtue of this connection the “thinking” aspect of sensemaking and the situation

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² If meaning is retrospectively ascribed to only elapsed experience, one question that must be faced is how we can explain the prospective meaning ascription to future experience. With regard to this issue, Schutz (1967) argues that even when people are anticipating future-experience, they must think about it as if it had already occurred. That is, when people think about the future, Schutz insists, their thinking is not done in the future tense, but rather in the future perfect tense (for example; “this will have happened,” not “this will happen”). In this context, Schutz says that future-experience gains meaning because attention is directed to it as if it had already occurred. For a more detailed understanding of this issue, see Schutz (1967), Weick (1969) and Gioia (1986).

³ When this manuscript refers to “organizational sensemaking,” it indicates sensemaking by individuals in organizations, not sensemaking by organizations.

Who make sense of things? As a matter of course, individuals in organizations do the sensemaking. Organizations are not entities that possess thinking capabilities. Therefore, organizations themselves cannot be said to make sense of things. For convenience’ sake, we can treat a collective as if it did the sensemaking in the case that individuals make sense of something in coalition with others. In even this case, however, it is not the collective itself that does the sensemaking in effect. Rather, it is individuals in the collective who really do the sensemaking.

I think that we need to be wary of extending the concept of sensemaking, which is derived from the individual level, to the organizational level. Because unreasonable homographic generalizations may raise only questions about anthropomorphism. With regard to this issue, Krippendorff (1975) identified two errors associated with the process of generalization. According to him, “errors of commission” appear when irrelevant information is imposed on the target domain. For example, when organizations are described as having sensemaking abilities, “errors of commission” may occur; that is, how useful is it to talk about the self-indication process that necessarily accompanies organizations making sense of something? “Errors of omission” appear when the information that is transferred covers only a part of what it pertains to. For example, having in mind an organismic conception of memory (an important element of sensemaking by individuals), researchers are more likely to look for and find information storage phenomena that are highly centralized as libraries are and that use semi-permanent storage media, as in the form of written records. Memory phenomena that are distributional and transient in character are thereby omitted. For a more detailed understanding related to anthropomorphic problems, see Krippendorff (1975), Walsh and Ungson (1991), and Cook and Yanow (1996).
are linked together in “a loosely coupled enactment process, in which each is determined partly, but not solely, by the other” (Porac, Thomas and Baden-Fuller, 1989, p.400; Weick, 1988). Third, organizational actors usually learn how they need to make sense of situations before them through their interactions with others and modify or reinforce already established meanings through additional interactions (Berger and Luckmann, 1967). Finally, the present sensemaking is constrained and empowered by existing “institutional practices (mental constructs)” in which it is embedded, and, in turn, these “institutional practices (mental constructs)” are reproduced and transformed in part by the very sensemaking (Giddens, 1979; Barely 1986; Scott 1995; Brower and Abolafia, 1996).

Based on these propositions, the paper wants to answer three interrelated questions:

Q1: How do organized actors, through the process of meaning construction, enact their problematic situations and adjust their meanings to the enacted situations?
Q2: How do organized actors in social interactions with others accomplish (construct) the meanings of problematic situations?
Q3: How do organized actors consciously draw upon existing institutional practices in the constructions of meaning and develop these institutional practices through such meaning constructions?

My answers to these questions are drawn from a grounded theory study of how street-level fire service workers in Korea manage the unknown situations that they verge upon. The study relies on data generated by individual interviews. Interviews are tape recorded and transcribed verbatim.

To clarify the ways in which my research participants handle their unstructured situations, the analysis includes a multi stage iterative process. First I examine their personal stories of the situations. Second, I develop codes inductively from their stories. Third, I generate theoretical assertions of the process in which they constructed particular meanings of the problematic situations before them. As patterns and anomalies emerge, I use data to validate them in an iterative way, going back and forth between theory and data. Finally, the analysis concludes with a grounded model of the meaning construction process.
Necessity for the Study

As the notion has been widely disseminated that individuals in organized settings realize their realities by “reading into” their situations patterns of significant meaning (Pondy, Frost, Morgan and Danridge, 1983, p.25), relevant scholars (e.g., Cohen, March and Olsen, 1972; Daft and Lengel, 1986; Brower, 1999; Weick, 1995, 2000; Baez and Abolafia, 2002) have seriously engaged the effort to understand sensemaking in organizations. Notwithstanding their thoughtful findings about sensemaking phenomena in organizations, however, there is much we do not know about organizational sensemaking. In particular, the ways in which individual actors deal with the situations that violate their perceptual frameworks are still left vague due to the lack of empirical research of sensemaking in real organizations.

This paper studies how Korean-street level fire service officials do emergency management work in terms of the meaning construction perspective. Any given disaster or emergency typically creates unique courses of events that substantially defy the automatic applications of plans and standard operation procedures (SOPs). Under the emerging circumstances not covered by old scripts, emergency management activities inevitably accompany a great deal of improvised meaning constructions of unstructured situations. Because of the very nature of emergency management, the study of the field can provide theoretically informative findings about how the members of the organizations impose “meaningful and sensible structure” (Morgan, 1980, p.617) upon their world.

In addition, we also know little about how participants cope with real emergency and disaster situations in everyday management contexts. With the exception of Weick’s case study (Weick, 1993), in particular, virtually no empirical studies have examined the activities of fire service workers in terms of the sensemaking perspective. In the case of Korea, fire service officials play a significant role in dealing with emergency and disaster events. Nevertheless, no single study of their activities has been undertaken. In this context, my study may offer useful information for improving management systems.

Lastly, I want to indicate that my dissertation is a qualitative study of Korean settings. Human beings have their own mental models for thinking and action. I expect that my study of an emergency management system in a different cultural area can provide an informative “signal” to the U.S sensemaking researchers and emergency practitioners to review their mental models—which are otherwise taken for granted and not readily accessible to them. On the other
hand, the sensemaking perspective is a relatively new one to the public administration scholars. I believe that my study can be an opportunity to get them to know a valuable lens for understanding the behavior of people in organizations.
CHAPTER 2
THREE STAGES OF SENSEMAKING IN THREE CONTEXTS

It is difficult to pinpoint sensemaking in organizations because its academic roots are sufficiently diverse and discipline specific. Diverse as its academic inputs might seem, however, there is a coherent view that runs through them: Organizational actors in social relations with others engage in ongoing events from which they extract cues and construct plausible meanings retrospectively on the basis of available “sensemaking practices” (Heap, 1975), all the while implanting a more or less tangible order into those ongoing events and structuring the practices that structure their sensemaking (Weick, 1995, 2000; Porac, Thomas and Baden-Fuller, 1989; Berger and Luckmann, 1967; Giddens, 1979; Gephart, 1997).

Sensemaking is what it says it is, namely, “making something sensible” (Weick, 1995, p.16). To make something sensible is to extricate “the” thing from its setting, and in doing so to confer a particular meanings on it (Blumer, 1978). As implied in the above statement, sensemaking includes a feedback process of confirming, elaborating, or revising the preceding notations and interpretations by externally manifesting, and in doing so making them material through “concrete behaviors” (Berger and Luckmann, 1967; Porac, Thomas and Balden-Fuller, 1989).

Sensemaking by individuals in organizations is often accomplished through interactions with others (Strauss, 1978; Fine, 1984). It is also guided by existing “institutional structures” (Giddens, 1979; Ranson, Hinings and Greenwood, 1980; Bartunek, 1984). Through such a sensemaking process, individuals continuously create the realities of their organizational daily lives toward which they subsequently “respond” (Weick, 2000), and reaffirm or modify the “institutional practices” that shape their sensemaking (Barely, 1986).

In this context, this chapter examines and organizes current discussion of the ways in which organizational members accomplish the realities of their situations by making sense of what occurs.
Three Stages of Sensemaking

The sensemaking process is neither simple nor well understood (Daft and Weick, 1984). There are many sensemaking related images in the literature, including noticing, scanning, attention, interpretation, encoding, thinking, doing, action, response (e.g., Hinz, Tindale and Vollarth, 1997; Fiske, 1992; Thomas, Clark and Gioia, 1993). These concepts can be organized into the following three stages that constitute the overall sensemaking process.\(^4\)

**Noticing**\(^5\)

In order to make sense of something, people must notice “the” thing that makes the sensation (Weick, 1995). What persons do not notice are not, *ipso facto*, available for their (further) sensemaking (Starbuck and Milliken, 1988). In a word, to make sense of something, as such, includes taking notice of “the” thing that is sensed.

According to Weick (1969, 1995) and Meltzer (1978), noticing is an attentional process by which individuals point out some portions of their experiences in the encountered situations as “cues” for subsequent interpretations. Starbuck and Milliken (1988) understand that noticing is a filtering process through which specific situational “stimuli” come into the perceptual foregrounds as “relevant information (signals),” while others recede into the background as “irrelevant information (noises).” On the other hand, Louis and Sutton (1991) suggest that noticing is a switching process in which actors move from “automatic thinking” to “active thinking” by recognizing some novelties or discrepancies that interrupt or violate their ongoing interpretations.

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\(^4\) To conceptualize the activity of meaning construction in organized settings, many scholars (e.g., Starbuck and Milliken, 1988; Louis and Sutton, 1991; Gioia and Chittipeddi, 1991) use the term “sensemaking” as a synonym for the terminology “interpretation” explicitly or implicitly. However, Weick (1995) argues that “sensemaking” should be contrasted with “interpretation” (although he himself often uses the term “sensemaking” in indicating the act of interpreting). According to him, the process of “sensemaking” is intended to include the construction and bracketing of the textlike cues that are interpreted, as well as the revision of the interpretations based on action and its consequences (p.8).

In this manuscript, I basically view “sensemaking” as a process in which individuals in organizations transform their problematic situations into comprehensible situations. This process starts from the recognition of the problematic situation. It also involves the ongoing adjustments of already established subject meanings, as a result of “concrete activities” (Porac, Thomas and Baden-Fuller, 1989). In this respect, “sensemaking” in my paper covers not only “interpretation” but also “noticing” and a sort of “feedback.”

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\(^5\) There are some articles (e.g., Etzioni, 1967; Daft and Weick, 1984; Cowan, 1986) that use the term *scanning* in explaining the phenomenon that can be also conceptualized by the terminology *noticing*. However, I prefer the term *noticing* to *scanning* on the grounds that *noticing* implies more informal and involuntary activities (Starbuck and Milliken, 1988, p.45), whereas *scanning* sounds more strategic, more under control of preconceptions, and less open to invention (Weick, 1995, p.52).
Based on these three notions of noticing, we can say that noticing is a process in which individual actors attentively capture some “problematic stimuli” as signals (cues) for further processing (interpretation) out of their ongoing experiences in the situations that they face (Kiesler and Sproull, 1982; Cowan 1986; Fiske and Taylor, 1991).

This analysis of noticing in the field of organizational sensemaking connotes three interrelated points of view with regard to the nature of the process. First, noticing is a process in which individuals look at their lived experiences in the encountered situations as a theme for speculation (Kalein, 1987; Moran, 2000; Sokolowski, 2000).

We experience the world because we understand it in certain ways, not vice versa. Meaning is not after the fact; it is not something we experience, as it were, after a first exposure to nature in the raw. Experience is already an interpretation (Bruner, 1995, p.19).

As seen in the above statement from Bruner, there is no unmediated access to the world “outside.” We already have some understanding (interpretation) of the world, through which we understand (experience) the world.

Noticing is a cognitive activity for us to look at our “already admitted” (Gelven, 1970) understanding (interpretation) of the world that we have normally looked through, and in doing so to make our “fore-having” (Gelven, 1970) understanding (interpretation) of the world thematic (Sokolowski, 2000). When we try to understand (interpret) the world “outside” by “stepping back” (Kalein, 1987) and “looking at” (Sokolowski, 2000) our existing understanding (interpretation) of the world, our current understanding (interpretation) of the world is switched from the “automatic” to the “conscious” mode (Louis and Sutton, 1991). In this respect, we can say that noticing is a starting point from which individuals in organizations begin to consciously interpret what has been pre-consciously interpreted (Moran, 2000) by looking at their already existing interpretation in the mind.

Second, noticing is a process in which individuals generate “their own stimuli” that they will actively interpret, rather than simply registering the pre-established “stimuli” that fall upon them (Blumer, 1969; Meltzer, 1979). What are noticed are not concrete or self-sufficient entities. On the contrary, what are noticed are human constructs-- being formed in and arising out of the very process of noticing. Referring to Starbuck and Milliken’s expression (1988),
mentioned earlier, “stimuli” themselves are neither signals nor noises. They (stimuli) become signals or noises for the first time only after persons identify them as signals or noises through the process of noticing. That is to say, “stimuli” do not manifest themselves as they are signals or noises. Instead, they (stimuli) come to be signals or noises in the course of human actors’ intervention (noticing) by which they are “amplified or attenuated” (Starbuck and Milliken, 1988). In this context, we can also say that noticing is “an act of classifying stimuli as signals or noises” (Starbuck and Milliken, 1988, p.46), whereby individual actors determine certain “stimuli” in their encountered situations as foregrounds (signals) to pursue, while making other “stimuli” parts of backgrounds (noises) in their cognition.6

Third, noticing is a process in which individuals indicate some things in the outward situations to themselves, and in doing so telescope in the things their problematic “plans of action” (Hewitt, 1976; Meltzer1979; Reynold, 1987). To indicate something to oneself is to make that something into an “object” (Reynold, 1987, p.68). An “object” is the nature or reality of a thing: the property or character conferred on the thing by a relevant person (Mead 1959; Blumer 1969; Reynold 1987). It represents a “plan of action,” a series of projected responses and the anticipated consequences of them (Meltzer, 1978). Hence, to indicate something to oneself is to point out the property or character of the thing to the mind. This means that a subject for whom it is an “object” locates his or her “plan of action” on the thing. Following this logic, noticing is a process in which actors make indication to themselves of some “problematic stimuli” in the encountered situations.

The “stimuli” imply the responses and the possible results of the responses (Mead, 1959). Accordingly, what make “stimuli (things)” as “stimuli (objects)” possible are “the responses and the imaginary results of the responses” called out by the “stimuli (things),” which are characterized as “plans of action” (Mead, 1959; Gelven, 1970). In this context, “problematic stimuli” are the stimulations whose contents, namely, the specific responses and the ultimate

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6 As seen in the above discussions, noticing involves a rudimentary interpretation in that it requires distinguishing certain “stimuli” (signals) from the myriad “stimuli” (noises) available to them, making crude separations of relevant from irrelevant (Kiesler and Sproull, 1982; Starbuck and Milliken, 1988). Accordingly, it is admittedly difficult to tell noticing from interpretation. However, like others (e.g., Starburck and Milliken, 1988; Weick, 1995), I think a distinction between noticing and interpretation exists and has theoretical importance. With regard to this issue, Starbuck and Milliken (1988) argue that interpretation (“sensemaking” in their terms) focuses on subtleties and interdependences, whereas noticing picks up major events and gross trends (p.60). Similarly, Weick (1995) insists that noticing refers to the activities of filtering, classifying and comparing, whereas interpretation refers more to subtle or elaborated understanding of what the noticed cues mean.
experiences following upon them are not readily imposed by related persons. After all, to indicate “problematic stimuli” to oneself is to refer to the problematic realities of the “stimuli” to the mind in the very process of indication. This suggests us that noticing is a process in which individual actors experience, and in doing so identify the blocked locations (impositions) of their plans of action on the contacted things (“stimuli”).

Taken together, noticing is a process in which individuals transform the encountered situations into their experienced problematic situations by perceiving some incongruities (Cowan, 1986; Smith, 1988), uncertainties (Milliken, 1987), or ambiguities (Daft, Lengel and Trevino, 1987) that do not fit into their ongoing interpretations. Through the process of noticing, occasions for sensemaking are constructed, after which they become a platform for further construction (interpretation) (Weick, 1995, p.85).

**Interpretation** 7

Interpretation is a process in which actors consciously determine “what the noticed cues mean” (Weick, 1995, p.51). That is to say, interpretation is a process of constructing the meaning of the noticed problematic occurrences. In order to understand this notion of interpretation, accordingly, we need to clarify the concepts of “meaning,” and “construct.”

Thus far in our discussions, we have referred loosely to “realities,” “meanings,” “objects,” and “plans of action.” The time has come to narrow our usage of these terms, particularly the word “meaning.” Dictionary definitions may give us a clue about the meaning of the terminology, “meaning.” Webster’s Third New International Dictionary (1981), for example, lists the following definitions:

1 a : the thing one intends to convey by an act or esp. by language: PURPORT (do not mistake my ~) b: the thing that is conveyed or signified esp. by language: the sense in which something (as a statement) is understood :IMPOR (what is its ~ to you) 2:the thing that is meant or intended: INTENT, PURPOSE, AIM, OBJECT 3: SIGNIFICANCE (a look full of ~) 4 a or meaning in intention: the logical connotation of a word or phrase: the intention of the term: what a correct definition exhibits b or meaning in extension: the logical denotation or extension of a term: the thing or class named by a word or substantive phrase 5: the pattern of engrams aroused by a given stimulus (p.1399)

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7 As implied in the above discussions of “noticing,” “interpretation” can be classified into two kinds according to the mode of the cognitive activity, namely, “habitual (pre-conscious or practical) interpretation” and “discursive (conscious or active) interpretation.” By “interpretation,” this manuscript means “discursive (conscious or active) interpretation.” The distinction between “habitual” and “discursive” interpretation will be explained in the latter part of this chapter.
Closely scrutinized, these definitions inform us that meaning is “the mode of being” (Moran, 2000, p.232) of a referred thing. As implied in the above definitions, the manner in which a referred thing exists is structured by a constitutive rule (Searle, 1995), “it (a referred thing) counts as something (in a certain context).” In this respect, we can say that interpretation is an intentional act to determine the way in which a referred thing is meaningfully presented. It shows us that the act of interpreting can be understood as an act to consciously decide “the as-structure” (Gelven, 1970) of the referent.

In explaining the process to distinctively grasp the content, a state of affairs through which a focused thing is apprehended, many scholars (e.g., Weick, 1995; Gray, Bougon and Donnellon, 1985; Berger and Luckmann, 1967) use the term, “construct.” In Webster’s Third International Dictionary (1981), the word “construct” is described as follows:

1: to construe or interpret (as a document, statement, expression) 2: to form, make, or create by combining parts or elements : BUILD, FABRICATE 3a: to create by organizing ideas or concepts logically, coherently, or palpably b(1): to arrange (words or morphemes) in a meaningful combination (2) : to produce (as a sentence) by such arrangement of words or morphemes 4a: to draw (a geometric figure) with suitable instruments so as to fulfill certain specified conditions b: to assemble separate and often disparate elements into (an abstract or nonrepresentational sculptural creation) 5a: to fabricate out of heterogeneous or discordant elements b(1) FEIGN (2): to infer in law syn see BUILD (p.489).

A close look at the above definitions reveals that “construct” is an act to create or produce something by uniting or combining certain elements. The two words, “combination” and

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8 If ‘an act,’ ‘look,’ ‘a given stimulus’ etc., in the above definitions come under ‘a referred thing,’ we can say that ‘purport,’ ‘significance,’ ‘the pattern of engrams’ and so forth correspond to ‘the mode of being’ of the referred thing.

9 In association with the concept of “the as-structure,” Gelven (1970) defines “interpretation” as follows.

If one claims that a furnace as a furnace must give off heat, one is interpreting a furnace, or more exactly, one’s relation to a furnace, which is all that the term “furnace” really signifies. This means, then, that interpretation is making explicit the as. If we consider the furnace example, it should be clear that when one does make explicit the as-structure of something, one is pointing out the purpose or usability of that thing (Gelven, 1970, p. 93).

As shown in the above statements, Gelven explains “interpretation” as the process of clarifying “the as-structure” of a referred thing. According to him, such a clarification of the as-structure of something is the process in which an interpreter understands his or her relation to the thing. The concept “interpretation” in this manuscript is primarily based on Gelven’s definition of “interpretation.”
“elements” are the keys to understand the underlying logic of those scholars who regard the act of interpreting in terms of a meaning construction process.

According to relevant researchers (e.g., Zerubavel, 1998; Bruner, 1995; Weick 1995; Starbuck and Milliken, 1988; Louis and Sutton, 1991), interpretation is a kind of “combining process” of two basic elements, that is, “the noticed cue” and “a frame of reference.” As discussed earlier, the noticed cue is an experiential entity of which the meaning (the mode of being) still remains problematic. A frame of reference, which is sometimes called “a generalized point of view” (Cantril, 1941, p.20) or “framework” (Weick, 1995, p.4), is considered as a belief about what is or what ought be (Starbuck and Milliken, 1988, p.51) or an expectation about what could be (Kilman and Mitroff 1979), which does not suppose a concrete individual being (entity) in advance, while implying an idealized being. The noticed cue itself is nonsensical because its predicate is not given yet. It is not until the noticed cue is put into a frame of reference that it becomes meaningful (Starbuck and Milliken, 1988). In this respect, we can say that interpretation is a process in which the noticed cue is connected to a frame of reference (what is, what ought be or what could be), by which the mode of being of the noticed cue, namely, the manner of being of the noticed cue (what the noticed cue is, what the noticed cue ought be, or what the noticed cue could be) is created (constructed).

Taken together, interpretation is understood as a process to constitute the meaningful “as-structure” (Gelven, 1970) of the noticed cue on the basis of the available “interpretative scheme” (Schutz, 1967). Through this process, the individual reaffirms, revises or elaborates his or her blocked plan of action. The newly established plan of action as a result of interpretation then, provides a ground for subsequent action to be carried out.

Action

Action is a corporeal conduct to externalize, and in doing so to embody the experience subjectively projected in advance (plan of action) (Schutz and Luckmann, 1989). The following

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10 With regard to what frameworks are, scholars take various examples. Weick (1995) cites ideology, premise controls, paradigms, theories of action and traditions as examples (pp.111-132). Brower (1999) gives constitutions, statutes, administrative rules, ethical codes and behavioral norms as instances (p.223). To Louis and Sutton (1991), frameworks are organizational ideologies and cultures (pp.61-62). According to Schutz and Luckmann (1989), an experience other than the present one also may be a frame of reference. For example, the present experience, more specifically, the just past experience, whose lived experiential evidence still resonates, they say, can be grasped in relation to a remembered experience as identical, similar, opposite, etc (Schutz and Luckmann, 1989, p.3). This suggests that there is no shortage of sources for frameworks. Whatever interpretation is grounded upon, we can call it a framework.
three aspects are critical to understanding of the nature of action in the field of organizational sensemaking.

First, action is behavior directed toward the realization of a *determinate* future goal (Schutz, 1967, p.xxiv). “For an act to occur, someone must act. For someone to act, an act must be projected” (Schutz and Luckmann, 1989, p.14). “Act (a verb)” or “to act” in this sense is “the action in progress” (Schutz, 1967, p.xxiv), “a continuous flow of conduct” (Giddens, 1979, p.89), which is initiated by an acting self. “An act” is a projected future (plan of action) (Schutz, 1967; Weick, 1969), which is pictured as determinate, that is, as over and done with even while it is still anticipated. Based on this approach from Schutz and Luckmann, we can say that action is the step by step performance (execution) of the “projected action” mapped out in the future perfect tense (Schutz and Luckmann, 1989). In other words, action can be said to be the purposeful or rational behavior which is oriented (motivated) by an envisioned future –a future that is anticipated now but has not been yet happened (Schutz, 1967).

Second, action is a controlled operation to translate “thought” into “deed,” through which an agent necessarily engages in his or her surrounding world (Schutz and Luckmann, 1989). That is to say, action is the willed or decided expression (externalization) of an “act” imagined *modo futuri exacti*, by which the actor reaches into his or her outside world (Catron and Harmon, 1981; Schutz and Luckmann, 1989; Berger and Luckmann, 1969). By way of the *efferent* manifestation of the “act” modeled in the mind, the actor becomes inextricably wound into the surrounding world and the modeled “act” is socially objectified (Weick, 1988, 2000; Gioia and Manz, 1985; Schutz and Luckmann, 1989; Berger and Luckmann, 1967).

Third, action is “doing” that often triggers the next “thinking” (noticing and interpretation) (Weick, 1979, 2000). Action involves both a process and a product. Action is a process through which the individual makes real, or turns into a reality, the idealized project (plan of action) that is represented in his or her mind (Weick, 2000). In the process of attempting

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11 ‘Action’ in my study is a conscious behavior guided by a projected future (plan of action) which is discursively constructed through an “active thinking process” (Louis and Sutton, 1991). Thus, it is not an unconscious “reaction” to a given “stimulus,” nor is it a routine and conventional “practice” (Giddens, 1976) based on “habits of mind” (Louis and Sutton, 1991). That is, “action” in this manuscript is neither “the things that are done to us” (Catron and Harmon, 1981, p.536) nor “the things that we do habitually (italics added)” (Catron and Harmon, 1981, p.536). Rather, it is “the things that we do consciously (italics added)” (Catron and Harmon, 1981, p.536). In this context, “action” in this study is different from “behavior” in behaviorism. Also, it is not a “practical action” (Garfinkel, 1967) which is governed by taken for granted “rules” (Powell and DiMaggio, 1991). For a more detailed understanding of this issue, see Garfinkel (1967), Giddens (1976), Catron and Harmon (1981), Louis and Sutton (1991), and Powell and DiMaggio (1991).
to real-ize an idealized action, the actor usually produces a stream of events that was not there before he or she took action (Weick, 1979). The product of action, namely, the “external residuum” of real-ized project is hard to be ignored or left out of account because its existence is not questioned and it has potential significance (Weick, 1979, 1995). By virtue of this nature, the outcome of action often provides a pretext to develop new ways of noticing and interpretation (March, 1996; Weick, 2000).

In short, action is the current “work” (Schutz and Luckmann, 1989) that is motivated by a future project and at the same time real-izes it. In the process of acting out a projected future (plan of action), the actor usually “puts a personal imprint on what is out there” (Weick, 2000, p.177), whether the resultant imprint is intended or not. And the set of traces deposited by action often becomes a candidate for subsequent sensemaking (Weick, 1979, 2000). In this sense, the supporters of the sensemaking perspective (e.g., Starbuck, 1983; Porac, Thomas and Baden-Fuller, 1989; Thomas, Clark and Gioia, 1993; March, 1996; Weick, 1979, 2000) consider action as an important mechanism to generate the “raw materials (data)” (Weick, 2000) available for the next episode of meaning construction.

**Sensemaking in Three Contexts**

Sensemaking is a series of conscious processes in which the individual as a sensemaker (1) brackets (notices) some puzzling and troubling portion of the flow of experience in the encountered situation as a text or a document for closer inspection (Denzin, 2001; Schutz, 1967), (2) forms (interprets) a plausible idea of the portion that is set apart so that he or she restores (reestablishes) the interrupted practical engagement with the situation that he or she faces (Moran, 2000; Weick, 1995), and (3) implants the idea through behavioral manifestation (action), and in doing so creates things in the situation, which often provoke further bracketing (noticing) and formation (interpretation) (Weick, 1979; Catron and Harmon, 1981).

In organizations, this sensemaking process by individuals occurs within three contexts, namely, an “ecological context,” an “institutional context,” and a “social relational context” (Manning, 1982; Smircich and Stubbart, 1985; Granovetter, 1985; Porac, Thomas and Baden-Fuller, 1989; DiMaggio, 1990). Related to these three contexts, the organizational sensemaking phenomenon is characterized by the following triadic processes: an “enacting process” (Weick,
Sensemaking As Enacting Process in Ecological Context

In association with its ecological context, sensemaking in organizations is an enacting process (Figure 2.1) through which organized members actively create or legislate part of the world in which they work (Weick, 1979, 1988, 1995, 2000; Abolafia and Kilduff, 1988; Smircich and Stubbart, 1985).

Based on the three stages of sensemaking described above, the enacting process in which organizational actors produce some of the very “environments (surroundings)” which they face (Merton, 1948) is understood as occurring through two transformational steps.

The first is the step through which organized participants make the “external” surroundings (situations) in front of them into their “internal” surroundings (situations) in their minds. The thinking stages (noticing and interpretation) of sensemaking correspond to this transformational step. As mentioned earlier, noticing is a cognitive activity of making that which is interpreted by tearing off some problematic portion of the field of experience in the surrounding situation (Weick, 1977, 1988, 1995). And interpretation is a conscious activity of making a “symbolic reality” (meaning) (Smircich and Stubbart, 1985) of the noticed portion by connecting (an) available interpretative scheme(s) to it (the noticed portion). Through these thinking processes, individuals in organizations (re)draw “the conceptual pictures” (Weick, 1995) of the “external” surroundings (situations) before them.

The second transformational step is the one through which organized people put their “internal” surroundings (situations) made in their heads into the “external” surroundings
(situations), and in doing so make new “external” surroundings (situations) that they subsequently deal with (Smircich and Stubbart, 1985). The action stage of sensemaking corresponds to this transformational step. As indicated above, action is a “centrifugal” activity of making real an idea of the surrounding situation by extending the idea outward (Thomas, 1928; Merton, 1948; Weick, 1977, 2000). Through this action process, organized participants bring their “internal” ideas (conceptual pictures) of the “external” surroundings (situations) into existence in tangible forms, set them in motion, and as a result, transform the displays of the “external” surroundings (situations) into new ones, which normally impose on them in turn (Thomas, 1928; Merton, 1948; Weick, 1988; Abolafia and Kilduff, 1988).

Accordingly, the “external” situations that organized people encounter in the course of sensemaking are not settings that “stand on their own” (Moran, 2000). Rather, they are settings that are “tampered and manipulated” (Moran, 2000) by organizational actors in the course of sensemaking. In this respect, sensemaking as enactment can be featured by a kind of controlling process in which individuals ascribe some meanings to their encountered situations, let the ascribed meanings become integral parts of the situations, and in doing so shape the contours of the situations (Merton, 1948; Manning, 1982). However, such situations are not perfectly determined (controlled) by the individual actors involved in the process of sensemaking. Because meaning ascriptions through the thinking stages (noticing and interpretation) are usually weak (Simon, 1957; Weick 1988), externalizations of the ascribed meanings through the action stage are usually novel (Mead, 1959; Weick, 1988), and the situations themselves are usually affected by other “exogenous factors” (Porac, Thomas and Baden-Fuller, 1989). For these reasons, therefore, we can not say that that sensemaking as enactment is a complete one sided controlling (determining) process in which individuals “command and (the) environments (situations) obey” (Follett, 1924, p.118). Instead, as suggested in the following statement from Follett (1924), sensemaking as enactment can be said to be an interdependent “authoring process ”(Giddens, 1979) in which individual actors continuously invite new situations (settings) that often require further sensemaking.

We are neither slave nor master of our environments. …..My farmer neighbors know this: we prune and graft and fertilize certain tress, and as our behavior becomes increasingly that of behavior towards apple-bearing trees, these become increasingly apple-bearing trees. The tree releases energy in me and I in it; it
makes me think and plan and work, and I make it bear edible fruit. It is a process of freeing on both sides. And this is a creating process (pp.118-119).

In sum, sensemaking in organizations is a process in which organizational members consciously do (notice, interpret and act) something with what happens to them, and in doing so constantly build (create) some of the subsequent happenings, which generally provide them with new opportunities and constraints (Weick, 1979, 1988). Through the process, individual actors in organizations energetically enact the “ecological context” (Smircich and Stubbart, 1985) of thinking (noticing and interpretation) and action.

**Sensemaking As Structuring Process in Institutional Context**

In conjunction with its institutional context, organizational sensemaking is a structuring process (Figure 2.2) through which individual participants consciously reorganize the lenses to view the world in which they work, and in doing so deliberately reestablish the ways of concerning themselves with the world. (Heideger, 1970; Gelven, 1970; Giddens, 1979; Kaelin, 1987; Powell and DiMaggio, 1991; Moran, 2000).12

![Mental Model of Sensemaker](image)

**Figure 2.2: Structuring Process in Institutional Context** 13

On the basis of the three stages of sensemaking discussed above, organizational participants initiate the process by experiencing some breaks in their “taken for granted interpretative schemes” (Schutz 1967; Ranson, Hinings and Greewood, 1980; Bartunek, 1984; Powell and DiMaggio, 1991; Moran, 2000).

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12 By “reorganize” and “reestablish” I mean various forms of structuring processes. Thus, they indicate a series of affirmations, as well as alternations of the existent cognitive framework and one’s relationship to the world.

13 By “institution” the paper means an internalized mental model (interpretive scheme) of the world “outside,” which mediates between the world and the response of the individual organism (Scott, 1995). Through social interactions with others, discussed below, my institution (mental model) is continuously interchanged with their institution (mental model), resulting in an imperfectly-shared our institution (mental model). By its nature, accordingly, my institution (mental model) inherently implies a sharedness derived from a sociality with others.
Kaelin, 1987; Weick, 1995). Through experiencing some disturbances in their pre-existent “mental constructs” (Brower, 1999), individual actors in organizations come to recognize that “reliance on habits of mind (may be) inappropriate” (Louis and Sutton, 1991, p.56), by which they disclose their formerly familiar but inconspicuous “structures of the mind” (Fiske, 1992) as themes for speculation (Kalein, 1987). The process of noticing relates to these activities of experiencing, recognizing and disclosing.

To disclose the structure of the mind is to reveal it as a phenomenon by “breaking down the inconspicuous familiarity into a conspicuous visibility” (Kalein, 1988, p.84; Garfinkel, 1967). Through this disclosure process, organizational actors come to critically “look at” (Sokolowski, 2000) their previously familiar but now strange “rules or assumptions” (Hirsch, 1997; Powell and DiMaggio, 1991; Kalein, 1987) whereby they have pre-thematically related themselves to immediate situations, and in doing so thematically construct ways to engage themselves in outward situations (Bourdieu, 1984; Kalein, 1987). The activity of interpretation pertains to such a thematic construction of the “meaning making structure” (Fiske, 1992).

Once the ways to approach and proceed in situations are thematically built (Ranson, Hinings and Greenwood, 1980), organizational members usually put them into action (Daft and Weick, 1984), by which they actualize (real-ize) their idealized dealings with the situations in tangible forms (Weick, 1995, 2000). When the results are “successful,” the schemes of involvement deliberately constituted in the course of interpretation are restored as useful guides to direct subsequent involvement with the situations (Weick, 1979), while gradually receding into “deep-seated assumptive frames” (Ranson, Hingings and Greenwood, 1980). When the results are not successful, they are repeatedly elaborated at the level of consciousness. In this respect, the action stage of sensemaking functions as a platform for channelizing further structuring process into either “automatic” or “active” mode (Louis and Sutton, 1991).

Geertz has written that “man is an animal suspended in webs of significance he himself has spun” (Geertz, 1973, p. 5). The foregoing discussion tells us that sensemaking is a crucial processing through which man spins (structures) webs of significance (institutional context) in which he or she then is suspended (structured).

**Sensemaking As Social Process in Social Relational Context**
Finally, organizational sensemaking is a social process (Figure 2.3) in which individual actors creatively construct the meanings of their immediate working situations in the context of

![Figure 2.3: Social Process in Social Relational Context](image)

As suggested in the above discussions, sensemaking is not a process in which the acting person habitually (pre-consciously) constructs the reality of the situation (Bourdieu, 1984; Powell and DiMaggio, 1991). Rather, sensemaking is a process in which the acting person discursively (consciously) constructs the reality of the situation. Habitual meaning construction is a series of knowing and acting processes which are frozen (doped) by the existent mental construct (Swidler, 1986). Instead, discursive meaning construction is a chain of knowing and acting processes which are not “anesthetized” (Brower, 1999) by the current mental construct. As a matter of course, the person doing the sensemaking is the one who actively constructs the meaning of the outward situation, while arresting the “doxic (taken-for-granted) elements” (Powell and DiMaggio, 1991, p.25; Bourdieu, 1984) of his or her pre-established scheme of reference.

Although it is not impossible, however, it is not easy at all to question the taken-for-granted, and as such unquestionable assumptive frame in the mind (Berger and Luckmann, 1967). Also, it is not easy to maintain a “controlled” (Bargh, 1994) meaning construction in that it
requires a considerable cognitive effort and behavioral commitment (Berger and Luckmann, 1967; Bargh 1984; Weick, 1995, 2000). If this is so, what makes it possible to trigger and sustain such an active meaning construction? What makes it possible for the individual to engage in a “mindful” (Louis and Sutton, 1991) meaning construction, while taking up a “contemplative stance” (Sokolowski, 2000) toward his or her already admitted interpretative scheme?

With regard to this issue, Berger and Luckmann (1967) insist the reality of everyday life is constituted in my “here and now.” In addition, they say that my “here and now” is not identical with other’s “here and now,” because my “here” is their “there” and my “now” does not fully overlap with theirs (Berger and Luckmann, 1967, p.23).

Berger and Luckmann’s viewpoint of my and their “here and now” suggests that so called “multiple realities” (McHugh, 1968) may emerge when persons and situations come together. It reminds us that “the same situations can have different meanings for different people” (McHugh, 1968, p.8).

The organization can be seen as exhibiting visible artifacts. However, as we study it here, it is a social network that the member agents are interlinked (Carley, 2000). Such an interlinkage exists essentially in the form of social interaction (Blumer, 1969). Without social interaction, such an interlinkage does not exist, and accordingly there can be no organization as a social network (Blumer, 1969; Schall, 1982; Carley, 2000). Naturally, the organization (a social network) and social interaction can not be understood in isolation (Harris and Cronen, 1979). The organization as a social network is not a “container” (Harris and Cronen, 1979) within which social interaction occurs but rather is the process of social interaction (Berger and Luckmann, 1967; Blumer, 1969; Meltzer, 1978; Harris and Cronen, 1979; Schall, 1982 ).

When we recognize that organizations are, after all, interaction phenomena, individuals in organizations are understood as “individuals in interactions.” Extending this idea to the field of organizational sensemaking, we can say that “sensemaking (by individuals) in organizations” is virtually “sensemaking (by individuals) in interactions.” This implies that the process of sensemaking emerges out of the process of social interaction. Considering that sensemaking is conscious meaning construction, this implication enlightens us that social interaction is a crucial mechanism enabling individual actors to engage in a conscious mode of meaning construction.
When we relate Berger and Luckmann’s standpoint of my and their “here and now” to the above three stages of sensemaking in this context, social interaction as sensemaking generator is comprehended in the following three aspects.

First, borrowing Berger and Luckmann’s terminology, the noticing stage of sensemaking is a process in which I (the first person singular, here as in the following illustrations, standing for an ordinary participant in organizational daily work) begin to look at my (taken-for granted) “here and now” as a theme for speculation by experiencing some interruption(s) of ongoing guidance in relating myself to an encountered situation. Such an experience is likely provoked by experiencing other’s “here and now,” which are different from mine. Interactions with others provide me with opportunities to meet and in doing so to experience their “here and now,” which are not the same as mine. In this respect, social interaction functions as a mechanism to make it possible for me to initiate an active development of my new “here and now.”

Second, the interpretation stage of sensemaking is a process in which I develop a new “here and now” through which I am involved in an encountered situation. In order to develop a new “here and now,” I must first make my “here and now” thematic (Sokolowski, 2000). In order to make my “here and now” thematic, I must look at my “here and now” that I have normally looked through by detaching myself from the “here and now” (Packer, 1985; Sokolowski, 2000). When I take distance from my “here and now,” and in doing so “neutralize” (Sokolowski, 2000) it as a theme of quasi theoretical study, my “here and now” is not my “here and now” any longer. At the moment that I neutralize my “here and now,” it comes into existence as a possible “here and now” that I consider in developing my new “here and now.” At this point of time, interactions with others supply me with chances to contact different kinds of “here and now” that can be contemplated in building my new “here and now.” Given my inherently limited thinking ability, therefore, social interaction functions as a mechanism by which I can obtain relevant information (other’s “here and now” in this case) more resourcefully, and accordingly can develop my new “here and now” more reasonably and easily.

Third, the action stage of sensemaking is a process in which I externalize my newly developed “here and now” via concrete behavior, and in doing so make it visible to others (Berger and Luckmann, 1967; Weick, 1988; Porac, Thomas and Baden-Fuller, 1989). As Blumer (1969) points out, social interaction “consists of, and exist in, the fitting of lines of action to each other by the members of the organization (the group in his term)” (pp.16-17). As long as I
participate in interactions with others as an organizational member, hence, I am constantly called on to express my “here and now” to my associates in an observable form of line of behavior that form “jointed” (Blumer, 1969) lines of behavior, and in doing so to sustain the interactions. Once I manifest my subjective “here and now,” and in doing so make it observable to other interactors, my manifested “here and now” are often impinged on by their “here and now.” This usually triggers me to engage in further development of my “here and now.” Related to the action stage of sensemaking, accordingly, we can say that social interaction functions as a mechanism by which I am induced to “objectify” (Burger and Luckmann, 1967) my “here and now” in the product of interpretation that is available both to myself and to other men, and in doing so to consciously commit myself to a continuous development of my “here and now.”

As stated in chapter one, organizational daily life is a dynamic web of interactions between I and others. Through such interactions, my relating (“here and now’) and their relating (“here and now”) to a commonly encountered situation are incessantly exchanged, by which my new relating (“here and now”) to the situation is continuously built and rebuilt under the context of imperfectly- shared-our relating (“here and now” ) to the situation. It is in this sense that social interaction is a crucial mechanism to make it possible for me to engage in a self-conscious mode of meaning construction (sensemaking).

A Conceptual Framework of Organizational Sensemaking
As a Foreknowledge of the Study

Various scholars have recognized that “the routine, taken-for granted aspects of organizational life are far less concrete and real than they appear” (Morgan, 1980, p.617). As a result, they (e.g., Porac, Thomas and Baden-Fuller, 1989; Ranson, Hinings and Greenwood, 1980; Thomas, Clark and Gioia, 1993; Weick, 1995, 2001) have actively engaged the effort to understand the conscious meaning construction side of organizational life, and the body of their efforts has come to be called “organizational sensemaking.” In this chapter, I reviewed this dialogue, and in doing so integrated related ideas into a conceptual framework including the contextual terrain as depicted in Figure 2.4.
Atheoretical science is not merely difficult or undesirable—it’s impossible. The reason for this impossibility center on the *Meno* paradox of Plato. …The paradox says that all inquiry is impossible because we either know what we seek, in which case why search for it, or we have no idea of what we seek, in which case how could we recognize it? The way out of this paradox….. is to say that we have at least partial knowledge of the objects of inquiry. In scientific inquiry this foreknowledge comes in the guise of theory. Science without theory stumbles
along blindly. Atheoretical science is impossible. The attempt at atheoretical science is simply bad science – or worse. (Garrison, 1988, p.21)

As Garrison (1988) points out, “concept-free observation is impossible” (p. 21). Without some form of prior, even if mistaken, knowledge of “sensemaking,” I could not proceed with an inquiry into the sensemaking process of Korean street-level fire service officials. Obviously, I needed some kind of conceptual structure in order to initiate and guide my research. Otherwise, I would not have known what to “look for” (Garrison, 1988). The above organization of current discussion of sensemaking in organizations, in this context, was my way out of the Meno paradox for the study. Such foreknowledge as I described earlier allowed me to explore how Korean fire service workers make sense of the situations in which they find themselves. The exploration started from an examination of the Korean fire service system as illustrated in the next chapter.
CHAPTER 3

FIRE SERVICE SYSTEM IN KOREA

Korea is located east of the mid-latitude of the Asian continent (33~44° N, 123~132° E). The Korean peninsula faces the Yellow Sea and the Chinese continent on the west, the East Sea and the Japanese archipelago on the east and the South China Sea and the Pacific Ocean to the south.

Its topography is characterized by western coastal areas with a gentle sloping terrain, while its eastern coast consists of steep gradients. About 50~70% of Korea’s annual precipitation flows into seas, as rivers have short water courses and riverbeds have steep gradients.

The country has a temperature climate with four distinct seasons featured by many arid days in spring, substantial rain in summer, and much snow in winter. Average annual precipitations is 1,247 mm with approximately 50~60% of the annual precipitation concentrated during the summer.

Due to its geographical and temporal character, Korea has suffered a great number of natural hazards, which have mainly resulted from drought, torrential rain, typhoons, storms and heavy snow. The average annual number of and natural disasters hitting Korea is placed at seven with annual average property loss and death toll standing at 1,6 trillion won and 136 deaths respectively. 14

Since the 1990s, in almost all areas across the country including land, sea and air, calamitous human triggered/technological disasters have frequently occurred, leaving death and injury in its wake.

In 1993, a train left the rails in Pusan (the second largest city in Korea), which resulted in 75 deaths and 105 injuries. In the same year, a passenger ship capsized on the sea, and a plane landing at a regional airport collided with a mountain. Two hundred ninety two passengers

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14 The geographical and temporal character of Korea described here relied heavily on “Natural Disaster Management in Korea” (2005) and “Safety Korea” (2005).
riding the ship were buried at the sea. Sixty six people in the airplane died. In 1994, a bridge over the Han River intersecting Seoul, the capital of Korea, collapsed, killing 32 people and injuring 17 more. In 1995, a five story department store in Seoul collapsed. Five hundred one people were dead, 937 were injured, and 6 people were missed. In 1999, a youth training center in the outskirts of Seoul had a fire, resulting in 23 people dying (including 19 kindergarten children). In 2003, an incendiary fire broke out in Daegu (the third largest city in Korea) subway. The incident caused 192 deaths and 148 injured.

These disasters-- a train derailment, an airplane crash, a ship sinking, collapses of a bridge and a building, conflagrations here and there, and repeatedly occurring large scale natural distastes have received the attention of Korean leaders. Korean leaders began to take a new look at the government involved emergency management system in a wholesale way. Under the catch phrase of the so called, “Safe Korea,” as a result, the NEMA (National Emergency Management Agency) was established as the first specialized national emergency management organization in the history of Korea in 2004.  

The NEMA is the Korean version of the FEMA (Federal Emergency Management Agency) in the U.S. The agency serves as an official government agency charged with oversight and management in such areas as fires, rescue operations, emergency aid regarding radioactive exposures, storms and other natural disasters and incidents. The NEMA supervises establishment of guidelines on safety management systems of national and local governments and all matters related to disaster management, including taking preventive measures, making provisions for and responding to disasters, restoring disaster sites and post-disaster appraisals. The agency consists of 1 officer, 3 bureaus, 19 divisions and 4 affiliated organizations (Figure 3.1). As of December, 2004, a total of 435 people (267 for the main office and 168 for the affiliated organizations) work for the NEMA.
The chapter describes the NEMA controlled Korean fire service system, which plays a pivotal role in the present governmental emergency management activities in the country.

**Fire Service Organizations in Korea**

Fire business in Korea is discharged by local government supported fire service organizations, which are directed by the NEMA (Figure 3.2).

The NEMA is responsible for the fire office regulations and the guidance of fire administration. Substantial fire services are provided by local fire organizations with fire stations as the central figures.

Affiliated Organizations: The National Fire Academy
National 119 Rescue Service
The National Institute for Disaster Prevention
The Civil Defense Training Center

**Figure 3.1: The Organizational Chart of the National Emergency Management Agency (NEMA)**

16 Fire Service Organizations in Korea described below relied heavily on “Natural Disaster Management in Korea” (2005) and “Safety Korea” (2005).
The present arrangement of administrative districts in Korea is a “three-tier” structure. As depicted in Figure 3.3, the wide range tier consists of seven metropolitan cities including one special city (Seoul) and nine provinces; the middle range (called “basic” in Korea) tier consists of hundreds of cities, counties (Gun) and autonomous wards (Gu)\(^{17}\); the small range

\(^{17}\) In Korea, city, county (Gun), and autonomous ward (Gu) governments are called “basic self-governing local governments.” Metropolitan city and provincial governments are called “large-unit self-governing local governments.”
tier consists of a great number of towns (Eup), sub-divisions of counties (Myeon), and blocks (Dong).

![Diagram of Administrative District in Korea]

*Source: Revised From Kim and Lee (1998)*

**Figure 3.3: Administrative District in Korea**

Fire stations in Korea are the organizations which are run by metropolitan city or provincial governments at the wide range-tier level, and conduct their fire duties for cities, counties (Gun), or autonomous wards (Gu) in the middle range (basic)-tier level. Although a fire station is established at one city, county, or autonomous ward in some cases, many fire stations exercise their jurisdiction over more than one administrative district in the middle-tier level.

Each fire station has one or two 119 rescue companies typically and is in command of five fire companies on the average. Under the administrative control of their superior institutions, fire departments, Korean fire stations take charge of the operations of 119 rescue
quads, fire companies, emergency medical teams, and voluntary fire companies in their jurisdictions.

**Fire Service Personnel in Korea**

There are three kinds of fire service personnel in Korea: fire service officials, voluntary firefighters and auxiliary firefighters. As of December, 2004, more than 25,000 fire service officials, about 87,000 voluntary firefighters, and 3,000 auxiliary firefighters and more deliver fire services to the public (Table 3.1).

Korean fire service officials are composed of national and local fire service officials. Most national fire service employees work for the NEMA (main offices and affiliated organizations). Local fire service officials are appointed by their local (metropolitan municipal or provincial) governments, and are regulated by the local statutes. The local government, however, follows the framework of the “Fire Service Official Act” and its subordinate national local statutes.

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18 A fire company in Korea usually has one emergency medical team. In the case of a fire company under the direct control of a fire station, the fire company has two emergency medical teams as a rule.  
19 The Korean fire service system is different from the U.S. fire service system in many respects. In the case of Korea, the Response Bureau at the NEMA has chief control of fire services at the national level. If we particularly focus on the comparison, the bureau might be compared with the U.S. Fire Administration under the FEMA. The main function of the USFA is to provide public fire education, training, technology and data initiatives. The Response Bureau at the NEMA is in charge of overall planning for the Korean fire service personnel system and emergency disaster and accident site leadership management. Also, the bureau drafts plans for putting out fires and investigation as to the causes of fires and renovates laws on volunteer firefighters and auxiliary firefighters. In addition, the bureau is in charge of legislating matters related to disaster rescue and relief and setting up emergency rescue systems. Furthermore, the bureau plans for fire service facilities and their standards. The bureau also is in charge of fire service legal matters and drafting and legislation for fire services in cooperation with the Mitigation and Planning Bureau at the NEMA. Unlike the USFA, accordingly, the Response Bureau at the NEMA determines the fundamental frame of the fire service system in Korea. On the other hand, it is unreasonable in a way to compare the Korean fire service system at the local level with that of the U.S. directly since the local fire service system in the U.S. is different in each and every state. If we focus on the Florida fire service system exclusively, each Korean fire department in a metropolitan city or province in the large-tier level could be paralleled with the State Fire Marshal, a branch of the Department of Financial Services. Fire stations in Korea might correspond to county or city fire departments in Florida. In Florida, the State Fire Marshal is run by the state government. Fire departments in Florida are run by city or county governments. The State Fire Marshal and city or county fire departments are not within the same administrative system, and are not hierarchically connected to each other. In Florida, fire departments in cities or counties are not answerable to the State Fire Marshal. In the case of Korea, fire departments are supported by metropolitan city or provincial governments. As described above, fire stations are also supported by metropolitan city or provincial governments, not by city, county (Gun), or autonomous ward (Gu) governments. In Korea, fire departments and fire stations are hierarchically coupled within the same administrative system, and fire stations are directly under the control of their fire departments. If the Florida fire service system is characterized by a “loosely coupled system” (Weick, 1979), in this respect, we can say that the local fire service system in Korea is featured by a “tightly coupled system” (Weick, 1979).  
20 Fire Service Personnel in Korea described below relied heavily on “Natural Disaster Management in Korea” (2005) and “Safety Korea” (2005).
Table 3.1: Number of Fire Service Personnel in Korea

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Total</th>
<th>NEMA</th>
<th>Fire Departments</th>
<th>Fire Stations</th>
<th>Fire Companies</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>7,447</td>
<td>186</td>
<td>1,028</td>
<td>5,744</td>
<td>20,489</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

National Employees: (207) Regional Employees: (27,240)

Source: Safety Korea. 2005

* 2,988 Voluntary Fire Companies, 86,638 Voluntary Firefighters
* 3,014 Auxiliary Firefighters
* National Fire Service Officials at Local Fire Service Organizations: Director of Fire Department (16), Director of Local Fire Academy (5)

Before the “Fire Service Official Act” was enacted in 1977, Korean fire service officials were originally police officials regulated by the “Police Office Service Act.” Applying the rank system of the police with appropriate modifications, the “Fire Service Official Act” classifies Korean fire service officials into eleven grades.

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21 The career civil service in Korea is classified into “General,” “Technological,” and “Special Services.” Civil servants who work in the technology, research and administrative fields are classified as “General Services.” “General Services” are horizontally divided into occupational groups, further subdivided into occupational series. Civil servants who perform simple task, technicians, and blue color occupations are classified as “Technical Services.” Typical examples include clerical staff, postal workers, and railway operators. “Special Services” include Judges, Public Prosecutors, Foreign Service, Police, Public Education Service, Civilian and Non-Civilian Service, and others who fall under the “Special Services” category due to the explicit nature of their work. Fire service officials are classified into “Special Services” category. For a more detailed information of the career civil service in Korea, see the website, http://www.moleg.go.kr.

22 With regard to the personnel management of fire service officials, there are a total of 10 national statutes in Korea: the “Fire Service Official Act,” the “Presidential Decree of Fire Service Official Appointment” and its ministerial ordinance, the “Presidential Decree of Fire Service Official Promotion” and its ministerial ordinance, the “Presidential Decree of Fire Service Official Regulations,” the “Presidential Decree of Fire Service Official Punishment,” the “Presidential Decree of Fire Service Official Education and Training,” the “Ministry of Government of Home Affairs Ordinance of Fire Service Official Costume” and the “Ministry of Government of Home Affairs Ordinance of the Scholarship for Fire Service Official Candidate.” The presidential decree or the ministerial ordinance mentioned in the above are the subordinate statutes of the “Fire Service Official Act,” which stipulates the matters delegated to the president or the head of Government of Home Affairs by the act.
### Table 3.2: Rank System of Korean Fire Service Officials

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Fire Service Official Position</th>
<th>Police Official Grade</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>General Fire Marshal</td>
<td>Administrator of the NEMA (or a person of the vice-minister class)</td>
<td>Commissioner General</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fire Marshal</td>
<td>Deputy Administrator of the NEMA (or a person of secretary general class in “General Service”)</td>
<td>Chief Superintendent General</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Deputy Fire Marshal</td>
<td>Director of Response Bureau at the NEMA, Director of Seoul or Pusan Fire Department, Director of National Fire Academy</td>
<td>Senior Superintendent General</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brigadier Fire Marshal</td>
<td>Director of Fire Department (Except for Seoul and Pusan Fire Department)</td>
<td>Superintendent General</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fire Chief</td>
<td>Chief of Fire Station, Director of Local Fire Academy</td>
<td>Senior Superintendent General</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assistant Fire Chief</td>
<td>Chief Clerk at Fire Department, Divisional Chief at Fire Station</td>
<td>Superintendent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fire Captain</td>
<td>Divisional Chief at Fire Station, Chief Clerk at Fire Station</td>
<td>Senior Inspector</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fire Lieutenant</td>
<td>Head of Fire Company, Chief Clerk at Fire Station</td>
<td>Inspector</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fire Sergeant</td>
<td>Head of Fire Company, Assistant Head of Fire Company</td>
<td>Assistant Inspector</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Senior Fire Man</td>
<td></td>
<td>Senior Police Man</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fire Man</td>
<td></td>
<td>Police Man</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In Korea, fire service officials are employed through an open competitive examination. When necessary, non-competitive examinations are administrated as a supplementary method to recruit fire service officials.

The open competitive examinations are classified into three types according to the appointed ranks: the Open Competitive Entrance Examination for Assistant Fire Chief, the Open Competitive Selection Examination for Future Manager (Fire Lieutenant), and the Open

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23 Through the revision of the “Fire Service Official Act” on December, 2004, the rank of General Fire Marshal was newly established. As of December, 2004, the highest rank of an incumbent Korean fire service official is a Fire marshal, the Deputy Administrator of the NEMA. The “Act on the NEMA and Its Affiliated Organizations” stipulates that a General Fire Marshal and a Fire Marshal can be appointed to the post of the Administrator and the Deputy Administrator of the NEMA respectively. The act also stipulates that the director of the Response Bureau at the NEMA shall be a Deputy Fire Marshal.
Competitive Entrance Examination for Fire Man. The examinations are conducted over four or five rounds and include written examinations along with physical examinations, practical examinations and interviews.\(^\text{24}\)

In the case that open competitive examinations cannot fulfill recruitment of necessary talents, non-competitive examinations are conducted to fill positions that require candidates meeting certain qualification requirements. The examinations are administrated over the whole

\(^{24}\) Korean “Fire Service Official Act” stipulates the written examination subjects for recruiting fire service officials as designated in the following table 3.3 and 3.4.

### Table 3.3: The Subjects of Written Exam. (Assistant Fire Chief and Fire Man)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>National and Local Fire Chief</th>
<th>Exam Subjects in the Third Round</th>
<th>Exam Subjects in the Fourth Round</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Korean History, English, The Constitution</td>
<td>Administrative Law, Laws and Regulations on Fire Services, Public Administration</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>National and Local Fire Man</th>
<th>Obligatory Subjects</th>
<th>Optional Subjects (1)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Korean Language, Korean History, English</td>
<td>Introduction to Fire Services, Public Administration</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Table 3.4: The Subjects of Written Examinations (Future Manager: Fire Lieutenant)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Exam Subjects in Third Round</th>
<th>Cultural/Social Science Series</th>
<th>Natural Science Series</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Obligatory Subjects</td>
<td>The Constitution</td>
<td>The Constitution</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Administrative Law</td>
<td>Korean History</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Korean History</td>
<td>English</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>English</td>
<td>Introduction to Natural Science</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Optional Subjects (1)</th>
<th>Public Administration</th>
<th>Introduction to Physics</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>The Criminal Law Act</td>
<td>Introduction to Chemistry</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>General Provisions of the Civil Code</td>
<td>Introduction to Chemical Engineering</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>The German Language</td>
<td>Introduction to Mechanical Engineering</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>The Russian Language</td>
<td>Introduction to Electronics Engineering</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>The Chinese Language</td>
<td>Introduction to Electronics Engineering</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>The Japanese Language</td>
<td>Introduction to Telecommunication Engineering</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Laws and Regulations on Fire Services</td>
<td>Laws and Regulations on Fire Services</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
range of the ranks of Korean fire service officials, and candidates can be appointed through a restrictive competition from a number of persons who fall under the same qualifications.\textsuperscript{25}

The recruitment examinations are administrated by the NEMA and the respective local governments under the application of the “Fire Service Official Act” and its subordinate national statutes. As a rule, successful candidates are trained for several weeks at the National or local fire academies, and then they undergo a period of probation at assigned fire service organizations such as fire departments and fire stations. After successfully completing a probationary period, they are employed as regular fire service officials.

The recruited fire service officials are expected to make a life-long commitment to the service until the age limit (Table 3.5), and can be promoted to a higher grade through a promotion review or a promotion examination.

\begin{table}[h]
\centering
\begin{tabular}{|l|c|}
\hline
Assistant Fire Chief or Above & 60 \\
Fire Captain or Below & 57 \\
\hline
\end{tabular}
\caption{Age Limit of Korean Fire Service Officials}
\end{table}

\textit{Table 3.5: Age Limit of Korean Fire Service Officials}

\textit{Source: Materials and Statistical Data on Fire Services, 2004}

Korean volunteer firefighters are local residents who support the regular full-time fire service officials. They are appointed by the directors of fire departments or the chiefs of fire stations who exercise control over their residential area.\textsuperscript{26} They are enrolled and active members of a volunteer fire company which is organized as a part of the local fire service system. When necessary, they can be called by the directors of the appropriate fire departments or the chiefs of the pertinent fire stations. When they are called, they perform their duties such as fire suppression and (or) rescue/emergency medical services under the command and control of the

\textsuperscript{25} The “Fire Service Official Act” prescribes the qualifications and procedures of the non-competitive examinations. For an understanding of these issues, see Korean “Fire Service Official Act.”

\textsuperscript{26} There is a little difference between qualifications for a volunteer firefighter according to regions. The difference is, however, negligible. In the case of Seoul, the “Seoul Municipal Ordinance of the Establishment of Volunteer Firefighter Company” stipulates that each appointing authority shall consider the following things in appointing volunteer firefighters among the applicants:

1. the resident who has a stable job in the fire service area.
2. the resident who has a good physical condition and a strong cooperative spirit.
3. the resident who enjoys public confidence and has a strong sense of service to society.
4. person who has a specialized knowledge in the field of fire service or holds a related professional certificate such as nurse, EMT (Emergency Medical Technician) or CFFM (Certificate of Fire Facility Management).
directors of fire departments or the chiefs of fire stations. They receive a certain amount of allowance per call. When they are injured in the course of their activities as volunteer firefighter, they are entitled to be compensated for those injuries. When they are killed as a direct result of their volunteer firefighter responsibilities, the relevant local governments pay compensation to the family of the dead. The levels of allowance per call and compensation for injury and death of volunteer firefighters are prescribed by the local statutes of the local governments which take control of the volunteer fire stations of which the injured or dead volunteer firefighters are (or were) members.

In Korea, auxiliary firefighters are quasi-soldiers who complete their military duty by serving in the fire service organizations rather than in the army. Korea is one of the countries that has adopted universal conscription system for every man above the age of eighteen with a few exceptions. In 2001, Korean national government enacted the so called “Act on the Establishment of Auxiliary Firefighter Company,” which enabled a young man on the list of conscription to fulfill his obligatory military service not in the army but in the fire service organizations. According to the “Act on the Establishment of Auxiliary Firefighter Company” and its subordinate statues, the administrator of the NEMA selects the candidates for auxiliary firefighters among the aspirants through an open competitive examination, and recommends them to the Ministry of National Defense for auxiliary firefighters. Under the assent of the Ministry of National Defense, the candidates are appointed as auxiliary firefighters. Living in barracks at the stationed fire service organizations, they are in fire service for 26 months.

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27 The “Presidential Decree of the Establishment of Auxiliary Fire Company” designates the NEMA, National Fire Academy, National 119 Rescue Service, local fire academies, fire departments and fire stations as the fire service organizations in which auxiliary fire fighters serve.
28 The Selection Examination for Auxiliary Firefighter is composed of a physical examination and interview in general. When necessary, however, a written or a practical examination can be added. In the case that a written examination is conducted, the subjects of the exam are “Korean language,” “Korean history” and “Common knowledge.” The examination is administrated by the NEMA.
29 When I visited a fire station in order to interview my informants, I happened to see a board hung on the wall of the office where I met the informant, which indicated a disposition and a daily time schedule of auxiliary firefighters at the fire station as seen in Table 3.6 and 3.7.
During the active period of service, Korean auxiliary firefighters are regulated by the “Act on the Establishment of Auxiliary Firefighter Company” and its subordinate national statutes, which have the full force and effect of military law. After fulfilling their obligatory fire service, they can be specially employed as a regular full-time fire service official thorough the non-

Table 3.6: A Disposition of Auxiliary Firefighters at a Fire Station

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Number of persons</th>
<th>OO Auxiliary Fire Company at OO Fire Station</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Su-Bang (corresponding to a sergeant)</td>
<td>Sang-Bang (corresponding to a corporal)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Division of Fire Administration</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Division of Fire Suppression and Fire Prevention</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Division of Rescue and Emergency Medical Service</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AA Fire Company</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AB Fire Company</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AC Fire Company</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AD Fire Company</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AE Fire Company</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OO Rescue Company</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 3.7: A Daily Time Schedule of Auxiliary Fire Fighters at a Fire Station

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Daily Work</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>06:00(06:30) ~ 07:00</td>
<td>Rising and the Morning Roll Call</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>07:00 ~ 08:00</td>
<td>Cleaning and Washing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>08:00 ~ 08:30</td>
<td>Breakfast</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>08:30 ~ 08:40</td>
<td>Equipment Check. Maintenance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>08:40 ~ 09:00</td>
<td>Morning Meeting and Assigning Duties</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>09:00 ~ 12:00</td>
<td>Work in the Morning</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12:00 ~ 13:00</td>
<td>Lunch</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13:00 ~ 18:00</td>
<td>Work in the Afternoon</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18:00 ~ 18:30</td>
<td>Dinner</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18:30 ~ 20:30</td>
<td>Relaxation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20:30 ~ 21:00</td>
<td>Preparing for the Evening Roll-Call</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21:00 ~22:00</td>
<td>The Evening Roll-Call</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22:00 ~</td>
<td>Sleeping</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

( ) : A Daily Work During the Winter Season
competitive examination mentioned above. The “Act on the Establishment of Auxiliary Fire Fighter Company” stipulates the official duties of the auxiliary firefighters in the service as described in Table 3.8.

Table 3.8: Official Duties of Auxiliary Firefighters

1. Supporting Fire Service Officials at Fires and Other Incidents
   (a) Supporting fire suppression, rescue and emergency medical service performed by fire officials at fires and other incidents. Maintaining an on-the-spot order.
   (b) Making water supply for fire suppression
   (c) Helping incident commander
   (d) Supporting other activities needed on the spot
2. Supporting Official Work
   (a) Assisting clerical work including delivering an official message
   (b) Supporting communication and computer related official work
   (c) Assisting fire service officials at fire companies
   (d) Supporting the activities related to fire water management
   (e) Fire prone area patrolling, and supporting fire prevention activities
   (f) Supporting vehicle driving
3. Gate Guarding Station House

Fire Services In Korea

The “Basic Act on Fire Service,” the mother law of all fire service related statutes in Korea stipulates the fire services performed by Korean fire service personnel as follows.

이 법은 화재를 예방·경계하거나 진압하고 화재, 재난, 재해, 그 밖에 위급한 상황에서의 구조, 구급활동 등을 통하여 국민의 생명, 신체 및 재산을 보호함으로써 공공의 안녕질서 유지와 복리증진에 이바지함을 그 목적으로 한다. (소방 기본법 제 1 장 제 1 조)

This Act purports to maintain the peace and order of the public and to contribute the promotion of the public good by protecting the lives and the property of the people through fire prevention, fire suppression and the provisions of rescue and emergency medical services in such circumstances as fires, natural and human-triggered disasters and other urgent incident. (The Basic Act on Fire Service, Chapter 1, Article 1.)
As shown in the stipulation of Korean “Basic Act on Fire Service” in the above, fire services in Korea are divided into two classes, that is to say, fire services and emergency response (rescue/medical) services.

In Korea, the things that fire service personnel do are generically named “소방 (消防: So-Bang),” “소방 (消防: So- Bang),” fire business in Korea is composed of “소 (消: So) and “방(防: Bang),” each designating the respective operations conducted by the corresponding fire service personnel.

The letter, “소 (消: So) is an ideograph to signify “extinguishing a fire.” As the written symbol stands out, the “소 (消: So)” of “소방 (消防: So- Bang)” indicates a series of activities of firefighters’ activities to put out a fire. Such activities by firemen, which are generally called “fire suppression,” have formed the basis of the fire services in Korea.

The literal sense of “방 (防: Bang)” is “to cover or shield from that which would injure, destroy, or detrimentally affect.” If we scrutinizing the literal sense of “방 (防: Bang),” we can know that a “방 (防: Bang)” conceptualized as the ideograph, “방 (防: Bang)” is a specific

30 In addition to indicating the meaning of “getting a fire under control,” the character, “소 (消: So) is also a sign of “removing something,” “digesting food,” and so on. When the ideograph, “소 (消: So)” is combined with another ideograph, 독(毒: Dok) whose meaning is “a poison,” for example, the letter, “소 (消: So)” is used as a sign to indicate the meaning of “removing something ( “a poison” in this case).” If “소 (消: So)” is used with a letter, “화(化:wha)” of which the meaning is “change,” on the other hand, the character, “소 (消: So) functions as a sign of “digesting food.” In this case, “화(化:wha)” refers to the state or the process that the nature of food is changed into something as a result of digestion. For a more detailed understanding of the examples of how the ideograph, “소 (消: So)” is used, see dictionaries of classical Chinese, explained in Korean.

31 When the character, “방 (防: Bang)” is used in a noun, it has the signification of “bank (levee).”

32 Taking “방 (防: Bang)” in its literal sense, the word is translated into “to protect” in English. When the word is coupled with “국(國: Guk) whose meaning is “country,” for example, the term, 국방(國防: Guk-Bang) comes to have the meaning of “national defense,” namely, “protecting a country against a foreign invasion.”

According to The Third International English Dictionary (1982), “protect” has the meanings of “1: to cover or shield from that which would injure, destroy, or detrimentally affect., 2: to act as protector for., 3: to guard, shield, or foster by a protective tariff or other form of trade control., 4: to render (a lyophobic colloid) stable by the addition of a protective colloid., 5a: to warn (the crew of an approaching train) that the track ahead is not clear., b: to flag or signal to stop” (p.1822). Of the usage of “protect” in the dictionary, this paper selects the first usage of the world (1) as the closest denotation of the character, “방 (防: Bang).”
protective activity against a certain harmful situation. With regard to the ways to shield from a destructive situation, on the other hand, there can be at least two kinds of protective activities. The first one is a preventive protection to keep a hurtful situation from happening or existing, or to block or minimize (an) imagined detrimental effect(s) from a possible situation. The second one is a responsive protection to block or minimize (a) damaging effect(s) from an actually occurred dangerous situation.

Until the 1970s, Korean fire services expressed as the "방 (防: So-Bang)" of "소방 (消防: So-Bang)" were the composite preventive protections, which were usually categorized into "fire prevention." The unsafe situation, which fire service personnel in charge of the "방 (防: So-Bang)" of "소방 (消防: So-Bang)" needed to handle, was confined to a "fire." The protective operations conducted by them were varieties of precautionary measures to prevent the outbreak of a fire, or to isolate or minimize a loss of life and property in the case of a fire.

"Fire prevention," which had been the "방 (防: So-Bang)" of "소방 (消防: So-Bang)" until the 1970s, has still been an essential fire business in Korea. It includes fire inspections, building permits, fire investigations, surveillance of fire-prone areas, and public fire education.

In Korea, fire inspections are conducted for structures, manufacturing sites and hazardous material storage areas by qualified fire inspectors in accordance with the act on installation, maintenance and management of fire prevention facilities. Besides regular inspections, Korean fire inspectors sometimes conduct occasional inspections in structures in danger of causing casualties in the event of a fire. They also conduct special inspections in the event of a possible occurrence of other large-sized fires and during seasonably fire prone periods.

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33 It can be said that "fire suppression," the "소 (消: So)" of "소방 (消防: So-Bang)" is also a protective activity to save lives and property from a fire, a destructive incident. From the viewpoint of the semantical structure of the term, "소방 (消防: So-Bang)," however, the word, "소방 (消防: So-Bang)" is a compound of "소 (消: So)" and "방 (防: Bang)." It means that the "방 (防: Bang)" of "소방 (消防: So-Bang)" indicates (an)other protection(s) except for "fire suppression," the "소 (消: So)" of "소방 (消防: So-Bang)." When Korean people designate the responsibilities of fire service personnel "소방 (消防: So-Bang)" overall, they do not use the "소 (消: So)" as a kind of the "방 (防: Bang)." In their usage of the term, the "소 (消: So)" and the "방 (防: Bang)" mean separate responsibilities of fire service personnel. In this respect, this paper understands the "방 (防: Bang)" of "소방 (消防: So-Bang)" as other fire services in Korea with the exception of "fire suppression."
Fire investigations are made by certified fire investigators. At fires, they turn out at the scene of the fire with firefighters. Through identification activities on the spot such as collecting evidence and interviewing witness, they determine the origin and causes of fires and estimate the extent of damage caused by the fires. When the cases might be arson or criminal negligence, they make an investigation with the police. Sometimes, their investigations are paralleled with those of relevant fire insurance companies. They often are called upon to testify in court. Fire investigators in Korea report their investigations on fires to their fire stations, the corresponding fire departments and the NEMA. Their reports are used as reference data for preventing similar types of fires in the future. In this respect, fire investigations have been recognized as valuable fire prevention measures.

Since the 1980s responsive protections against unfavorable situations of various kinds including fires have been integral parts of Korean protective fire services, the “방 (防: So- Bang)” of “소방 (消防: So- Bang).” As rescue and emergency medical services by specialized fire service officials have been provided at each kind of risky site including a fire scene from the 1980s, the scope of protective fire services in Korea has been expanded from preventive fire services to preventive/responsive safety services.

In Korea, EMS (Emergency Medical Services) was limited to transporting those injured from fire sites to hospitals until the 1970s. Fire stations experimented in transporting emergency patients during curfew hours at night in 1981. Following the successful trial period and good response from residents, each fire station began to establish emergency patient reporting centers and began to operate emergency teams in accordance with the provision that took effect in 1982. A revision of the Basic Act on Fire Service, made in 1981, stipulated the duty of offering emergency aid. Around 5,000 qualified fire service officials now operation within the EMS (Table 3.9). They transport around 3,000 patients to hospitals per day (Table 3.10).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Total</th>
<th>Nurses</th>
<th>EMT</th>
<th>EMT Guaranteed in U.S.A</th>
<th>Assistant Nurses</th>
<th>EMT Trainees</th>
<th>Others</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>4,900</td>
<td>215</td>
<td>2,545</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>1,532</td>
<td>567</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 3.10: EMS Statistics

<p>| | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ambulances</td>
<td>1,174</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Runs</td>
<td>1,027,429</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No. of transported patients</td>
<td>1,068,458</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No. of transported patients per day</td>
<td>2,927</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Average transported patients per ambulance</td>
<td>910</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Safety Korea, 2005

Korean 119 rescue squads with advanced training and equipment were established in 1988 to cope with industrial and natural disasters including explosions and floods as well as to take appropriate measures against the possible occurrence of incidents, traffic accidents and terrorist acts during the 24th Summer Olympic Games held in 1988. Before that time, firefighters were responsible for the services, and their services were restricted to rescuing people from the scene of fires. With the 24th Summer Olympic Games as a momentum, 8 rescue squads with skilled members were set up in 1988. In 1989, a revision of the Basic Act on Fire Service stipulated the responsibility of saving lives from injurious situations of every sort and variety including fires. Korean 119 rescue teams are mainly composed of fire service officials with military background of special forces such as air-borne troops, UDT/SEAL (Underwater Demolition Team/ Sea Air Land), and EOD (Explosive Ordnance Disposal). They are usually taken into service through non-competitive examinations mentioned above. As of December, 2004, more than 2,000 rescuers are in service (Materials and Statistical Data on Fire Services, 2004). They now handle 5,000 cases on average per day (Table 3.11).

Table 3.11: Rescue Statistics

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Cases handled</th>
<th>Number of rescued people</th>
<th>Average number rescued per day</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>95,679</td>
<td>60,254</td>
<td>165</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Safety Korea (2005)
As shown in the descriptions above, the fire service system in Korea is not just a fire service system. The system combines fire suppression, fire prevention, and rescue/emergency medical services into the system itself. In a word, the Korean fire service system is itself a public safety system throughout the country.

The subsequent discussions in the paper illustrate how Korean fire service officials, the central axis of safety or emergency management in the country, consciously relate themselves to their encountered working situations. I outline the research methods and design for doing so in the subsequent chapter four.
CHAPTER 4
RESEARCH METHOD

This study is an “analytic interpretation” (Charmaz, 2003) of 45 working episodes collected from 36 Korean street-level fire service workers whom I interviewed. In the interpretation I tried to understand how street-level fire service officials in Korea actively organize their encountered working situations in meaningful forms. Through such an "interpretive understanding" (Brower, Abolafia, and Carr, 2000; Schutz, 1963; Schwandt, 2003) I propose a “terrain specific theory” (Sanjek, 1990) of organizational sensemaking. In my research the terrain to be examined is the process by which Korean street-level fire service officials make sense of the situations in which they have to act. Thus the theory suggested in the study is “this particular terrain as it is understood by me.”

The procedure by which I interpretively grasp the sensemaking process of Korean street-level fire service workers has been channeled by the grounded theory approach, which was originally developed by Barney Glaser and Anselm Strauss (1967).

The grounded theory approach is a “conceptually-mediated” (Golden-Biddle and Locke, 1993) qualitative research method for analyzing data gathered by a variety of means. By combining the strength of the traditional qualitative research with a systematic approach to data analysis (Brower, 1995; Turner, 1983), the method seeks to “go beyond mere description of

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34 The notion of “interpretive understanding (Verstehen in German term)” (Coser, 1971) is generally used to refer both to “the ordinary actors’ inside defining process of the situations” (Schwandt, 1996) and to “a method peculiar to the social sciences” (Schutz, 1963).

Related to Weber’s conception of “formless content (immediate sensations),” “categorically formed content (concrete facts),” and “methodologically formed presentation of facts (scientific concepts)” (Burger, 1987, p. 62), for example, Schutz (1963) embraces two dimensions of “interpretive understanding (Verstehen). According to Schutz, Verstehen is, on the primary level, the process by which all of us construct the lived experiences (meanings) of our everyday world (Schutz, 1963, Schwandt, 1994, 2003). Yet Verstehen is also the process by which social scientists construct a theoretical framework within which the primary process (the constructs made by the actors on the social scene) may be comprehended (Natanson, 1963; Schutz, 1963; Schwandt, 2003). In this case, Schutz says, Verstehen refers to a second-order process, a special means of the entry into the construction of the meaningful experiences by the actors in ordinary life, by which social inquirers seek to make sense of the first-order process (Schutz, 1962; Schwandt, 1994, 1996, 2003).

By “interpretive understanding” in this chapter, I mean the second sense of Verstehen explicated by Schutz. As I will explain below, the Verstehen which I exercised in the study is the so called “grounded analysis,” a qualitative analysis technique.
social phenomenon in natural settings, and to build theory based on analyzing relationships among components in a given social setting or phenomenon” (Brower, 1995, p.44).

What I needed in the study was a broad range of sensemaking experiences given by Korean fire service officials. Obviously, the research was expected to generate large amounts of non-standard qualitative data, which would make analysis problematic. In order to develop a “good theoretical account” (Turner, 1983) of such large volumes of data, accordingly, my study essentially called for a research analysis method to make it possible to sustain an intimate relationship with data, and at the same time to analyze the data. The grounded analytic approach made it possible to accomplish these two purposes. More recent suggestions of this approach (Charmaz, 2003; Creswell, 1998, 2002; Glaser: 1990; Strauss, 1987; Strauss and Corbin, 1990, 1998) provided guidance to the process of analyzing data.

Data Collection

Data Collection Method

The data from which I have constructed a “middle range theoretical framework” (Charmaz, 2003) of organizational sensemaking were the actual working experiences provided by the Korean fire service officials whom I contacted for the study. The data collection technique that I used in the fieldwork was “intensive interviewing” (Lofland and Lofland, 1985).

The intensive interview is “a guided conversation whose goal is to elicit from the interviewee rich, detailed materials that can be used in qualitative analysis” (Lofland and Lofland, 1995, p.18). “In contrast to ‘structured interviewing’ where the goal is to elicit choices between alternative answers to preformed questions on a topic or situation, the intensive interview seeks to witness (italics substituted for ‘discover’ in Lofland and Lofland’s original statement) the informant’s experience of a particular topic or situation” (Lofland and Lofland, 1985, p.18).

As I have stated repeatedly earlier, the primary purpose of this study is to understand how street-level fire service workers in Korea make sense of their immediate working situations. As a matter of course, the data that I needed for the purpose were not Korean fire service officials’ opinions about the validity of my already exiting understating (knowledge) of their sensemaking. Instead what I needed in the study was their real experiences in unstructured working sensemaking situations from which I would try to develop my understanding of their sensemaking. From the outset,
therefore, I did not consider the structured interview as a possible data gathering tool for the study.

Several reasons drove me to choose intensive interviewing instead of participant observation. Participant observation is an ethnographic research method which “combines participation in the lives of the people under study with maintenance of a professional distance that allows adequate observation and recording of data” (Fetterman, 1989, p. 34-35). As Fetterman (1989) points out, the method usually “requires close, long-term contact with the people under study” (p. 37). My dissertation was not financially assisted. When I planned to visit Korea to collect data, I was working as a researcher for a research institute at Florida State University. I could not stay in the country for my fieldwork more than three months. Limited research budget and a predetermined time schedule did not allow long periods of fieldwork. As compared to participant observation, the interview was an effective method by which I could gather data without requiring undue time commitments.

In addition to the given constraints of the research, I chose the intensive interview for a more fundamental reason. For me, the adoption of participant observation meant that I participated in the daily work activities of Korean fires service officials “openly in the role of researcher” (Becker and Geer, 1970), observing what actually happened and registering the events that would unfold before me. If I had been interested in the reproduction of Korean fire service officials’ work activities in natural settings, the method should have been seriously considered as a promising data collection tool in spite of such restrictions as mentioned above. My real interest was not, however, the reproduction of the daily work of the Korean fire people under the study. Instead, what I was deeply concerned with was their sensemaking experiences in daily working situations, which was firmly believed to involve the inside defining process of the situations. Direct observation of ostensible work behavior could not be direct observation of mental processes in people’s heads. Even if I had engaged in direct observation of Korean fire service officials’ work activities in natural settings, accordingly, I would not have regarded such a direct observation as a primary source of data. Rather I should have employed observed behavior as a source for follow-up interviewing. In any case, a typical data-gathering pattern would have been to inquire with an individual fire service official about “what was going on” in a previously observed situation. For me, such an inquiry was basically identical to intensive interviewing.
If participant observation is not a method by which I can have a direct access to Korean fire service officials’ sensemaking experiences, how about the intensive interview? Can I say that intensive interviewing is a relevant method assuring my direct access to informants’ “amorphous” (Lofland and Lofland, 1985) experiences themselves? This was the question that I had when I gave the interview as a data collection method a serious consideration. With regard to this issue, my reading of Sokolowski’s discussions below was crucial to select the intensive interview as the data collection method for the study.

We might be tempted to think of memory in the following way: when we remember something, we call up a mental image of the thing and recognize this picture as presenting the same thing we once saw. In this view, remembering would be not all that much different from looking at a photograph of someone and recognizing who the person is and the setting in which the photograph was taken. The only difference would be that the photograph is in the “extramental” world, while the memory image is in the “instrumental” world. This interpretation of remembering is very wrong. It confuses remembering with another kind of intentionality, picturing. ……. In picturing, we look at one object that depicts another. We look at this piece of colored canvas or that piece of paper, and in it we see something else: a woman, a rustic scene. In remembering, we do not look at one object that depicts another. We simply “see” or visualize the object directly. Remembering is more like perceiving than like picturing something. In memory I do not see something that looks like what I remember; I remember that object itself, at another time. If we are pestered by a memory that will not leave us, we should, strictly speaking, not say, “I can’t get that image out of my mind!” Rather, we should exclaim, “I can’t stop visualizing that thing!” ……. In memory the object that was once perceived is given as past, as remembered. Moreover, it is given as it was then perceived; if I saw an automobile accident, I remember it from the same angle, with the same sides, aspects, and profiles, from which I saw it. One and the same accident is given to me again, and if I have to testify about the accident, I may have to rerun the event a few times to try to bring the details to the mind. (“Try to remember: Did the pedestrian step into the street before or after the traffic light changed?”) When I do rerun the event, I do not inspect an inner picture; I try to exercise again the perception I had then and bring back the thing I saw, and I do this way it is done when we remember things (Sokolowski, 2000, p. 67).

Intensive interviewing in the study was a “retrospective interviewing” (Fetterman, 1983) in that I had to ask informants to recall their sensemaking experiences from the past. Although some may dispute this understanding, Sokolowski’s statements above informed me that what prospective informants would deliver to me should not be their “present” images of their
previous experiences but rather the previous experiences themselves in principle. On the basis of Sokolowski’s argument, the interview was the only way by which I could directly observe my informants’ sensemaking experiences that would be presented in their acts of remembering.

**Data Sites and Informants**


I gained entry to the data sites in Seoul through my Korean associate who was in a key position in the activities of fire stations in Seoul. I could get to the other sites through my former Korean teacher’s former student, who was on intimate terms with the fire station chiefs in the corresponding regions and the director of the National Fire Academy.

Seoul, the capital of Korea, is the largest city in Korea. At the time when I began to collect data, there were twenty one fire stations, twenty four rescue companies and one hundred nine fire companies in Seoul, where more than five thousand fire service officials were working. More fire service workers were working at more fire stations, rescue companies and fire companies in Seoul than any other location in Korea. In Seoul I could obtain the richest possible data by accessing more data sites and getting in touch with more informants. Seoul was an ideal location for the research.

Cheongju and Kongju are middle-sized cities in Korea, and they lie adjacent to Seoul. These two cities were useful as locations for research for the following two reasons. First, the fire service workers in Cheongju and Kongju were convenient to contact and interview because the cities are near Seoul, a primary place where I collected data. Second, my research is not the study of street-level fire service workers in Seoul: it is the study of street-level fire service officials in Korea. Cheongju and Kongju provided important comparative sources of data, since
data from Seoul alone made it impossible to know which aspects of fire service officials’ experiences related to peculiarities of Seoul’s administrative and political environment.

The National Fire Academy was negotiated as an important data site in the course of gathering data in the local facilities described above. The fire academy is located in Cheonan, a large city in Korea. Cheonan is near Seoul, and it lies halfway between Cheongju and Kongju. Due to these geographical characteristics of Cheonan, I could easily visit the site (The National Fire Academy) while coming and going to Seoul, Cheongju and Kongju so as to collect data. The National Fire Academy in Korea is a fire and related emergency training organization for fire service personnel across the country. Besides the basic benefit of geographical convenience, the academy was a most suitable site where I could concurrently contact and interview fire service workers from a breadth of regions in Korea. The data site provided me with an informant pool which covered a wide range of local units in Korea, and as a result I could produce more generalizable findings about sensemaking.

In this study I wanted to explore the sensemaking experiences of Korean street-level fire service officials. Korean fire service officials are the regular full-time fire service workers who are under the regulation of the so called “Fire Service Official Act,” which was enacted in 1977, and who work at fire service organizations in the country such as the NEMA (National Emergency Management Agency), fire departments, fire academies, fire stations, rescue companies and fire companies. Among them, street-level fire service officials point to the fire service personnel who work at fire stations, rescue companies, or fire companies across the country, and who make direct contact, and accordingly constantly “interact (or could interact: italics added) with citizens in the course of their jobs” (Lipsky, 1980, p. 3), including fire inspectors, fire fighters, the members of rescue squads, EMS (Emergency Medical Service) members. Korean street-level fire service officials in this sense was the target population whose sensemaking process I wanted to try to understand in the study. The problem that I faced was how to sample informants from the population so that “what I learned about their sensemaking (Italics added) experience would not be easily dismissed as idiosyncratic and irrelevant to the larger population” (Seidman, 1998, p. 44).

In my research, it was neither practically nor logically possible to use random sampling or a stratified random-sampling approach in order to construct an informant pool which might be representative of the population. First, the list of the whole population (street-level fire service
workers in Korea) were not available. It was nonsensical to randomly select informants without a sampling frame. Second, “randomness is a statistical concept that depends on a very large number of participants” (Seidman, 1998, p.44). Given the predetermined constraints of the research mentioned in the earlier, it was simply impossible to establish such a large enough interview sample so as to make claims of generalizability to the population. Furthermore, my research is an in-depth interview study. As Seidman indicates (1998), “there is always an element of self-selection in an interview study” (p. 44) since interview participants must consent to be interviewed. By the nature of the study, self-selection and true randomness could not be well-matched from the start.

Under the circumstances that random selection was not an option, the sampling strategy that I employed was to *purposefully* construct an informant pool of which the range of people and regions could be fair to the population (Seidman, 1998).

As defined earlier in the term, “Korean street-level fire service officials,” the population under my study are fire inspectors, firefighters, rescuers, and the EMS personnel who work at fire stations, rescue companies, or fire companies which are widely dispersed across the country. I paid attention to two variations present in the population: the variation of people and locals. At the conveniently contacted sites described above, I tried to sample interview participants who reflected the range of these two variations in the population so that the resulting informant pool could not be likely to be idiosyncratic.

The purposive sampling of interview participants passed through three steps. To begin, I made contact with potential informants inside the range in the population through “gatekeepers” (Creswell, 1998) who controlled access to them. In my research, the gatekeepers were the fire station chiefs and the director of The National Fire Academy who had the responsibility for the operation of all the data sites but Jorng-ro Fire Company in Seoul presented earlier. The potential informants with whom I was put in touch for my interview study were the workers or the students at the sites, and I did not know those people. There was not any route of access other than through administrators in charge. My gatekeepers were cooperative. They were interested in my project. Through their good offices, I could easily come into contact with all the types of street-level fire service workers at the data sites in Seoul, Cheongju and Kongju. At The National Fire Academy, I could also gain access to the prospective interview participants from other metropolitan cites and provinces in Korea.
During the process of contact with prospective informants, I took the step of selecting the people I would interview. When I made preliminary contacts with potential informants before the actual interview, I introduced myself and explained my proposed research by telling them that Korean fire service workers played a significant role in the emergency management system in the country but that little was empirically known about how they actively managed their immediate working situations. Then I presented my interest in “learning about how Korean fire service officials actually handle their puzzling or troubling working situations,” and asked them to grant access to their previous experiences in such situations. What I wanted to hear from informants was their real sensemaking experiences in encountered working situations. It was important to let the prospective informants clearly know what I would expecte of them in the interview. However, they were not familiar with the concept of “sensemaking” itself. Instead of enumerating what was meant by “sensemaking,” therefore, I expended an effort to inform the potential participants of my interest in the study using simple and non technical terms.

When I asked potential participants to join the study, some of them were reluctant to get involved in an interview. In the face of such reluctance, I was concerned about the possibility that I might “go to great lengths to exercise persuasion only to find later the interview itself to be an ongoing struggle” (Seidman, 1998, p.47). So, I did not try to ardently persuade the reluctant individuals to participate in an interview. Saying in effect that “you are a particularly good person to talk to, and each episode’s names and settings will be disguised in any reports that I produce,” I tried to persuade them once again. In instances in which they were sill disinclined to participate despite these efforts, however, I avoided to having an interview with them.

My purposive selection of interview participants, on the other hand, involved the so called “snowball, or chain-referral” sampling (Lofland and Lofland, 1995). When I successfully completed an interview with informants with whom I had contacted, I usually asked them to recommend others to whom I might talk. One of them, whom I interviewed at a site in Seoul, offered to call her peer at Jong-ro Fire Company in Seoul for me, and arranged her consent. She was successful. I interviewed the person. Again, this informant introduced her fellow at the same company to me, and I could productively interview him.

During my stay in Korea, I came into contact with fifty two Korean fire service officials at the street level for my interview study. Of them, eleven people declined to participate in an interview. I did not try to interview five persons who were hesitant to get involved in the
research. As a result, I had interviews with thirty six participants, who were firefighters, rescuers, EMS staff or fire inspectors covering various regions in the country. From them I heard forty five sensemaking related working stories.

**Conduct of Interviews**

In the instances that I gained the participation of potential informants in the research at the time of my contact visit with them, I scheduled the times, dates and places of interviews right then. I let the informants choose the best times, places and dates of interviews. If they stated a preference, I tried to be flexible enough to accommodate the informant’s choice (Seidman, 1998). In deciding the date of the interview, however, I made an effort to space the actual interview from two days to a week apart from the contact visit since I thought that such a spacing could allow time for the participants to mull over their previous sensemaking experience but not enough time to lose the connection between them and me. In the event that the participants’ choice fell at the same time as already established interview appointments, or was outside the spacing which was believed to be reasonable, I carefully asked them to reconsider the times and (or) dates of interviews. In those cases, the participants and I set up interviews in such a way that we all were comfortable with the resulting schedule.

During the contact visit, I also developed a data base of my participants in order to smooth the progress of the communication between me and them. It included the informants’ names, ranks, work place telephone numbers, cellular phone numbers, electronic mail addresses, the best time to be in touch with them, and the time to avoid calling them, if any.

After a contact visit, I sent electronic mail to the informants whom I selected and to those whom I did not. Electronic mails were used to thank all the contacted people for meeting with me and, in the case of those who were selected for the study, to confirm in writing the schedule of interview appointments, and to advise them to expect a follow-up call before the actual interview.

In the follow-up call the nature of my project was reiterated, the informants were asked to participate in the research once again, and the schedule of interview appointments was confirmed finally. They all were in agreement. They did not make a demand of change in the schedule. Before concluding each call, I provided a prompt to get the participants thinking about puzzling or troubling working experiences that they had undergone. The prompt was essentially an extension of my study goal.
Interviews in Seoul, Cheongju and Kongju were conducted at either each informant’s private office or an agency conference room. In most cases, the participants in The National Fire Academy had opted for a coffee shop near the academy. In a few cases, the place of the interview was the conference room in the academy dormitory that the informant had reserved. At first, I had misgivings that the noise and the lack of privacy might undermine the effectiveness of the coffee shop for interviews. Yet the coffee shop was quiet and unfrequented enough for the participants to be unconcerned about surroundings and others, and accordingly to concentrate on the interview.

Interviews in the cities mentioned above were done in the daytime. Of my informants, firefighters, rescue service personnel and EMS staff worked twenty four hours on, and twenty four hours off (with shifts starting at 8 a.m.). They did not want to devote their time to my interview study on an off-day for them. Interviews with them by night were not appropriate. According to my informants, their turning out for a period of night duty was relatively busy, which might result in an unexpected discontinuance of the interview. Fire inspectors were daytime workers who wanted my visit with them for interviews during their office hours.

In Seoul, Cheongju and Kongju, I usually interviewed two or three participants at different data sites during the same day. As I said before, the data sites in those three cities were fire stations, rescue companies and fire companies. Except for Jorng-Ro Fire Company, the fire companies where I interviewed my informants (firefighters and the EMS personnel) were under the direct control of the fire stations where I interviewed my other informants (fire inspectors). In Korea, the fire company under the direct control of a fire station uses the same building with the fire station. As I described in chapter 3, on the other hand, Korean fire station takes control of one or two rescue companies. The rescue company in Korea is with or very next to its fire station. Such a geographical contiguity of the interview sites made it possible for me to interview multiple informants at separate work places on the same day.

Interviews at the National Fire Academy were conducted in the evening. The participants at this site were students who were in the courses provided by the academy. I could not interview them in the daytime when they were in their class. For each visit, I had an interview with one or two persons after 5 p.m. when the class was dismissed.

Before beginning the interview, I showed the informed consent form (see Appendix A) to each participant and asked him or her to sign it. In my contact visit with the informant, I had already
asked permission to tape record the interview and explained all aspects of the study that the informed consent form covered. So my participants were not surprised by the contents on the form when I presented it. Nobody declined to sign the form. Everybody consented to be tape recorded.

In interviewing I initially arrived with a set of questions (Appendix B, and C) about which I wanted my informants to speak freely in their own terms. The instrument that I brought to the interview was developed to prompt interviewees to recall, in the best recollection of their experience, their act of sensemaking and its consequences in three contexts that I designated in chapter two.

Each interview began with an opening question, in which I asked informants to tell me about dilemmas, uncertainties, ambiguities, or other puzzlements or troubles that they had in their work in real situations. Then, I guided what the participant would say consulting the prepared interview instrument as necessary.

During interviewing, however, I did not use the prepared questionnaire as a tightly structured set of questions to be asked verbatim. Nor did I go through the interview guide in strictly the same order that I had originally set up questions. In interviewing I stayed to the questionnaire but was flexible enough to follow the conversation of the interviewee. In those instances when an informant did not raise the issues that merited my pursuing, and if there was an opportunity to do so without diverting recollection of his or her own experience, I referred to the interview guide and raised issues upon which I wanted to touch (Seidman, 1998). Luckily, however, many informants raised relevant issues on their own as they talked about their sensemaking experience. The questions typically used in such cases followed from what the participants had said (not from the questionnaire). In the course of talking about things that my informants cared about, on the other hand, they answered, in many cases, some of the questions in other parts of the instrument. The interview instrument in such cases was employed as a checklist of things I wanted to talk about during the interview (Lofland and Lofland, 1995). I checked them off as they were accomplished.

Once the participants spoke in response to a given question, it was my intention to “listen more and talk less,” (Seidman, 1998, p.63), assuming “the role of one who is to be taught” (Lofland and Lofland, 1985, p.56). In instances in which I wanted to seek concrete details or clarification of what informants said, I avoided interrupting their conversation. After they
concluded marking a point or points, I explored what I wanted to know with informants by asking such questions as, “You mentioned __________, could you tell me more about that?” or “I am not sure I know what ______ means, what do you mean by ______?” In exploring what the interviewee said, however, I always kept the possibility in mind that too much exploration could make the interviewee shift the modality of his or her sensemaking story telling from “remembering” to “reconstructing.” When I intuitively felt that my exploring for explication or clarification of the participant’s words could lead to a fictitious reconstruction of his or her sensemaking experience (not a factious remembrance of the experience), I did not try out further exploration with the participant.

When interviewers do talk in an interview, they usually ask questions. The key to asking questions during in-depth interviewing is to let them follow, as much as possible, from what the participant is saying. Although the interviewer comes to each interview with a basic question that establishes the purpose and focus of the interview, it is in response to what the participant is saying that the interview follow up, ask for clarification, seek concrete details, and request stories. ………….The interviewer’s basic work……is to listen to actively and to move the interview forward as much as possible by building on what the participant has begun to share (Seidman, 1998, p.66).

The interview technique in Seidman’s statement above was what I tried to apply to the interviews with my informants.

Every interview concluded with an obligatory question, “was there anything I didn’t ask that I should have asked (?)”

The length of time for each interview was 30 minutes on the average. The longest interview took around an hour and a half. In this interview, the informant told me of his previous three sensemaking experiences. The length of the shortest interview was ten minutes or so, which I shall present as an example of my data analysis in the following section. In this case, the informant responded to a fire response call during the interview. Therefore, the interview could not be completed. The participant was supposed to leave for summer vacation the day after I interviewed him. Due to my other interview arrangements, I could not schedule a follow up interview with him. However, the interview provided me with valuable information to yield insights into the topic of the study.
Data Analysis

Having completed the interview, I had the tape recorded interview transcribed verbatim. I then studied the transcript and analyzed it. I did not allow transcripts to pile up without studying them as they became available. I spent as much time immediately studying and analyzing the interview material as I spent in the interview itself. This was important because subsequent data-gathering was based on the ongoing analysis. In this respect, data collection and analysis in the study was a “zigzag process—out to field to gather information, analyze data, back to the field to gather more information, analyze the data and so forth” (Creswell, 1998, p.57).

The analysis continued after I returned to Florida State University. During the latter stages of analysis, I was able to draw more fully on others including my guiding professor for input in the analysis. The principal goal of data gathering in Korea, therefore, was not “theoretical saturation” (Strauss and Corbin, 1990), but getting sufficient, rich data to permit analysis to proceed to closure after I returned to FSU.

As I indicated earlier, the process of data analysis was predicated on grounded theory procedures. The section that follows describes three types of grounded theory approaches that I consulted for the analysis of data. I then explain my approach to grounded theory methodology, which actually directed the data analysis in the study. Exemplifying a case of data analysis, finally, I show how I actually analyzed the data collected in the fieldwork.

Three Types of Grounded Theory

Grounded theory is a general methodology for deriving theories (abstract analytical frameworks) from an analysis of the patterns, themes, and common categories underlying observational data without any particular commitment to specific kinds of lines of research, or theoretical interests (Babbie, 2001; Creswell, 1998; Strauss, 1987; Strauss and Corbin, 1994). The methodology “was developed by Glaser and Strauss in the early 1960s during a field observational study of hospital staffs’ handling of dying patients” (Strauss, 1987, p.5). Their pioneering book, The Discovery of Grounded Theory (1967) laid the foundation for major ideas of grounded theory used today, and it became a procedural guide for numerous qualitative

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35 “Theoretical saturation” is a terminology widely used by grounded theorists. The term in grounded theory is usually defined as “a state in which the researcher makes the subjective determination that new data will not provide any new information or insight for the developing theories (italics substituted for ‘categories’ in Creswell’s original definition)” (Creswell, 2002, p.450). For a more detailed understanding of this terminology, see Creswell (2002), Glaser and Strauss (1967), and Strauss and Corbin (1990, 1998).
researchers claiming the use of the methodology to legitimate their research (Charmaz, 2003; Creswell, 2002).

In the years since *Discovery*, Strauss and Glaser have moved the methodology in somewhat conflicting directions while independently authoring several books that refine and explain their early methods (Glaser, 1978, 1992; Strauss, 1987). The late Strauss, with his more recent coauthor, Corbin has proposed more formulaic and systematic coding (analytical) procedures to give rigor to studies (Strauss and Corbin, 1990, 1998), whereas Glaser has emphasized a more flexible and open-ended form of grounded theory research to warrant fidelity to encountered data (Glaser, 1978, 1992). To the variations in grounded theory, on the other hand, Charmaz (1990, 1994, 2003) has recently added another position: constructivist grounded theory. In association with data analysis in grounded theory, those three methods are described below.

**Strauss and Corbin’s Systematic Design.** The systematic design is the detailed, rigorous grounded theory method that Strauss and Corbin identified in their 1990 coauthored book, *Basics of Qualitative Research: Grounded Theory Procedures and Techniques* and elaborated in their second edition in 1998 (Charmaz, 2003; Creswell, 2002). “It is much more prescribed than the original conceptualization of grounded theory in 1967” (Creswell, 2002, p. 441).

Their systematic design emphasizes the use of data analysis steps of open, axial, and selective coding for developing a grounded theory.

**Open coding** is the first analytic process of “conceptualizing, defining categories, and developing categories in terms of their properties and dimensions” (Strauss and Corbin, 1998, p. 121). In conceptualizing, data are segmented into discrete incidents, ideas, events, happenings, and acts, and are then given abstract names that represent or stand for these concepts. (Strauss and Corbin, 1990, 1998). The conceptual name or “code,” can be one placed on the objects by the analyst or may be taken from the words of respondents; the latter are usually referred as “in vivo codes” (Strauss and Corbin, 1998). “Once concepts begin to accumulate, the researcher should begin the process of grouping them or categorizing them under more abstract explanatory terms, that is, categories” (Strauss and Corbin, 1998, p. 114). After a category is identified, the analyst can begin to develop it in terms of its specific properties and dimensions in order to provide more detail of the category (Strauss and Corbin, 1990, 1998).
Axial coding is a process in which “data are put back together in new ways after open coding by making connection between categories” (Strauss and Corbin, 1990, p. 96). In axial coding, the grounded theorist selects one open coding category, positions it at the center of the process being explored, and then relates other categories to it (Creswell, 2002; Strauss and Corbin, 1990, 1998). This is done by utilizing a coding paradigm involving causal conditions, context, intervening conditions, strategies and consequences (Strauss and Corbin, 1990, 1998; Creswell, 2002).

In Figure 4.1 below, Creswell (2002) succinctly illustrates Strauss and Corbin’s axial coding paradigm.

Selecting coding is “the process of integrating and refining the theory” (Strauss and Corbin, 1998, p. 161). In integration, the categories in the axial coding model are organized around an identified (selected) central idea indicating what “this research is all about” (Strauss and Corbin, 1998). Through such organization, the researcher provides an abstract (theoretical)
explanation for the process being studied in the research (Creswell, 2002). Once a theoretical
scheme is outlined, the grounded theorist refines the theory. Refining theory consists of
“reviewing the scheme for internal consistency, and for gaps in logic, filing in poorly developed
categories, trimming excess ones and validating the scheme” (Strauss and Corbin, 1998, p. 156).
“Poorly developed categories are saturated through further theoretical sampling. The theory is
validated by comparing it to the data or by presenting it to respondents for their reactions”
(Strauss and Corbin, 1998).

**Glaser’s Emerging Design.** Although Glaser participated with Strauss in the initial book on
grounded theory (Glaser and Strauss, 1967), Glaser has since written an extensive critique of the
late Strauss (and Corbin) approach (Creswell, 2002, p. 445). Glaser’s position becomes clear in
his 1992 refutation of Strauss and Corbin” (Charmaz, 2003). In *Basics of Grounded Analysis:
Emergence vs. Forcing* (1992) answering Strauss and Corbin’s work in *Basics* (1990), Glaser
finds “Strauss and Corbin to be forcing data and analysis through their preconceptions, analytic
questions, hypothesis, and methodological techniques” (Charmaz, 2003, p. 254). According to
him, Strauss and Corbin’s specific and pre-set analytic categories such as we see in their axial
coding paradigm cause researchers to be locked into preconceived analytical blinders in
analyzing the data, divert them from the data, and result in poorly integrated theoretical
frameworks (Charmaz, 1990, 2003; Crewell, 2002). In this respect, Glaser views their approach
“as full of conceptual-description, not grounded theory” (Charmaz, 2003, p. 255).

For Glaser, the so called “constant comparative method” (Glaser and Strauss, 1967) is
enough strategy to build a *grounded* theory as it is. The constant comparison method is an
inductive data analysis that Glaser proposed (with Strauss) in *Discovery* (1967). The overall
intent is to “discover” the theory from the data of social research (Glaser and Strauss, 1967). The
method is a “concept-indicator model” (Strauss, 1987), which is composed of a series of
procedures of “generating and connecting categories by comparing incidents in the data to other
incidents, incidents to categories, and categories to other categories” (Creswell, 2002, p.451). As
Creswell (2002) explains the procedures in Figure 4.2, raw data are formed into indicators (I)—

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36 According to Strauss and Corbin, theoretical sampling is “sampling on the basis of concepts that have proven
theoretical relevance to the evolving theory” (Strauss and Corbin, 1990, p. 176). For Strauss and Corbin, theoretical
sampling is a pivotal part of generating good grounded theory. Whenever researchers find gaps in their data and
holes in their theories in the process of developing and refining the theories, accordingly, Strauss and Corbin
strongly recommend them to continuously conduct theoretical sampling, that is, to go back to the field and to collect
additional data to fill the conceptual gaps and holes so that “theoretical saturation” is achieved (Charmaz, 2003;
small segments of information that come from different people, different sources, or the same
people over time. These indicators are, in turn, grouped into several codes (e.g., Code A, Code B,
Code C), and then formed into more abstract categories (e.g., Category I, Category II).
Throughout this process, the researcher constantly compares indicators to indicators, codes to
codes, and categories and categories (Creswell, 2002, p. 451). In the process, the researcher lets a
theoretical scheme emerge from the data. Once a scheme emerges from the data, the grounded
theorist also “compares the scheme with the raw data to ground the categories in the information
collected during the study” (Creswell, 2002, p. 451).

In Glaser’s eyes, the analytical method advanced by Strauss and Corbin has already
tampered with structural concepts (e.g. causal conditions, context, intervening conditions,
strategies and consequences) that properly belong to theory. For Glaser, their method is not a
method that the researcher can use in order to build a theory grounded in the data since it (Strauss
and Corbin’s method) itself is a “methodologically compacted theory” (Garrison, 1988). In this
context, Glaser proposes the constant comparative method described above as a transparent
analytic technique for which usage can induce the grounded theorist to capture the theory fully
grounded in the data.

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**Figure 4.2: Glaser's Comparative Analysis in Grounded Theory**

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tampered with structural concepts (e.g. causal conditions, context, intervening conditions,
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context, Glaser proposes the constant comparative method described above as a transparent
analytic technique for which usage can induce the grounded theorist to capture the theory fully
grounded in the data.
Charmaz’s Constructivist Approach. The constructivist approach has been articulated by Charmaz (1990, 1994, 2003) as an effort to move grounded theory into the realm of interpretive social science.

In her 2003 article, *Grounded Theory: Objectivist and Constructivist Methods*, Charmaz places her version of grounded theory in juxtaposition with those of Glaser and Strauss and Corbin.

Charmaz’s understanding of these major proponents of grounded analysis can be described as follows; “both Glaser and Strauss and Corbin assume an external reality that the researcher can discover and record” (Charmaz, 2003, p. 255). They all “endorse a realist ontology and positivist epistemology” (Charmaz, 2003, p. 255). They are realists in that they come to posing “the reality of the data,” unaltered by the researcher. They are also positivists in that they believe that the knowledge of “the reality of the data” is derived from and justified by the direct observation of the reality, which is unfettered by the subjectivity of the researcher. Consequently, their methodological strategies (i.e., Strauss and Corbin’s scientific coding paradigm, and Glaser’s constant comparative analysis) are the methods whose intent is to let grounded theorists maximize their direct access to the reality of the data by minimizing the intrusion of their subjectivity into the access, and in doing so faithfully record (build) what they observe in the data into a conceptual language (structure: theory). Obviously, data analysis in their grounded theory approach is a process in which the analyst tries to “discover” “the reality of the data,” and in doing so to generate a theory to reflect (mirror) the reality. In this sense, their approach to grounded theory is an “objectivist method” (Charmaz, 2003).


In order to clarify what is meant by her constructivist version of grounded theory, we need to examine the following statements from her.

Researchers create a conceptual interpretation of the data, impose an order on it, explicate the relationship between the categories, and organize those relationship to communicate their ideas to audience (Charmaz, 1990, p. 1170).

The rigor of grounded theory approaches offers qualitative researchers a set of clear guidelines from which to build explanatory frameworks that specify relationships among concepts (Charmaz, 2003, p. 251).
As seen in the first statement, Charmaz views data analysis in grounded studies as basically the process of interpreting the data. “The” interpretation explained in the statement is not the process in which the researcher takes hold of “the” order (reality) in the collected data. Rather, it is explained as the process in which the researcher creates (constructs) “an” order (reality), imposes the created (constructed) order (reality) on the data, and in doing so understands the data in terms of the imposed order (reality).

For Charmaz, as seen in the second statement, “an” order (reality) given by the analyst is another name of “a” conceptual framework (theory) that the analyst creates (constructs) so as to explain the data collected. Here, she argues that a series of theory building techniques in grounded theory can be effective tools that qualitative researchers without the “objectivist” standpoint can also take in order to “provide an useful conceptual rendering and ordering of the data” (Charmaz, 2003, p. 252) under study.

In association with the data analysis in grounded study, the technical strategies that Charmaz suggests include (a) a two-step data coding process (“line-by-line coding” and “focused coding”), and (b) memo writing aimed at the construction of conceptual analysis (Charmaz, 2003, p. 251).

Line-by-line coding is a modified “open coding” process in which Charmaz (1990, 1994) examines each line of the interview scripts in her constructivists studies (e.g., studies of people with chronic illness), and then defines actions, events and subjects’ meanings within them. Her focused (or selective) coding uses line-by-line coding products that reappear frequently to sort large amounts of data; this second activity is more directed and, typically, more conceptual than the initial coding (line-by-line coding). From the focused codes in her studies, Charmaz develops the categories for synthesizing and explaining the data that she collected, which in turn shape her constructing of analytic frameworks. Charmaz’s memo writing is “the intermediate step between coding and the first draft of the complete analysis.” (Charmaz, 2003, p. 261). Through this memo writing, she elaborates processes, assumptions, and actions that are subsumed in the codes in her grounded theory studies.

From Charmaz’s point of view, grounded theory is not a process in which researchers discover “the reality” grounded in the data. Rather, grounded theory is a process in which researchers create “a reality,” clothe the data with the created reality, and in doing so take the clothed reality as “the” “real” reality of the data. In Charmaz’s own terminology, her grounded
theory is, therefore, the methodological process of “creating the discovery” (Charmaz, 1990, p. 1165) of the reality of the data collected. In this context, her analytic techniques mentioned in the earlier, in this context, can be said to be a kind of heuristic guideline whose original intent is to get qualitative researchers without an “objectivist” stance to create the discoveries about the obtained data in the process of their analyzing the data.

**Grounded Theory in My Study**

*Anything whatever* can be considered in one of at least two ways, and we do so all the time. I may *either* focus on something *just for its own sake*, paying attention to it itself (‘John, this particular child in need of help’); *or*, I may *take it as an example* of something else, in which case I attend to the individual, not as or for itself, but as exemplifying (‘John, whose mode of life reveals that of autism’). In the latter case, something is indeed presented, but it is presented in a *complex manner*: it is presented by means of the exemplifying item, which is also itself presented but not focused upon for its own sake (I may focus on John, concernfully for instance; or I may focus on the phenomenon of autism as presented through John’s life, action, words, behavior, etc.) (Zaner, 1978, pp. 7-8).

As I suggested earlier, the collected data for the study were 45 working episodes from 36 Korean street-level fire service officials. Data analysis in the study was not the process of examining the episodes as or for themselves. Rather, the analysis was the process in which I paid attention to *the* sensemaking process *exemplified* by such numbers of particular working episodes (although some of them were not clearly shown to exemplify the process), and in doing so revealed *the* process to the mind. For analyzing the data, in this respect, the grounded analysis that I employed in this study was a methodological procedure through which I captured *the* sensemaking (the exemplified kind) *in* the working episodes (the exemplifying particulars), and in doing so displayed to the mind the way it (*the* sensemaking *in* the data) was.

In disclosing *the* sensemaking process *in* the data, I referred to a set of technical coding procedures advanced by Strauss and Corbin (1990, 1998). In the actual process of analyzing (coding) data, however, I did not impose their prescriptive and predetermined “coding paradigm (analytical framework)” (Strauss and Corbin, 1990; Brower, 1996) on the process. Instead, I let an analytical framework (coding paradigm) emerge in the very process of analyzing (coding) the collected data.

The analysis in the study was the process in which I experienced *the* sensemaking *exemplified by* the data, and in doing so presented it to the mind in the form of a conceptual
scheme. In the sense that my analysis (experience) was grounded in the data, it was an inductive analysis. Yet, the analysis was not such a purely inductive inferential process as seemingly assumed by Glaser (1978, 1990). As Kant says, “if theories without facts are empty, facts without theories are blind” (Garrison, 1988, p. 25). I neither entered the analysis *tabula rasa* by completely disengaging myself from my prior theoretical commitments, and nor could I do so. Rather, I carried into the analysis my former theoretical understandings of sensemaking phenomena, which were primarily based on the readings of Weick’s sensemaking discussions, Mead’s symbolic interactionism, Husserl’s transcendental phenomenology, Heidegger’s existential (or hermeneutical) phenomenology, and Schutz’s sociological phenomenology. Although they were speculative (in the sense of “theories without facts”), my *engagement* of such fore-having theoretical perspectives made it possible for me to direct myself toward, and in doing so to experience (understand) *the* sensemaking process *in* the data, and as a result to present it as it was experienced (understood). In this respect, the grounded theory in the study was not an atheoretical but a theoretically sensitized inductive analysis.

In this grounded study, the process of analyzing the collected data in which *the* abstract structure grounded *in* the data came into view was the process in which I took (interpreted) the data as examples of *the* sensemaking (*the* abstract structure), and in doing so grasped (understood) *the* sensemaking which ran through the data. At this point, I shared with Charmaz a viewpoint that data analysis in grounded theory is essentially the process of “interpretive understanding (*Verstehen*)” (Natanson, 1963; Schutz, 1963; Schwandt, 1994, 1996, 2003). Yet, unlike her constructivist approach, my approach to the method of “interpretive understanding” was phenomenological. My data analysis in the study was not a process in which I created *a* sensemaking (reality), imputed it to the data, and understood the data in terms of the imputed sensemaking (reality). Instead the analysis was a process in which I constantly encountered with *the* sensemaking (reality) as presented (“exemplified” in this case) through the data, and in doing so continuously clarified my apprehension of *the* “real” phenomenon. If Charmaz’s “interpretive understanding” was the construction of *a* reality of the data, in this sense, my “interpretive understanding” was the construction of knowledge of *the* reality *in* the data. If Charmaz’s

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37 As Schwandt (2003) shows clearly, the notion of engagement “entails more than a confession of positionality or simply inventorying ‘where one stands’ relative to that which is being interpreted” (p. 322). “Engagement means risking one’s stance and acknowledging the ongoing liminal experience of living between familiarity and strangeness” (Schwandt, 2003, p. 322). Although my prior theoretical assumptions suggested the initial conceptions that I brought to the analysis, in this sense, I risked those assumptions in the process of analyzing data.
Verstehen was “active constitution” (Mohanty, 1997) in that it was the constitution of thing (as is the case with Schutz’s “first-order” construct explained in footnote 1 of this chapter), in this respect, my Verstehen was passive in that it was “the constitution of sense, not of thing” (Mohanty, 1997, p. 91) (as being equivalent to Schutz’s “second-order” construct). As a matter of course, the grounded theory in the study was not a “method of creating” a reality of the data. My grounded theory as a method of Verstehen was a “method of being aware” of the reality in the data.

As I indicated earlier, the interpretive understanding in the study was the understanding (experience) of the exemplified reality in the data. However, the understanding (experience) was not only bound to the reality of which it was the understanding (experience). It was also united with “I” for which it was the understanding (experience). To be exact, therefore, the Verstehen (interpretive understanding) in the study was “my understanding of the reality in the data.” For certain, the possibility of inaccuracy was inherent in the “interpretive understanding” because of its private character which was derived from my subjectivity. As a safeguard against such inaccuracy, therefore, it was necessary to bring into question continuously, and consequently to critically inspect “my interpretive understanding.” In order to do so, I relentlessly withdrew from “living in interpretive understanding,” attended to, and placed in question my lived “interpretive understanding.” Through such a reflexive procedure, I made my Verstehen the explicit object of propositional inspection, and in doing so closely examined its legitimacy. In this context, the grounded study in the study was a “methodological (epistemic) doubt” (Fulton, 1966) by which I incessantly gave attention to the “mineness (subjectivity)” of my act of understanding, attempted a critical scrutiny of the reality in the data (in the form of a proposition) in my understanding, and in doing so, founded “my understanding of the reality in the data” on a less biased ground.

An Example of Data Analysis

The object of inquiry in the study was the sensemaking process of Korean street-level fire service officials, which ran through the collected interview materials. The way (method) to get at

38 Strictly speaking, there are two senses of sensemaking. One is the “thought object construction” (Schutz, 1963 a) performed by the ordinary social actors who are involved in, and accordingly operate upon the world in which they live. When I refer to the sensemaking of Korean street-level fire service officials, the referred sensemaking corresponds to this sense of sensemaking. The other sensemaking is the “thought object construction” performed by the social scientist as observer, who “is not involved in the observed situation, which is to him not of practical but merely of cognitive interest” (Schutz, 1963 b, p. 335-336). The Verstehen that I exercised in this study was this second sense of sensemaking, namely, “the constitution of sense of the sensemaking of Korean street-level fire service officials (not the constitution of a “sensemaking” of Korean street-level fire service officials).”
the sensemaking was, as I indicated in the earlier, an “interpretive understanding” to take the materials as examples of the sensemaking. In the study, therefore, my understanding of the sensemaking necessarily involved an awareness of an individual datum, not for its own sake, but as exemplifying the intended sensemaking.39 As the method of access to the sensemaking, in this respect, my data analysis was an “anonymization” (Natanson, 1978) process in which I reduced away the particularity of the collected data, and in doing so typified them, through which I disclosed the sensemaking phenomenon which “was common to” (Zaner, 1978) the data collected.

The analysis as the act of typifying each of the data was composed of two steps of coding process. The first step of coding was the so called “abstracting process.” In the process, I extracted, from the data, the constituents of the sensemaking, gave the constituents some conceptual names, and then categorized them. The technical aspect of the process was guided by Strauss and Corbin’s open coding procedure. The second step was a “structuring process.” In the process, I related (structured) the identified constituents (in the form of categories) as the relation (structure) appeared to me, and in doing so revealed the sensemaking phenomenon in the data to the mind. Once the sensemaking (as an abstract structure in the data) had been disclosed, I described in a few sentences the disclosed phenomenon. The description was guided by Charmaz’s memo writing procedures.

39 “Intentionality” and its cognates such as “intention,” “intending,” and “intended” are technical terminologies which have been widely used in the field of phenomenology. The phenomenological use of the words does not mean planned or purposeful thought in the sense that we say that “Mr. Lee bought some wood with the intention of building,” or “She intended to finish law school one year later” (Natanson, 1966; Sokolowski, 2000, p. 8). The phenomenological notion of the words is sharply distinguished for the words in the more familiar sense of signifying a deliberative act of will (Chapman, 1966).

In phenomenology, “there is no cognito without cogitationes; in short, there is no consciousness without objects of consciousness” (Stewart and Mickunas, 1990, p.36). There is no such thing as consciousness closed in upon itself (Sokolowski, 2000; Steward and Mickunas, 1990). Consciousness is always directed toward an object “outside” (Sokolowski, 2000). All consciousness, first and foremost, is consciousness of something (Schutz, 1966, Sokolowski, 2000). In the field of phenomenology, the terms above are used to designate such a fundamental directional character of our all conscious acts.

This study was my consciousness of the sensemaking process of Korean street-level fire service officials, which was exemplified by the data collected. The exemplified sensemaking was the object which was intended (directed) in the act of my consciousness as an “exemplifying awareness” (Zaner, 1978). My consciousness (as an exemplifying awareness) was the experience of the exemplified sensemaking in the data (not in the mind), in and through which the sensemaking appeared, presented itself, and was apprehended as it appeared.

For a more detailed understanding of “intentionality” and its cognates, and their associated core doctrine in phenomenology, the “correlational apriori” of consciousness, see Chapman (1966), Gurwitsch (1966), Sokolowski (2000), and Steward and Mickunas, 1990). The issue of the “correlational apriori” of consciousness will be touched upon once again at the end of this section.
Each coding process was followed by a critical examination of its validity by means of a propositional reflection. In this respect, my continuous testing of my own coding processes involved some features of Glaser’s “constant comparative analysis.” The following is an illustrative example of the analysis.

Table 4.1: An Example of Abstracting Process I (From Original Korean) ⁴⁰

| 한 … 일주일 되었으나? 관내에 있는 냉동창고에서 불이났습니다 (physical situation). 지령을받고 …한…. 이분되었으나…. 그 좀 되었을까요 (givenness of physical situation). 바로 현장에 도착했습니다. 저희들은 지령받음 무조건 나가야 하나고 (givenness of the basic mode of one’s relating to physical situation: givenness of one’s workinghood). 예상했던 대로 (empty determination of the present state of physical situation), 크지 않은 불이었습니다 (filled determination of the present state of physical situation) (smooth change from empty to filled determination). 초기화재였는데 (determining the character of an element of physical situation: determining the phase of fire in “fire-in-an ice storage warehouse”), 집안가능했고 (phantasizing the physical situation in desirable future possibility). 즉시 진압이 필요한 상황이었습니다 (projecting an action strategy). 선착대 대장으로 출동했는데 (“determining one’s self inter-est: “inter (between) + est (to be)”), 쉽게 야기할, 군대로 이야기할 소대장이죠. 진압을…(위해) (physical situation in desirable future possibility: “in-order-to” motive of projected action strategy). 바로 들어가야하는 상황이었는데, 근데 애들이 (social encourer in face to face situation) 무물꾸물해요 (field of expression: bodily movement)! 만들어갈려 그려드려요 (non-reflexive “thou” taking: by taking thou’s “in-order –to” motive). 쉽게 이야기해서, 생각은거라 (non-reflexive “thou” taking: by taking thou’s ‘because- of” motive). 근데, 사실상, 애들이 상황이 아니었거든요 (re-determining the present state of physical situation). 크지 않은 불이었고, 말씀드렸다시피 초기화재 있었습니다. (Confirming the validity of already determined character of the already focused element of physical situation: determining the size and the phase of the fire in “fire-in-an ice storage ware house”. 냉동창고이기때문에 위험물질이있습니다. 그 리저기할 (업역) 안 들어갈 정도로 위험한) 정도…는 아니었습니다 (determining the character of the focused element of physical situation: determining the degree of the risk of the hazard materials in “fire-in-an ice storage ware house-containing- some hazard materials). 당연히 들어가야죠 (confirming the validity of one’s initially projected action strategy). 근데 (애들이) 만들어가! 위험하지도 없는 (불인) 데, 생각은거지 (“they” taking: “thou” typification). 근데, 솔직히이기때서, 일단, 애들이 업역을만 잘언더 할러 Doing (“they” taking: “thou” typification). 다그치는거 (projecting an alternative interactional strategy)? 잘 안먹습니다, 일반적으로 (eliminating a projected alternative interactional strategy). 그래서 제가 앞장서서 들어갔습니다. 호스를고 (projecting and realizing an interactional strategy). 한마디로 이야기해서 시범을보여주시. 업역을 필요없다 이거지. 위험한거 아니야 이거지. (interactional strategy: letting my “in-order –to” motive become my partner’s “because-of” motive). 따라들어오더라도 (successful social encourer affecting). 불것조 (successful manipulation of physical situation). |

⁴⁰ When I analyzed interview materials, I was not anticipating how the process of analyzing the materials itself could be shown to others. I alone was the intended reader of the process, including memo writing. Thus I coded terms like “givenness” and “workinghood,” while not necessarily meaningful terms for readers, are faithful to my own analytic work.
Around...one week ago? there was a fire in a cold storage warehouse within our area of
the jurisdiction (physical situation). We got a response signal from a communication
center...and, our response time maybe...two minutes? (givenness of physical situation)
Yeah...two minutes. We ran to the scene immediately. Without any exception, as you
know, we have to run a fire ground and perform a fire duty if we get a response signal
from a communication center (givenness of the basic mode of one's relating to
physical situation; givenness of one's workinghood). As anticipated (empty
determination of the present state of physical situation), the fire was a one and one
fire (filled determination of the present state of physical situation) (smooth change
from empty to filled determination). The fire was incipient. (determining the
character of an element of physical situation: determining the phase of fire in “fire-
in-an ice storage warehouse”). It was possible to suppress the fire, (phantasizing the
physical situation in desirable future possibility), so an immediate inside fire fight was
needed (projecting an action strategy). I responded to the fire as the first response
group commander (“determining one’s self inter-est: “inter (between) + est (to be)”).
We might say... I am a kind of platoon leader in the army. Anyway, (for) a fire
suppression (physical situation in desirable future possibility: “in-order-to” motive
of projected action strategy), an immediate inside fire fight was needed. By the way,
my guys (social encounterer in face to face situation) were hanging back! (field of
expression: bodily movement) They were not going to enter the building (non-reflexive
“thou” taking: by taking thou’s “in-order –to” motive). In a word, my guys were
scared (non-reflexive “thou” taking: by taking thou’s ‘because- of’ motive). But, as a
matter of fact, the situation was not as dangerous as they were scared (re-determining
the present state of physical situation). The fire was incipient. As I said to you, it was
incipient (confirming the validity of already determined character of the already
focused element of physical situation: determining the phase of the fire in “fire- in-
an ice storage ware house”). There were some hazard materials inside the building
because the building was a cold storage warehouse. But the materials were not
so...dangerous (as my guys were scared to enter the building) (determining the
character of the focused element of physical situation: determining the degree of the
risk of the hazard materials in “fire-in-an ice storage ware house-containing- some
hazard materials). Obviously, an immediate inside firefight was needed (confirming
the validity of one’s initially projected action strategy). Nonetheless, (they) were not
going to enter the building! They were scared of (the fire) that was not dangerous (“they”
taking: “thou” typification). By the way, actually speaking, the guys are not going to
enter a building (on fire) in general, if they are scared at all (“they” taking: “thou”
typification). Egging on? (projecting an alternative interactional strategy) It is not
useful in general (eliminating a projected alternative interactional strategy). So, I
entered myself at the head, taking a fire hose in hand (projecting and realizing an
interactional strategy). In a word, I signaled to my guys that you (his subordinate
firefighters) did not needed to be scared and that the fire was not dangerous
(interactional strategy: letting my “in-order –to” motive become my partner’s
“because-of” motive). They came with me (successful social encounterer affecting).
The fire was successfully extinguished (successful manipulation of physical situation).
The example above is a part of the seventh interview in my study. The codes in the parentheses were the sensemaking elements that I extracted from the response of the interviewee to an opening question. The interview in this example was not completed, because the interviewee got a fire response call from a communication center during the interview. Before the interview was interrupted, I asked a follow-up question to explore in more detail how he handled the “fire-in-an ice storage warehouse” situation. From his reply to the question, I extracted several other sensemaking elements such as “social encounterer’s understanding of physical situation,” “one’s taken-for-grantedness of the giveness of physical situation,” “one’s taken-for-grantedness of the giveness of one’s workinghood,” “one’s taken-for-grantedness of the existence of other,” “one’s knowledge of field of expression,” and “one’s prior experience in similar situations.” I coded the statement of the interviewee on the day of the interview. 41

As seen in the conceptual names in bold prints in the example, I put English names on the sensemaking elements extracted from the data. There were two reasons for this. First, as I indicated earlier, my grasping of the sensemaking phenomenon in the data has been facilitated by the readings of related books and articles, which were all written in English. Ironically, as a Korean I was more comfortable to label the constituents of the phenomenon in English. The second reason was the fact that the final report of the completed analysis had to be written in English anyway. Even if I had coded my Korean data in Korean language, I would have had nothing to do but re-name a considerable portion of the codes in English. I very much wanted to avoid this troubling possibility.

Table 4.2 is my translation of the original transcript into English. In analyzing data, I did not translate the balance of my interview materials into English. Table 4.2 is merely an example to illustrate in English how I actually coded the data. If the extracted constituents of the sensemaking in the data had been conceptually labeled at all, I categorized relevant constituents, and then named the established categories. The name given to each category was usually more abstract than that given to the sensemaking elements grouped (categorized) under it. In the case of the interview above, my categorization of the extracted sensmaking elements was as follows.

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41 Many of codes in the above parentheses were revised and elaborated in the process of analyzing other data.
### Table 4.3: An Example of Abstracting Process (II)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Physical Situation</th>
<th>Physical Situation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Givenness of Physical Situation</td>
<td>Givenness of Physical Situation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social Encounterer in Face-to-Face Situation</td>
<td>Social Encounterer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social Encounterer’s Understanding of Physical Situation</td>
<td>Social Encounterer’s (Other’s) Relating to Physical Situation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Givenness of One’s Workinghood</td>
<td>Empty Determination of the Present State of Physical Situation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Smooth Change from Empty to Filled Determination</td>
<td>Filled Determination of the Present State of Physical Situation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Determining the Character of an Element of Physical Situation</td>
<td>My “Now”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Determining the Phase of the Fire in “Fire-in-an Ice Storage Warehouse”</td>
<td>“My” Relating to Physical Situation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Phantasizing the Physical Situation in Desirable Future Possibility</td>
<td>Projecting an Action Strategy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Physical Situation in Desirable Future Possibility</td>
<td>(“In-order-to” Motive of Projected Action Strategy)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Determining One’s Self Inter-est: “Inter (Between) + Est (To Be)”</td>
<td>My “Here”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Field of Expression: Bodily Movement</td>
<td>Non-Reflexive “Thou” Taking</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-Reflexive “Thou” Taking (by Taking Thou’s “In-order –to” Motive)</td>
<td>Non-Reflexive “Thou” Taking</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-Reflexive “Thou” Taking (by Taking Thou’s “Because-of” Motive)</td>
<td>“Thou” Taking</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Re-Determining the Present State of Physical Situation</td>
<td>Confirming the Validity of Already Determined Character</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Confirming the Validity of Already Determined Character of the Already Focused Element of Physical Situation</td>
<td>Reconstructing My Relating-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Determining the Character of the Focused Elements of Physical Situation</td>
<td>to Physical Situation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Determining the Degree of the Risk of the Hazard Materials</td>
<td>Confirming the Validity of One’s Initially Projected Action Strategy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“They” Taking: “Thou” Typification</td>
<td>“They” Taking</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Projecting an Alternative Interactional Strategy</td>
<td>Eliminating a Projected Alternative Interactional Strategy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Projecting an Alternative Interactional Strategy</td>
<td>Mapping an Interactional Strategy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interactional Strategy: (Letting My “In-order –to” Motive Become My Partner’s “Because-of” Motive)</td>
<td>Realizing an Interactional Strategy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Realizing an Interactional Strategy</td>
<td>Self-Fulfilling Outcome</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Successful Social Encounter Affecting</td>
<td>Successful Manipulation of Physical Situation.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Successful Manipulation of Physical Situation.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>One’s Taken-For-Grantedness of the Givenness of Physical Situation</td>
<td>Stock of Knowledge on Hand</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>One’s Taken-For-Grantedness of the Givenness of One’s Workinghood</td>
<td>Stock of Knowledge</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>One’s Taken-For-Garntedness of the Existence of Other</td>
<td>Stock of Knowledge at Hand</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>One’s Knowledge of Field of Expression</td>
<td>Routine Knowledge</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>One’s Prior Experience in Similar Situations</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
1: My (Initial) Relating to Physical Situation
2: Social Encounterer’s (Other’s) Relating to Physical Situation
3: “Thou” Taking

* Problem: Incongruence between “My (Initial) Relating to Physical Situation” and “Taken Thou (Assumed Other’s Relating to Physical Situation)”

**Figure 4.3: An Example of “Structuring Process”**

In the second step of coding, I structured the relationship of the abstracted sensemaking elements as the relationship was presented to me, and I then wrote a brief memo to characterize the presented relationship. On the face of it, the process seems to be similar to Strauss and Corbin’s axial coding. Unlike their axial coding, my process did not involve forcing the abstracted sensemaking elements to relate each other according to a predetermined relational paradigm. Rather, in my analytic process, I tried to listen, and in doing so display the relationship that the identified sensemaking elements told me.
Memo writing was a short description of a theme emerged from the disclosed sensemaking phenomenon. I restricted my description here to just a few sentences in order to pinpoint the emergent theme (as a kind of story line) (Strauss and Corbin, 1990, 1998). Detail could obscure what the disclosed sensemaking phenomenon was all about. The following was the “structuring process” for the interview in the above.

**Table 4.4: An Example of Memo Writing (Original)**


**Table 4.5: An Example of Memo Writing (Translated)**

| This case is a “socially imposed sensemaking.” Initially constructed “my relating to physical situation” was interrupted by social encounterers (fellow men). The process of mapping was “reconstructing my relating to physical situation” – “they taking” – “establishing an interactional strategy.” The mapped solution was successful, which produced “self-fulfilling outcomes.” Due to such a successful problem solving, “stock of knowledge” (specifically, stock of knowledge at hand), which was consulted in the process of mapping, was reinforced. Throughout the process of mapping, my initially constructed relating to physical situation was not basically changed. My already “here” was still the same. My already “now” also was basically the same. In the process, however, an interactional strategy to real-ize my already relating to physical situation was considered. |

An analysis of any particular phenomenon must always be a correlational one: any possible object is strictly correlated to the various ways in which it is and can be presented, and conversely every mode of awareness is strictly correlated to that of which the awareness is had. ...It thus becomes necessary to recognize that for any specific phenomenon there are specific ways by means of which it is given or otherwise apprehend (Zaner, 1978, p. 6).

There are different kinds of intending, correlated with different kinds of objects. For example, we carry out perceptual intentions when we see an ordinary material object, but we must intend pictorially when we see a photograph or a painting. .....Pictures are correlated with picturing intending, perceptual objects are correlated with perceptual intending (Sokolowski, 2000, p. 12).
The “correlational apriori” of method (or consciousness) - the doctrine of phenomenology - explained by Zaner and Sokolowski was applied to the data analysis in the study. When we see a picture, as Sokolowski points out, our way of seeing must be “picturing.” If our mode of seeing is not “picturing” but “perceptual intending,” what we see must be not a “picture” but a “material object.” What I saw in this study was the sensemaking phenomenon exemplified by the data collected. The sensemaking in my data was an “abstract structure” in the data. The two steps of coding process, “abstracting” and “structuring” shown in the example in the above was, in this context, my “method of seeing” which was correlated with the abstract structure in the data. Through such a “method of seeing,” I could see the sensemaking phenomenon (as an abstract structure) in the data.

The analysis as a method of “abstracting” and “structuring,” on the other hand, was not once and for all. The analysis was iterative. In the process of iterative data analysis, as shown in Figure 4-4, my “previous” and “present” acts of “abstracting” and “structuring” interacted with each other, through which I understood the sensemaking phenomenon in the data more clearly.

Figure 4.4: Iterative Data Analysis Toward More Clarified Understanding of The Sensemaking Phenomenon in The Data.
Through such an iterative process of “abstracting” and “structuring,” I saw two faces of the sensemaking of Korean street-level fire service officials, namely, the “social encounterer caused sensemaking,” and the “physical thing effected sensemaking.” Of these two faces of the sensemaking, I will focus on one face, that is to say, the “social encounterer caused sensemaking,” which was more frequently alluded to by my informants, and accordingly appeared to me more vividly. Chapter six is the face that I saw. Before that, I will introduce, in chapter five, a sensemaking story that I collected and examine the story on the basis of our discussions in chapter two.

42 These two faces of the sensemaking that I understood is elaborated more fully in chapter six.
CHAPTER 5

A SENSEMAKING EPISODE: A BUILDING OF TWO (AND YET FIVE) STORIES

In chapter two, I reviewed current discussion of conscious meaning construction by individuals in organizations and integrated related ideas into a conceptual structure for the purpose of developing a foreknowledge for the study. In the chapter, I delineated the process of organizational sensemaking in three stages: noticing, interpretation, and action. Next, I demonstrated how sensemaking in organizations could be understood in its three contexts: the ecological, the institutional, and the social relational. I tried to show how each context might provide a setting for a unique account of the three stages of sensemaking.

In this chapter, I offer a sensemaking story of a Korean fire inspector in order to illustrate the points discussed in chapter two. From the illustration, I derive the underlying issue that is in chapter six.

A Sensemaking Episode: A Building of Two (And Yet Five) Stories 43

Mr. Kim is a Korean fire inspector with two years experience in the field. Approximately one year ago he conducted a fire safety inspection of an apartment building of five stories that contained ten households. The building was built on sloped ground. The first and fourth floors had separate main entrances through which the residents could enter and exit onto sidewalks at different levels on the sloped ground adjacent to the building.

As a result of inspection Mr. Kim discovered that dwelling units on the third floor and above were not equipped with an “automatic descending life line” called Wangang-Gi in Korea. 44 As far as he knew from the Korean Fire Safety Code, every home on the third floor and

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43 This episode is my story telling of the working experience of the eighteenth interviewee for the study. That is, it is a representation of the interviewee’s experience, not merely a verbatim account of his experience.
44 Wangang-Gi is a kind of fire rescue rope manufactured by coating heavy aviation cable with cotton to help reduce friction and maintain durability. An installed Wangang-Gi permits an individual to escape from upper floors of a burning building by descending on this rope-like fixture. The price of a Wangang-Gi is equivalent of approximately eight to one hundred dollars in U.S. currency.
above in apartment buildings of three to ten stories ought to be furnished with a *Wangang-Gi*. If not, the inspector must enforce administrative measures to give building representatives instructions to set up *Wangang-Gis*. If *Wangang-Gis* are not installed after such instructions have been issued, the inspector should report the failure to prosecutors. To Mr. Kim the inspected building was an object to which the administrative instructions applied because it was a building of five stories not equipped with *Wangang-Gis*. When he inspected the building the building representative was absent, and Mr. Kim could not inform him of the fire safety violation.

Mr. Kim returned to his office, and as he was drawing up the papers for issuing administrative instructions directed to the building representative, his fellow fire inspector, Mr. Lee, asked what he was doing. Mr. Kim explained his inspection of the building. Mr. Lee interposed an unexpected objection to Mr. Kim’s inspection, raising the divergent opinion that the building might not be five stories high. He pointed out that the building could be a structure with two stories above and three beneath ground level if the sidewalk adjacent to the fourth floor were considered to be ground level. Not until hearing Mr. Lee’s suggestion did Mr. Kim realize that he had not thoroughly examined the building register when he inspected it. As a matter of fact, Mr. Kim did not even think about the need to look into the building register because, given his initial impression, the building simply appeared to be five stories high.

Just as Mr. Lee suggested, the building was registered as a structure with two stories above and three beneath ground level. This meant that the building was not an object to which the administrative instructions applied as Mr. Kim initially presumed. Despite the official record of the building register, however, the building appeared to be five stories high in every respect to Mr. Kim. He had misgivings that the absence of *Wangang-Gis* might endanger the lives of the residents in the event of fire. From this perspective, the building was an object for administrative instructions as described previously. He asked Mr. Lee whether the building could be equivalent to an object requiring administrative instructions, but neither he nor Mr. Lee knew how to handle the case.

Together with Mr. Lee, Mr. Kim referred this matter to their supervisor, Mr. Yang, who had wider experience in the field. Mr. Yang opined that the building was not an object requiring administrative instructions. If Mr. Kim forced the building’s representative to install *Wangang-Gis*...
Gis, he pointed out, it would be perceived as a kind of governmental heavy-handedness. Mr. Yang sympathized with Mr. Kim’s view, however, that Wangang-Gis needed to be installed in the building for the safety of residents. As an alternative to administrative instructions, Mr. Yang recommended that Mr. Kim take an administrative action named Haengjeong-Jido (administrative guidance) to induce the representative to install Wanggang-Gis voluntarily. Mr. Yang’s suggestion seemed reasonable to Mr. Kim. Mr. Kim had been familiar with Haengjeong-Jido, but he was not far-sighted enough to think about the possibility that it could be applicable to this case. He thought that Haengjeong-Jido was an effective administrative measure to avoid the reproach of heavy-handedness and at the same time to make it likely that the building representative would install Wangang-Gis.

Mr. Kim sent written advice, paid a visit to the representative, and urged him to set up Wangang-Gis. The representative hesitated to comply at first but finally promised to do so under Mr. Kim’s powers of persuasion.

Some weeks later, Mr. Kim got a phone call from the representative informing him that Wangang-Gis had been purchased but the residents did not know how to use them. He wanted Mr. Kim to provide directions for them and to demonstrate their use to residents. Kim was at a loss. He was not sure whether such training and demonstration belonged properly within the domain of his duties and responsibilities as a fire inspector. Again, Mr. Kim inquired with Mr. Yang about this matter. The request of the representative was a surprise to Mr. Yang also, and he could not readily answer Mr. Kim’s question. After contemplating the situation for a while, Mr. Yang concluded that it was possible to construe the implications of Haengjeong-Jido more actively for this situation. According to Mr. Yang, Haengjeong-Jido in this case was not necessarily limited to sending a letter of advice, paying a visit to the representative, and persuading him to purchase Wangang-Gis. Mr. Yang believed that, if necessary, teaching and demonstrating could be a part of Haengjeong-Jido. There was an appeal of reason in what Mr. Yang proposed. Accepting Mr. Yang’s view, Mr. Kim taught the residents how to use Wangang-Gis and provided a demonstration in cooperation with the rescue team of his fire station.

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46 Haengjeong-Jido is an administrative measure to recommend, advise or counsel the person(s) concerned to do or not to do something. Unlike administrative instructions (Haengjeong-Myeonglyeong in Korean language), Hangjeong-Jido does not carry the legal implication of being able to compel adherence. Traditionally, in Korea, however, due to the normative influence of governmental officials, Haengjeong- Jido has had the effect and force comparable to administrative instructions.
It was not long before a fire of unknown origin actually occurred in an apartment on the fourth floor (the ground floor from the point of the building register). The dwelling unit was consumed. However, a housewife, cut off from escape by the fire, managed to save herself by descending on a *Wangang-Gi* installed on her balcony. She was one of the residents who had learned from Mr. Kim how to use *Wangang-Gis*.

When Mr. Kim conducts a fire safety inspection of a building nowadays, he always checks the building register carefully. When he finds something wrong with an inspected building, he knows about approaches in his work other than instructing (ordering) the person(s) concerned to correct the problem. When people ask about how to use fire safety equipment such as a hydrant, a fire hose, or even a *Wangang-Gi*, he is very comfortable providing directions for their use.

**Sensemaking in Three Stages.** This episode is Mr. Kim’s sensemaking story. The three stages of sensemaking which I outlined earlier -- noticing, interpretation, and action--can be illustrated for Mr. Kim’s story. As shown in the story, Mr. Kim initiated his sensemaking of the building situation by his “noticing” (stage one) what he had inspected. Through the process, he attentively captured a characteristic of the inspected building, which can be expressed as “an apartment building of two (and yet five) stories not equipped with *Wangang-Gis*.” In the process, he experienced, and in doing so identified his blocked “plan of action” toward the building situation – “whether or not the building is an object for administrative instructions.” By the process, Mr. Kim transformed the encountered building situation into his “problematic” situation for further processing (interpretation).

Mr. Kim can be seen in a complex process of “interpretation” (stage two), although here we will focus exclusively on a more limited portion of his interpretation. Specifically, we see Mr. Kim in a process in which he consciously combined the noticed characteristic with an administrative measure suggested by his supervisor, and in doing so actively constructed his dealing with the inspected building in a meaningful form. As seen in Figure 5.1, Mr. Kim’s combination of the noticed cue plus a frame of reference basically included a process of “typification” (Berger and Luckmann, 1967, Schutz, 1967) in which a concrete (individual) entity is categorized into an idealized (generalized) type.
As indicated in the above syllogism, Mr. Kim’s interpretation of the building (S is P) was the result of his combination of the noticed building situation (S) with an administrative measure (M is P) suggested by his supervisor, Mr. Yang. This combination was effected through the process in which he typified the noticed building situation (S) into a member of the category “a building not violating the fire safety law, but threatening the safety of residents (M),” which was implied in the frame of reference (M is P) proposed by Mr. Yang. Through this process, Mr. Kim imposed what was true of the category (namely, an object for Hangjeong-Jido) on the building situation, leading to his interpretation, “the building of two (and yet five) stories not equipped with Wangang-Gis is an object for Haengjeong-Jido.”

In our story Mr. Kim also carried out a continuous flow of “action” (stage three) -- sending a letter, paying a visit to the building representative, and persuading him to establish Wangang-Gis. The flow of action was Mr. Kim’s purposeful effort to “conduct outward” (Weick, 2001) that which had been internal, and in doing so complete his new plan of action, namely, Haengjeong-Jido that he mapped out in the mind in the process of interpretation.48

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47 For an explanation of Mr. Kim’s interpretation of the inspected building, I borrowed this syllogism from James’ (1890/1981) “familiar meaning making structure” (Fiske, 1992). For a detailed understanding of the reasoning process in James’ “familiar meaning making structure,” see James (1890/1981).

48 Strictly speaking, we can say that Mr. Kim’s Hangjeong-Jido was composed of a series of a projected responses such as “sending a letter,” “paying a visit to the representative,” and “persuading him to equip Wangang-Gis,” and his intermediate, and ultimate goal following upon them, that is, “a successful persuasion of the building
the process, Mr. Kim persuaded the representative to install *Wangang-Gis* to his expectations, which in turn, however, led to his unexpectedly being asked to teach and demonstrate how to use the *Wangang-Gi* to the residents. His action was instrumental. Yet it spun off an unanticipated consequence. The consequence provided Mr. Kim with a pretext to develop a new way of understanding his project, *Haenjeong-Jido*.

**Sensemaking in Three Contexts.** We now illustrate the three sensemaking contexts—ecological, institutional, and social relational— in Mr. Kim’s story. In association with “the inspected building situation” (in the sense of ecological context), Mr. Kim’s noticing and interpretation were conscious thinking processes in which he envisioned a “projected line of action” (Blumer, 1969) to handle the situation. Through these thinking processes, he re-modeled his idea of the building before him. That is to say, “the inspected building is not an object for administrative instruction, but an object for *Haengjeong-Jido*.” Mr. Kim’s action was a process in which he implanted his modeled internal idea of the building situation in the situation “outside,” set it in motion, and as a result shaped the contour of the situation into a new one -- the building equipped with *Wangang-Gis*. As stated above, however, the building situation was not perfectly determined by him. In acting out, and in doing so real-izing his project, *Haengjeong-Jido*, Mr. Kim produced another “environment” toward which he subsequently needed to “respond,” which trigged him to seriously think over the implications of *Haengjeong-Jido*.

In the process of making sense of the inspected building, Mr. Kim did not only *enact* a happening with the building situation that he consequently had to cope with. In the process, Mr. Kim also *structured* “his fire safety inspection practices” (in the sense of institutional context) that have structured his subsequent inspections. In the case of Mr. Kim’s sensemaking, he *already* had at least two “taken-for-granted” fire inspection practices. One of them could be characterized as: “A building violating the fire inspection law is an object for administrative instructions.” This practice made it possible for Mr. Kim to initially understand the building as an object for administrative instructions. Also, the practice had its “explicatory shadow,” that is, “A building not violating the fire inspection law is not an object for administrative instructions.” When Mr. Kim found out the official characteristic of the inspected building from the building representative to equip *Wangang-Gis,*” and “the assurance of the safety of the residents.” In this sense, his actual flow of action was a real-ization of the responses and the goals, which had been *already* modeled in the mind. By “*Haengjeong-Jido,*” I give a general name to all of them, even though, in fact, Mr. Kim’s “action” was composed of a series of steps.
register (the building of two stories), this “explicative shadow” provided him with an interpretation that “the inspected building was not an object for administrative instructions.” However, Mr. Kim had another fire inspection practice already in mind, so to speak: “A building threatening the safety of residents is an object for administrative instructions.” As shown in the story, the building not equipped with Wangang-Gis was actually five stories high to Mr. Kim, which had the potential to threaten the safety of the residents in the case of fire. Related to the assumed characteristic of the building (the building of five stories), Mr. Kim’s other practice provided him with the opposite interpretation that “the building was an object for administrative instructions.” In the course of noticing this puzzling characteristic of the building, Mr. Kim experienced, and recognized a certain break in the “taken-for-granted” flow of these two fire inspection practices. In doing so, he disclosed them to himself as a theme for speculation, which can be depicted as Figure 5.2.

![Diagram](A Building Violating the Fire Safety Law → An Object For Administrative Instructions ← A Building Threatening the Safety of Residents)

**Figure 5.2: Mr. Kim’s Disclosed Original Interpretive Scheme**

In the process of interpretation of the inspected building, Mr. Kim accomplished a thematic construction of his inspection practices by internalizing an administrative measure, “Haengjeong-Jido,” recommend by his supervisor. Through such an internalization, Mr. Kim modified his “already admitted” (Gelven, 1970) concept, “a building threatening the safety of residents” into a more narrow one, “a building not violating the fire safety law but threatening the safety of residents.” In the process, Mr. Kim reestablished new fire inspection practices.
illustrated in Figure 5.3, while retaining the validity of his first fire inspection practice. The newly structured fire inspection practices have subsequently structured his fire inspections.

As we know, Mr. Kim’s effort to realize his project, *Haenjeong-Jido*, brought about an unexpected consequence, the request of the building representative for teaching and demonstrating how to use the *Wangang-Gi*. In the course of handling this situation, Mr. Kim elaborated his understanding of *Hangejong-Jido* with the help of Mr. Yang, leading to his accepting the request of the representative. The result was “successful,” which encouraged Mr. Kim to make active use of the elaborated *Haenjeong-Jido* in conducting subsequent fire inspections.

In the story, we can finally see that Mr. Kim’s sensemaking was accomplished through *interactions* with “other fire inspectors” (in the sense of social relational context). In the interaction with Mr. Lee, Mr. Kim came to recognize the troubling characteristic of the inspected building. Through interaction with Mr. Yang, he came to know how to manage his encountered problematic situation. The additional interaction with Mr. Yang provided him with an opportunity to develop the implications of his plan of action, *Haengjeong-Jido*. In the end, the safe escape of the housewife from the fire was the result of these social interactions of Mr. Kim with his fellow fire inspectors.

**Mr. Kim as “to be-in-the work-world”**
Heidegger (1970), an existential phenomenologist, says that human being (Dasein in German terms) is “Being-in-the-world” (Heidegger, 1970; Gelven, 1970; Kaelin, 1987; Moran, 2000). Due to the fundamental structure of human existence (“Being-in-the-world”), he insists, we can not separate ourselves from “the-world” “in” which we live. However, Heidegger does not suggest that the “Being” of “Being-in-the-world” is one’s actuality caught up by its already admitted ways of “being-in-the-world.” Instead he emphasizes that the “Being” is one’s possibility to transcend its already “being-in,” and in doing so to explore and determine its new ways “to be- in-the-world.” In this respect, Heidegger explicates his conception of “Being-in-the-world,” a basic state of “Being” as “to be (one’s infinitive possibility)-in-the-world,” not “being (one’s substantive actuality)-in-the-world.”

Heidegger’s idea of the existential structure of human being informs us that Mr. Kim’s sensemaking was the process in which he actively deliberated and determined the way he was able “to be-in-the-world” that he lived.

In the above story, “the-world” that Mr. Kim lived thorough was “the work-world” “in” which he conducted a fire safety inspection of the apartment building. The building was a thing in “the work-world.” Fire safety inspection was “the work” of “the work-world.” In the story, “the work” was the founded mode of Mr. Kim’s “Being (existence)-in-the-world.” On the other hand, Mr. Kim’s conduct of the inspection was his “working out” of “the work.” His “working out” of “the work,” that is to say, his fire safety inspection conduct was his involvement with “the-world-of-work.”

Since the building was a thing within “the-world-of-work” that Mr. Kim was “in” a priori, the building situation before him was already and always “the working-situation.”

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49 In his book, “A Commentary On Heidegger’s Being and Time,” Gelven (1970) views the “Being” of Heidegger’s “Being-in-the-world” in terms of “to be” rather than “being.” With regard to this issue, Gelven’s comments are as follows:

The most important pair of terms in Heidegger’s thought is Sein… Sein is the infinitive form of the verb “to be,” and should be translated as such. If the reader mentally substitutes “to be” at every occurrence of the term “Being” …, he will be much closer to the original meaning, although stylistic smoothness may be sacrificed….The point is that the English word “Being” can be used to either as a synonym for the infinitive, or as a substantive. The sentence “Being with her is delight” can be substituted by the sentence “To be with her is a delight”: but in the sentence “The sloth is an unsavory being,” the term “being” cannot be substituted by the infinitive. All I am suggesting is that whatever it is possible to make the substitution to the infinitive form, it should be made (Gelven, 1970, p. 18).

On the basis of Gelven’s translation of the “Sein” of German terminology, “Dasein,” I understand Heidegger’s “Being-in-the-world” from the standpoint of “to be (not being) -in-the-world.”
matter of course, his encounter with the building did not occur in isolation from “the work-world” that he was “in.” From the outset, the building was, for Mr. Kim, “an object for the work (fire safety inspection) that I (Mr. Kim) work out (conduct).” At every moment of his sensemaking, he was “in” such a practical encounter with the building. As shown in the story, however, Mr. Kim was not immersed “in” his already admitted engagement with the building. He continuously stood back from his relating to the building situation, critically reflected on it, and in doing so actively constructed a new possible “working” relation to the situation “in” which he was able “to be.”

“The-world” that Mr. Kim was “in” was “the work-world.” In that his “Being (existence)” was always and already “in-the-world-of-work,” he was a practitioner. Yet he was not an “empirical practitioner” who simply fell into a pre-established way of “being-in-the work-world.” Instead, he was a “transcendental practitioner” who stepped back from his “being-in,” observed it, and in doing so organized the way he was able “to be-in-the work-world.” In this context, we can say that Mr. Kim’s sensemaking was the process in which he as a transcendental practitioner concernedly developed his practical engagement with the building encountered in his “world-of-work,” and in doing so proactively designed the way “to be-in-the work-world.”

Chapter six illustrates that the “sensemaking” of Korean street-level fire service officials, as known in Mr. Kim’s case, is essentially conscious “working relation making.” Chapter six particularly pays attention to how fire service officials as transcendental practitioners manage the interruptions of their relating to what are encountered in their working situations, when the interruptions are caused by others.
Sensemaking is meaning construction at the conscious level. But this begs the question, what is “meaning” at all, which is constructed in the process of sensemaking?

When we speak of the “meaning” of a given predicament, we are using a concept which has the following articulation. a) Meaning is for a subject; it is not the meaning of the situation in vacuo, but its meaning for a subject…b) Meaning is of something; that is, we can distinguish between a given element – situation, action or whatever – and its meaning… And thirdly, c) things… have meanings in a field, that is, in relation to the meanings of other things. Meaning in this sense …, is for a subject, of something, in a field (Taylor, 1973, pp. 11-12).

From Taylor’s three dimensional structure of “meaning” described above, we in chapter two primarily paid attention to the second dimension, that is to say, “meaning is of something.” When we say that “S is p,” the “p-being” of S is the “meaning” of S. In the statement, “S is p,” S is characterized in terms of a way in which S exists, its “p-being.” It means that a referred thing is taken as its “mode of being (meaning).” This indicates that the “meaning (mode of being)” of a referred thing is the “as” (Gelven, 1970) of the referent, through which the referent is grasped. On the basis of such an understanding, we viewed sensemaking as the conscious process of constructing the “as (meaning)” of something, the route to the something.

Mr. Kim’s sensemaking story in chapter five let us think over an implication that the first dimension of Taylor’s “meaning” structure (“meaning is for a subject”) could have for our study, which led us to clarify our understanding of “meaning” in association with its second dimension mentioned earlier. As shown in the story, Mr. Kim’s sensemaking was his sensemaking of an inspected building as “an object for Haengjeong-Jido.” In the process, he deliberately constructed the “as (meaning)” of the building.

The building of which Mr. Kim actively constructed the “as” was outside Mr. Kim. In this sense, the building itself ex-isted “(ex, ‘outside’; ist, ‘to be’)” (Stewart and Mickunas, 1990, p. 65). However, the building in the story did not ex-ist in itself. By borrowing Taylor’s
terminology, we see that the building was not “in vacuo.” Instead, it was “a thing in Mr. Kim’s world of work (fire safety inspection).” Although “the building in its being” was outside Mr. Kim, “its being constructed” was “in” Mr. Kim, who always existed in the world of work (fire safety inspection). Since the locus of “the building’s being constructed” was “in” Mr. Kim (not “in” the building-in-itself), the “constructed building’s being (meaning)” was “for” him. Since Mr. Kim was an agent (subject) already and always “in” the world of work (fire safety inspection), on the other hand, the “meaning (as)” of the building, which was constructed by him, was “for” him, and at the same time “for” his work (fire safety inspection). The story, in this context, tells us that Mr. Kim’s sensemaking was the process in which he discursively developed the “as (meaning)” of the building “for” himself, “for” his work.

This analysis of Mr. Kim’s story informs us that the focal point of “meaning” is not in an object but in a subject (Gelven, 1970). “Meaning” is not propagated from object to subject. It is propagated from subject to object. “Meaning” does not therefore emanate from an object and terminate in a subject. Rather, it issues from a subject and focuses on an object (Chapman, 1966). When Mr. Kim said that “the building is an object for Haengjeong-Jido,” he was not simply conceptualizing a sensory input from the building with more or less describable characteristics, but saying that “the building is (as) an object for Haengjeong-Jido for me, for my work.” In his own characterization, what Mr. Kim constructed was not a “building-sensation.” Rather, what he constructed was the “mode of being (as)” of the building for him, for his lived work.” In this respect, Mr. Kim’s sensemaking was “his-meaning (as)” construction of the apartment building.50

50 In this manuscript, I argue that sensemaking is the process in which a subject consciously constructs “his or her-meaning” of something. By this argument, I do not mean that it is impossible for us (subjects) to examine our contacted things as they are to sight, and in doing so capture the physical or meta physical properties (characteristics) of the things standing on their own. When our “sight stances at a distance and (our) seeing does not tamper with the things seen” (Moran, 2000, p. 233), we are observers of the things. That we are detached spectators, however, does not mean that we are isolated subjects. As Heidegger (1970) points out, we human beings (“Dasein” in his terminology) always have a world. We are “Being-in-the-world.” We are always world-involved. When we are “disinterested spectators,” the world that we are in is the so called “world-of-science (theory).” When we are “in-the science (theory)-world,” our contacted things are “things-in-the science (theory)-world.” Since these things are in “the-world-of-science(theory)”) that we are also in, the things are objects of theoretical study “for” us (as scientists or theorists). Since the things are objects of theoretical study in association with our purely cognitive interest, it is possible for us to see the things as they really are in terms of detached observers, and in doing so capture the physical or meta physical properties (in the sense of “meanings”) of the things in themselves.

This circular rendition of “meaning” proposes that the basic modality of “meaning” (the meaning of “meaning”) is already given (or located) by (or in) “the-world-of-concern” (Gelven, 1970) that we are in, and our specific (concrete) meaning constructions are founded upon such an already determined modality of “meaning” (the meaning of “meaning”). In the case that the world that we are in is “the-world-of-science,” as discussed above, the things
Mr. Kim’s story is an “example” of the sensemaking of Korean street-level fire service officials. As shown in the discussion earlier, the sensemaking that the story exemplifies is the process in which the officials actively organize the ways in which contacted physical things are able “to be” for them, for their daily work. In this chapter, I present such an organization by Korean fire service workers more fully.

I begin this chapter with an examination of how Korean street-level fire service officials (hereafter, the officials or the workers) initially construct the meanings of encountered physical things for them, for their work. I then show how the initially constructed meanings are interrupted by others, and the interruptions are recognized by the workers. Next, I explore how the officials map out and carry out certain ways to handle these interruptions. In scrutinizing the officials’ interruption management, I give attention to another facet of “meaning” expressed by Taylor as “meanings in relation to the meanings of other things.” As exemplified by Mr. Kim’s story, what the officials encounter in the field of their work are not only physical things. They also include other persons. The story signifies to us that for the workers, “social encounterers” as well as “physical things” are the objects to which they attribute “their- meanings.” In many cases in which “the workers’-meanings” of some physical situations are interrupted by social encounterers, as delineated later, the management of the interruptions by the workers is not separated from their attentive consideration of the meanings that the social encounterers could have for them, for their work. In investigating such cases, I illustrate how the officials

which we encounter in the world are (as) objects of theoretical study in the first place. In the world, we see the things as things in themselves, and accordingly can seize their own characteristics (meanings). When the world that we have is “the-world-of-life,” the things that we encounter in the world, are, from the outset, (as) objects “for” our living. In “the life-world” (Schutz, 1973; Gurwitsch, 1974), the “meanings” that we construct are the relevant ways by which we practically relate ourselves to these things.

Such a notion of “meaning” was crucial to understanding the nature of Mr. Kim’s sensemaking. As shown in the story in chapter five, the source of the breakdown of Mr. Kim’s ongoing fire safety inspection of the apartment building was the “height” of the building. Its “height” became salient, “whereas before it was transparent” (Packer, 1985, p. 1084). In the process of his sensemaking, however, he was not interested in the “objective” height of the building (so many feet and inches). He was not even aware of such an “objective” weight of the building. Why? Because the world that Mr. Kim was in was not “the-world-of-science (theory),” but “the-world-of-work (fire safety inspection).” As a matter of course, Mr. Kim did not see the “height” of the building in terms of “feet and inches,” which ex-sted “simply there” (Packer, 1985; Gelven, 1970; Moran, 2000) in an indifferent way. From the outset, the “height” of the building was “the number of stories” for Mr. Kim, which was meaningfully related to his work, fire safety inspection. Throughout the process of his sensemaking, Mr. Kim related with such a basic modality of the “height” of the building. It is in this sense that Mr. Kim’s sensemaking (conscious meaning construction) is not the process of making (constructing) a “building-sensation,” but the process of making (constructing) a relevant mode of being of the building for him, for his work (fire safety inspection).
consciously develop the “meanings (of physical things) in relation to the meanings of social
encounterers.”

Korean Fire Service Officials’ Construction of
The “Initial” Working Relationship with Physical Things

Except for fire inspectors, the officials engage their work by responding to emergency
calls. The emergency calls to which firefighters respond are the 1-1-9 (9-1-1 in the U.S) requests
for fire. The emergency calls to which rescuers and the EMS (Emergency Medical Services)
members respond are the requests for rescue and emergency medical services. Their response to
emergency calls is imperative. Once emergency calls are dispatched to them by the E
(emergency) 1-1-9 communication centers, they unconditionally race to the spots where certain
situations related to the calls occurred.

For firefighters, rescuers and the EMS members, the dispatched emergency calls are
“tasks” which are assigned to them. The moment the “tasks” are given to them, a world-- let us
call it “the-world-of-work”-- is imposed on them. The instant “the-world-of-work” is imposed,
the officials immediately leave the worlds that they have participated in, and in doing so “leap
into” (Schutz, 1973) the imposed world. Let us take an example. One of my interviewees, a
firefighter was playing table tennis with his fellows, the EMS members. At that time a fire call
was suddenly dispatched to him with the alarm bell, and he responded to the call without delay.
Before the alarm bell rang, the world that he had been absorbed in was the so called “world-of-
play.” At the moment when the alarm bell rang, his lived world was shifted from “the-world-of-
play” to “the-world-of-work.” In the shifting process, he quickly dropped his attention to playing
table tennis, and in doing so promptly transferred his concern to the fire call.

The worlds that the officials have lived before responding to emergency calls are quite
varied. When their periods of night duty are busy, they sometimes have a short nap in the
daytime. In such cases, the world that they live is “the-world-of-dream.” They spend much time
checking and repairing their emergency equipment. In those cases, the world that they are in is
another kind of “world-of-work” of which the province is not the same as that of the world that
they are engaged in when they respond to emergency calls. No matter what worlds they have
lived prior to emergency calls, if a new world, that is to say, “the-world-of-work” is imposed
upon the officials along with the calls, the officials directly withdraw themselves from the worlds
that they have been in, and in doing so instantaneously plunge into “the-work-world” by responding to the calls at once.

Unlike fire fighters, rescuers, and the EMS members, fire inspectors do not set to work by responding to emergency calls. Instead, they begin to work by “responding to” the instructions from the superior authorities. The instructions are the requests for fire safety inspections. By way of instructions, “what” and “when” to inspect are assigned to fire inspectors and the assignments as such come to be the “tasks” for fire inspectors. They do not either doubt or attempt to doubt the validity of whether to perform the assigned tasks themselves. For them, it is natural that they should perform the tasks. At a point in time “when” they need to conduct fire safety inspections of some designated objects (“what”), accordingly, they shift their lived world to “the-world-of-work (fire safety inspection)” without hesitation, and in doing so place themselves in “the-work-world.”

Once the officials are involved in “the-world-of-work,” they direct their attention to certain things in “the-work-world,” and in doing so relate themselves to the things. The things that firefighters, rescuers and the EMS members care about are various kinds of fires and persons waiting for rescue and (or) emergency medical services, which are in association with the emergency calls dispatched to them. The things that fire inspectors are concerned about are the objects in conjunction with their inspections. If they inspect structures, the structures are the objects to which they pay attention. In cases in which they visit and inspect manufacturing sites, their attentive things are the sites. If items of hazardous material storage are the objects for fire safety inspection, fire inspectors give attention to these items.

The above things that the officials note are all the physical things. At first glance, one might say that rescuers and the EMS members attend not to inanimate things but animate human beings. It is true that their attention is related not to physical things but to persons. Yet, their attention is not related to persons as persons, that is, as “conscious living beings” (Schutz, 1967). Rather, it is related to persons as physical things, since the attention at this point of in time is directed “not to the inner subjective experiences” but “to the outer bodily conditions or movements” of persons.

The officials’ relating themselves to the focused physical things is their construction of a relation with the things. They construct a relation with the things since they “already” have the relation to be constructed. This relation that they “already” have is a “working relationship” that
the officials have to the things. *The* “working relationship” is *the* relationship that is “initially” formed when the officials locate themselves in “the-world-of-work” by responding to emergency calls or the instructions from the superior authorities. When the officials locate themselves in “the-work-world,” they determine their “I” which is “to be” “between” them and the things that are in “the-work-world” that they (the officials) are “now” in. Through such a determination of their “I-in-between,” namely “self inter-est: inter (between) + est (to be),” the officials come to have a “working relation” with the things in their world of work.

However, *the* relation that the officials have to the things at this point in time is “empty.” Although the officials have the *form* (“working”) of *the* relation (“working relation”), they do not have its *contents.* The officials’ relating to the focused physical things, namely, their construction of *the* “working relation” with the things, in this sense, is the process in which they “fill” their already exiting “empty” working relations with some *contents.* As shown in Figure 6.1, the process is characterized by the “self (as a determined *I*-in-between) projection” of the officials from their defined “present states of the physical things” to some “desirable future states of the things,” in which they mediate the passage by projecting (picturing) certain “action strategies,” through which they construct *the* working relation (as-structure).

![Figure 6.1: Korean Fire Service Officials’ Construction of The “Initial” Working Relation with Physical Things](image-url)
In order to clarify the above discussion, let us take a look at a case below.

Several days ago, we got an emergency call from the communication center, and we ran to the scene where a car accident took place. In fact, we ran to the scene without knowing that it was a car accident. Because the communication center told us that there was a lady who was down with a sudden stomachache by the wayside. I thought she could be an acute invalid. In such cases, we need to transport patients to hospitals promptly in order to let them receive proper treatment (from the hospitals). When we arrived at the scene, however, we found out that she was a patient who had been injured in a car accident. While walking across a road crossing, she was hit by a car. She was not badly injured, though. She suffered fractures. When I examined her on the spot, her ankle and clavicle were broken. In the cases that persons are injured in car accidents, we need to examine patients (the injured persons) carefully. If we do not do so, the cases could sometimes happen that we can not locate a bone fracture. If so, it (our negligence) could cause a secondary injury. In the cases that we transport the patient without knowing, or neglecting an identified fracture, a simple fracture could be developed into a comminuted fracture, resulting in some difficulty with bonesetting. Because when we transport the patient, the ambulance keeps chattering. So, it is important to evaluate patients on the spot, especially in the cases of car accidents. In such cases, we have to give necessary first aid to the patients in order to avoid a secondary injury. This case fell under such cases. The

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51 I have eliminated names or used covernames for all presented data in order to provide anonymity to my informants. In so far as possible episodes are presented, albeit with names deleted, in a manner that preserves the integrity of the story being told.

52 The Korean name of “comminuted fracture” is “분쇄골절.” My informant did not use the terminology, “분쇄골절.” The secondary injury that she described in her statement, however, was indicating “comminuted fracture,” that is, “분쇄골절.”
lady was the patient to whom I needed to give the corresponding first aid treatment. (Informant 15-1: Translated)

By responding to an emergency call from the communication center, my informant in the above case situated “herself-as-an-EMS-member” in “the-world-of-work” imposed by the call, and in doing so concerned the situated self (“I-in-between”) with “a-lady-being-down-by-a-wayside” in her world of work. From the moment when she engaged in “the-world-of-work” as an EMS member, for her, “the-lady-being-down-by-a-wayside” was an “object” that she needed to “care for.” At the point when she was involved in “the-work-world,” however, the way to “care for” the lady was not decided (“empty”).

If we make an observation of her on-the-spot activities, we can learn how she constructed “the way” more vividly. When she arrived at the scene, she “exploded” (Schutz, 1973) her previous anticipation of the lady, focused on some aspects (“the present state” in Figure 6.1) of the lady (as a physical thing) such as “number of fractures,” “type of break,” and “the cause of the fractures,” determined the characters of the focused aspects, and in doing so diagnosed (“defined” in Figure 6.1) the lady as “a-patient-with-simple-fractures-caused-by-a-car-accident.” This diagnosis (“definition”) caused (“because context” in Figure 6.1) her to “project” (envision) a “desirable future state of the lady (as a physical thing),” which can be described as “the-lady-to-be-protected-from-the-secondary-injury.” 53 In order to (“in-order-to context” in Figure 6.1) accomplish this project, she again “projected” (envisioned) an “action strategy,” namely, “giving-the-corresponding-fist-aid-treatment.” Through the projection of such an action strategy, the informant constructed “the way” (the lady “as” a-patient-with-simple-fractures-caused-by-a-car-accident-to-whom-“I”-need-to-give-the-corresponding-first-aid-treatment-in-order-to-prevent-the-secondary-injury) by which she could relate herself (as an EMS member) to the lady.

Through the process as exemplified in the case above, Korean street-level fire service officials construct their opening relationship with the physical things in their world of work.

Interruptions of The “Initial” Working Relationship with Physical Things

53 “The” secondary injury in my informant’s project is “comminuted fracture” of which the Korean name is “분쇄골절.”
The working relation that the officials are going to construct “initially” is the “as-structure” in Figure 6.1 in the preceding section. As implied in Figure 6.1, the “as-structure” is composed of three “abstract parts” (Sokolowski, 2000): the present state of the physical thing, a desirable future state of the thing, and an action strategy. Within the “as-structure,” these three abstract parts are interdependent with one another, and arranged into the “as-structure” in a certain manner. That is to say, an action strategy is projected on the basis of a desirable future state of the thing, and joins the “as-structure.” A desirable future state of the thing is projected on the basis of the present state of the thing, and joins the “as-structure.” The present state of the thing is defined and functions as the foundation upon which a desirable future state of the thing is im-mediately projected, and an action strategy is mediately projected (via “a desirable future state of the thing”). It joins the “as-structure” through the projected future state of the thing, and action strategy.

By way of such “three-layered interweave,” these three abstract parts “are blended together into their whole” (Sokolowski, 2000, p. 24), through which the “as-structure,” which is the whole made up of these three parts as moments (Sokolowski, 2000, p. 136), is constructed (formed).

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54 With regard to the structure of parts and wholes, Sokolowski (2000) divides parts into pieces and moments. According to him, pieces, which are also called independent parts, are “parts that can subsist and be presented even apart from the whole” (Sokolowski, 2000, p. 22). His examples of pieces are leaves and acorns, “which can be separated from their tree and still present themselves as independent entities.” (Sokolowski, 2000, p. 22). Moments, which are sometimes called non-independent parts, are “parts that cannot subsist or be presented apart from the whole to which they belong; they cannot be detached.” (Sokolowski, 2000, p. 22). As examples, he takes “the color red (or any other color), which cannot occur apart from some surface or spatial expanse, and musical pitch, which cannot exist except as blended with a sound” (Sokolowski, 2000, p.22). In this respect, he explains that “pieces are parts which can become wholes” (Sokolowski, 2000, p. 22), whereas moments are parts that cannot become wholes. In Figure 6.1 in the preceding section, “an action strategy” is founded upon “a desirable future state of the thing,” which in turn is founded upon “the present state of the thing.” Accordingly, “an action strategy” is not presented (“projected” in Figure 6.1) except through “a desirable future state of the thing.” “A desirable future state of the thing” is also not presented (“projected” in Figure 6.1) except through “the present state of the thing.” “The present state of the thing” is the “substrate” (Sokolowski, 2000) for “a desirable future state of the thing” and “an action strategy” through which the “as-structure” is ultimately presented (constructed). “The present state of the thing” is the “founding part” (Sokolowski, 2000), a part of the “as-structure” as a whole. “It itself is not the “as-structure,” Therefore, the presentation (“definition” in Figure 6.1) of “the present state of the thing” is not the presentation (construction) of the “as-structure.” Rather, its presentation (definition) supports the presentations (projections) of “a desirable future state of the thing,” and “an action strategy” through which the “as-structure” is finally presented (constructed). In this sense, “an action strategy,” “a desirable future state of the thing,” and “the present state of the thing” are all moments to one another in the presentation (construction) of the “as-structure,” as the whole. Whenever they exist and are experienced (“defined” and “projected” in Figure 6.1), as Sokolowski points out, “they drag along their other moments with them; they exist only as blended with their complementary parts.” (Sokolowski, 2000, p. 24).
This analysis of the “as-structure” informs us that the “as-structure” is the “whole-with-these-three-moments.” It means that the workers’ construction of the “as-structure” is the process in which they present (in the form of “defining” or “projecting”) the moments of the “as-structure,” and in doing so interweave them into the structure (as the whole). For the workers, a “successful” construction at this point in time, is, in this respect, the construction that they present (in the form of “defining” or “projecting”) all the moments of the “as-structure,” and in doing so seamlessly interweave them into the structure intended. The construction by my informant in the previous section is one such case. As shown in her statements above, she presented (in the form of “defining” and “projecting) three all moments (abstract parts) of the “initial” working relationship (the “as-structure) with the lady on the scene, namely, the present state of the lady (as a physical thing), a desirable future state of the lady, and an action strategy. In so doing, she effortlessly arrayed them into the working relationship intended, resulting in a “successful” presentation (construction) of the working relationship (the “as-structure”), which can be expressed as “the lady (as a physical thing) as a-patient-with-simple-fractures-caused-by-a-car-accident (the defined present state of the physical thing)-to-whom-‘I’-need-to-give-the-corresponding-first-aid-treatment (a projected action strategy)-in-order-to-prevent-the-secondary-injury (a projected desirable future state of the thing).”

In many cases, the officials’ construction of the “as-structure” is successful as that of the informant above was. Yet their construction of the structure is not always successful. In some cases, the workers have difficulty in presenting (defining or projecting) any one of the moments of the “as-structure,” leading to the failure in the construction of the structure itself. In other cases, the officials experience, in the process of presenting, and in doing so intermingling the moments, some problems with the flow of their fusion into the “as-structure.” These types of “unsuccessful” constructions are closely related to the physical things in their world of work. The following are examples.
A person was injured at a nearby mountain top, while descending the mountain.\(^{55}\) We responded to the emergency call toward evening. It took us around two hours to arrive at the scene. Because we had to go up the mountain where the accident occurred... When we arrived at the scene, it was already dark. There was a lady who put on weight. She had no abnormal symptom except for the broken ankle. So, she could not even stand up. It was already dark. The scene of the accident was the mountain path with a very steep grade. The situation was the situation that we had to take her to the foot of the mountain. The problem was... how do we take her to the foot of the mountain? We were at a loss. It was dark, the path was narrow and slanted, and the lady was heavy in addition! In that instant, an idea about how to do it did not strike me. (Informant 7-1: Translated)

My informant (rescuer) in the above case defined (presented) the present state of the lady (as a physical thing), which can be articulated as “a-heavy-patient-with-a-broken-ankle,-who-is-on-the-narrow-and-dark-mountain-path-with-a-very-steep-grade.” On the basis of the defined (presented) present state of the lady, he projected a desirable future state of the lady, namely, “the-lady-to-be-taken-to-the-foot-of-the-mountain.” Yet he was “unsuccessful” to project an action strategy in-order-to bring about the projected desirable future state of the lady. In other words, my informant failed to map out, in his imagination, a “future course of action” that he (with other rescuers) would carry out in-order-to take the lady to the foot of the mountain. Without a plan to take the lady to the foot of the mountain, he (with other rescuers) could not take the lady to the foot of the mountain. By missing a part (an action strategy) of the route (the “as-structure”) to the lady, the informant could not relate himself (as a rescuer) to the lady (as an object of rescue) at this point in time.\(^{56}\)

As shown in the statement from my informant, his presentation (projection) of an action strategy was interrupted by the attribute of the peculiar “inner” aspect of the lady (as a physical thing), that is, “the weight of her body,” and the characters of the contingent “outer” aspects of the lady, namely, “the features of the situational (geographical and temporal) factors” (Schutz,

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\(^{55}\) In expressing “the person who was injured, while descending the mountain,” my informant used the terminology “환자.” In English, “환자” is “patient.”

\(^{56}\) My informant’s ultimate handling of this troubling situation was “successful.” According to him, the situation was not such a situation that he (with other rescuers) could carry the lady on a litter. Through discussion with other rescuers who had responded to the emergency call with him, the informant figured out the way to piggyback her. Using “rescue rope” as a kind of “baby wrapper,” they could carry her on their backs by turns, and descend the mountain “successfully.”
1973) accidentally associated with the lady, which were all combined into the present state of the lady.

Let us take a look at another case.

The accident occurred in a residential section. There was a residential street with very steep stairs. Strangely enough, a car accidentally backed into a set of stairs and partially ascended the stairs... Just at that time, a lady went down the stairs, and the car ran over the lady, and the lady was pressed under the car. When we arrived at the scene, the car was suspended on the stairs and the lady was under the car. The priority matter was to drag the lady out from the car... In order to do so, we have to lift the car, you know? By the way, if we lifted the car, it seemed that the car had a tilt to the front and would move. If so, it could result in a further injury. I have ever experienced such a situation. It was not difficult to lift the car.

Unlike the former case, the informant in this case presented (defined and projected) three all moments for the “as-structure.” He defined the present state of the lady (as a physical thing). The present state of the lady revealed in his definition was “the-lady-under-the-car-suspended-on-the-very-steep-stairs.” He projected a desirable future state of the lady. The desirable future state of the lady envisioned in his project was “the-lady-to-be-dragged-out-from-under-the-car.” He also projected an action strategy. The action strategy planned in his project was “car-lifting.” In the process of presenting these three moments, and in doing so ordering them in their whole, the “as-structure,” however, what the informant experienced was not the continuum of the flow of their fusion into the “as-structure,” which can be depicted as “lifting-the-car-in-order-to-drag-the-lady-out-from-under-the-car-suspended-on-the-very-steep-stairs.” Instead, what he experienced in the process was the “interruption” of the fusion flow, which can be portrayed as “dragging-the-lady-out-from-under-the-car-suspended-on-the-very-steep-stairs // lifting-the-car-
In order to clarify this discussion, we need to examine the informant’s construction of the “as-structure” on the basis of the following statement from Schutz (1963 b).

All projecting consists in anticipation of future conduct by way of phantasying… I have to visualize the state of affairs to be brought about by my future action before I can draft the single steps of such future acting from which this state of affairs will result. Metaphorically speaking, I must have some idea of the structure to be erected before I can draft the blue-prints. Thus I have to place myself in my phantasy at a future time, when this action will already have been accomplished. Only then may I reconstruct in phantasy the single steps which will have brought forth this future act (Schutz, 1963 b., p.319).

Based on Schutz’s statement, the desirable future state of the lady that my informant projected was “the future state of affairs of the lady” which he fantasized as “having been brought about” by his “future acting (with other rescuers).” His project of a future state of affairs of the lady was founded upon the present state of the affairs of the lady already disclosed by his definition. Through the project of a future state of affairs (the-lady-to-be-dragged-out-from-under-the-car) founded upon the revealed present state of affairs of the lady (the-lady-under-the-car-suspended-on-the-very-steep-stairs), the informant connected these two “states of affairs,” and in doing so experienced the connection as connected, which can be described as “dragging-the-lady-out-from-under-the-car-suspended-on-the-very-steep-stairs.” For the informant at this point in time, there was no “problem” with the connection which would be mediated, and accordingly real-ized by his “future acting (with other rescuers).”

At the very time when the informant projected (fantasized) a future state of affairs of the lady, and in doing so connected it to the defined present state of affairs of the lady, he did not have a “picture” in his mind of “a future acting” from which the projected future state of affairs would result. His project at this point in time was the project of “a state of affairs” to be brought about by his “future acting,” not the project of “the single steps (future acting)” to bring forth “the state of affairs.” Since he did not hold a picture before his inner eye of what he was going to do (his future acting), he could not connect his “future acting” with the presented two “states

57 I employed front slashes here as a grapheme to set off the expression of the interruption.
of affairs of the lady,” and therefore was not able to experience its connections with these two states of affairs.

As Schutz points out, my informant’s project (picturing) of “a future acting” was founded upon the fantasized (imagined in advance) “end result” of the “acting,” that is to say, the projected future state of affairs of the lady (the-lady-to-be-dragged-out-from-under-the-car) when his “future acting” would already have been completed (accomplished). For the informant, this modo futuri exacti end (result) was the “goal” of “a future acting” that he would carry out.

The goal (envisioned as attained) motivated him to map out (picture) “the single steps (his future acting)” in-order-to reach the goal. “Car-lifting,” as indicated above, was the “steps” that my informant mapped out as an “in-order-to chain” to reach the envisioned goal (end), “the-lady-to-be-dragged-out-from-under-the-car.”

By way of projecting (picturing), and in doing so holding a picture (car-lifting) before his inner eye of what he was going to do (Schutz, 1967), the informant could connect this projected “future acting” with the presented two “states of affairs of the lady,” and in doing so was able to experience its connections with these two states of affairs. Through the project of “a future acting (car-lifting)” founded upon the envisioned future state of affairs of the lady (the-lady-to-be-dragged-out-from-under-the-car), the informant formed such an “in-order-to chain” as described above, and in doing so experienced the formation as formed, which can be expressed as “lifting-the-car-in-order-to-drag-the-lady-out-from-under-the-car.”

As designated above, the informant’s envisioned goal, “the-lady-to-be-dragged-out-from-under-the-car” was the “end result” of his “future acting.” His projection of a “future acting” was the process in which he traced back the interlocking links of the chain in-order-to reach the envisioned goal: from the fantasized “end” “back” to the “first step” of the “future acting.” In this respect, we can say that his projected “future acting (action strategy)” was an entire “in-order-to” chain, which was composed of not only “car-lifting,” but also “other steps” including a series of activities before and after lifting the car. During the interview, my informant did not refer to such “steps.” I understood the “car-lifting” in his statement above as a “general name” that the informant gave to his projected “future acting (as an entire “in-order-to” chain) which had “car lifting (in the narrow sense)” as its “kernel” (Schutz, 1973), and “other steps” as its “horizon” (Schutz, 1973).

If we limit our attention to the activity of “car-lifting” itself, on the other hand, we can also say that “car-lifting” is also composed of a series of “steps” such as fixing position for lifting a car, putting a lifting equipment on the position, operating the equipment and so on. During the interview, I asked the informant to explain the process of car-lifting. He did not (or could not) explain the process in detail. His reply was that he generally used a hydraulic equipment for lifting cars when he needed to lift cars on the emergency scenes. On the basis of his statement above, “드는것은 어렵지 않아요. 드는것은 어렵지 않은데...(It is not difficult to lift the car. It is not difficult to lift the car, but…)” I understood that his “car-lifting (in the narrow sense)” was a totality of a series of activities which were completely “self-evident” to him, and therefore were not easily accessible to even himself.
(car-lifting) to the disclosed (defined) present state of affairs of the lady (the-lady-under-the-car-suspended- on-the-very-steep-stairs), and in doing so experienced the relation as related, which can be re-presented as “lifting-the-car-suspended-on-the-very-steep-stairs.”

Here, the informant experienced a “problem” with the “interconnections” of the experienced three moments. For him, “lifting-the-car (in accordance with the planned car-lifting)” could cause “the-car-suspended-on-the-very-steep-stairs” to move ahead. If the car moved while “lifting-the-car,” he was anxious, the car would trail the lady. It meant that he (with other rescuers) could not “drag-the-lady-out-from-under-the-car-suspended-on-the-very-steep-stairs.” He felt that there might be a mistake about his belief in “lifting-the-car-in-order-to-drag-the-lady-out-from-under-the-car.” Under the situation that he himself was not confident about the validity of his original belief, the informant could not lift the car “in-order-to-drag-the-lady-out-from-under-the-car.” By putting out of action, and in doing so reflecting upon “the projected action strategy (car-lifting)” propositionally, he seriously figured out the ways to “drag-the-lady-out-from-under-the-car (the projected desirable future state of the lady),” considering the identified (defined) “situational feature” (Schutz, 1973) of the lady (the defined present state of the lady), that is, “the car-suspended-on-the-very-steep-stairs.”

The above cases are the examples that the officials’ construction of the “as-structure” (the “initial” working relationship) is interrupted by the physical things in their world of work. However, the workers’ construction of the “as-structure” is not only interrupted by the physical things. Their construction of the structure is also interrupted by other persons in the field of their work. The so called “social encounterer caused interruption” is different from the named “physical thing effected interruption” in that if the latter is the interruption of a successful construction of the “as-structure,” the former is the interruption of the “previous” successful construction of the “as-structure.”

As shown in Figure 6.2 below, the “socially caused interruption” necessarily involves a process in which the officials grasp (understand) the lived (subjective) experiences of other persons through “signitive-symbolic representation” (Schutz, 1967), regarding their gestures.

59 We can say that the informant’s final handling of this puzzling situation was “successful.” Through the discussion with other rescuers who responded to the emergency call with him, he and other rescuers fastened the car to an electronic pole (adjacent to the top of the stairs) by a wire rope, and then lifted the car. They “successfully” dragged the lady out from under the car, and transported her to the hospital without hesitation. For the informant, however, it was a pity that she was carried away while being transported to the hospital.
facial expressions, verbal interjections, and words that the others have produced as a “field of expression” (Schutz, 1963, 1967 and 1973) for those experiences. The workers in the process do not perceive someone else’s bodily movements and words as such, that is to say, as physical events or external “cultural artifacts” (Schutz, 1967). Rather, the officers in the process perceive the movements and the words as “signs that the other is having certain lived experiences which he or she is expressing through those movements and the cultural artifacts (words)” (Schutz, 1967, p. 101). On the basis of such “signitive apprehension of the other’s body and (or) words as an expressive field” (Schutz, 1967, p. 101), the workers direct (orient) their intentional (attentional) gaze through the perceived field of expression to the lived (subjective) experiences of the encounterers lying behind the field, and signified by the field (Schutz, 1967). In so doing, the workers take hold of (understand) the encounterers’ own subjective (lived) experiences of the physical things that are common to both of them (the workers and the encounterers).

Figure 6.2: Social Encounterer Caused Interruption

Once the officials seize (understand) the encounterer’s subjective (lived) experiences of the commonly shared physical things, the seized (understood) subjective (lived) experiences of
the encounterers are overlaid with their previously constituted subjective (lived) experiences of the things (their formerly constructed “initial” relating to the physical things). In the process, the officials experience an “inter-subjectivity” between “my (the officials’)” and “your (the encounterers’)” subjective (lived) experiences of the physical things that are referred to by “us (the officials and the encounterers).” In many cases, there is no problem with the experienced “inter-subjectivity.” In numerous cases, however, the workers also experience some “incompatibility” between their and the encounterers’ subjective (lived) experiences of the commonly focused physical things. Such experiences lead the officials to take a distance toward (Kullman and Taylor, 1966; Schutz, 1967; Sokolowski, 2000) their prior “subjectivity (their previous construction of the “initial” relating to the physical thing),” make it a proposition retrospectively (Sokolowski, 2000), and in doing so try to establish their new “subjectivity (re-construction of the “as-structure” intended) of the still focused physical things at the conscious level.

Let us look at the related cases below.

…관내에 있는 냉동창고에서 불이났습니다 … 예상했던 대로, 크지 않은 불이었습니다. 초기화재였는데, 진압가능하고 즉시 진입이 필요한 상황이었습니다….선착대 대장으로 출동했는데….진압을…(위해), 바로 들어가야하는 상황이었습니다, 근데 애들이 우물쭈물해요 ! 안들어갈려 고려하다고요. 쉽게 이야기 해서, 겁먹은거라. (Informant 7-1)

…There was a fire in a cold storage warehouse within our area of the jurisdiction… As anticipated, the fire was a “one and one fire.” 60 The fire was incipient, it was possible to suppress the fire, so an immediate inside fire fight was needed…. I responded to the fire as the first response group commander….For a fire suppression, an immediate inside fire fight was needed. By the way, my guys were hanging back! They were not going to enter the building. In a word, my guys were scared. (Informant, 7-1: Translated).

This case is the one that I introduced in chapter four as an illustrative example of my data analysis. In order to understand how my informant in this case understood what was going on in the minds of other firefighters on the scene (the fire in a cold storage warehouse), we need to

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60 A “one and one fire” is a Korean terminology for a small fire.
examine his understanding of the firefighters on the basis of the following of Schutz’s two kinds of “motives,” which are expressed as “contexts” in Figure 6.1 in this chapter.

In ordinary speech the term “motive” covers two different states of concepts which have to be distinguished.

a) We may say that the motive of a murderer was to obtain the money of the victim. Here “motive” means the state of affairs, the end, which is to be brought about by the action undertaken. We (can) call this kind of motive the “in-order-to motive.” From the point of view of the actor this class of motives refers to the future. The state of affairs to be brought by the future action,….., is the in-order-to motive for carrying out the action.

b) We may say that the murderer has been motivated to commit his deed because he grew up in this or that environment, had these or those childhood experiences, etc. This class of motives, which we (can) call “(genuine) because-motives” refers from the point of view of the actor to his past experiences which have determined him to act as he did. What is motivated in an action in the form of “because” is the project of the action itself (for instance, to satisfy his need for money by killing a man) (Schutz, 1963 b., p. 321).

In the above case, my informant’s understanding of other firefighters on the scene started with his default apprehension that the objective gestures of the firefighters before his eyes were the “manifestations” (Schutz, 1967) of the subjective experiences of the firefighters. Looking upon the given bodily movements (gestures) of the firefighters as the “evidence” (Schutz, 1967; Sokolowski, 2000) for the lived experiences of the firefighters, the informant directed (oriented) his attention through the “outward” movements that he saw before his eyes to the “inner” minds of the firefighters who made them. In the process, he “subjected his perceptual data to interpretation” (Schutz, 1967, p. 114), and in doing so knew that the perceived bodily movements (gestures) of the firefighters indicated that they engaged in an “action (as a purposive behavior)” which he recognized as that of “hanging back.” After taking a mental snapshot (hanging back) of the observed bodily movements (gestures) of the firefighters, my informant fantasized “a filmstrip” (Schutz, 1967) into which the taken mental snapshot (hanging back) could be fit. That is to say, the informant imaginatively re-established the “in-order-to motive (in-order-not-to enter the building)” of the “action (hanging back)” in his view, and from there
grasped the “because motive (fear of the fire)” that, he thought, had determined the firefighters to do what they projected to do (not to enter the building by hanging back) (Schutz, 1963 b, 1967).

By way of “running over (Schutz, 1967) in his mind the constitutive process of the firefighters’ inner experiences lying behind their gestures and signified by the gestures, the informant as a “direct observer” (Schutz, 1967) understood the firefighters’ own lived (subjective) experiences of the warehouse fire (physical thing). And the understood experiences of the firefighters were superimposed on his previously constituted experiences of the “same” fire, which can be described as “an-incipient-one-and-one-fire (the defined present state of the focused physical thing)-requiring-an-immediate-inside-fire-fight (a projected action strategy)-for-the-sake-of-suppressing-the-fire (a projected desirable future state of the physical thing).” In the process, as implied in the above statement from him, the informant experienced an “incongruence” between his and the firefighters’ experiences of the warehouse fire (physical thing) before all of them (the informant and the firefighters). Such an experience induced the informant to stand back from his ongoing relating to the fire, and in doing so, as illustrated in the following section, to scrutinize the validity of his already constructed “initial” relating to the fire.

Let us take a look at another example of the “socially caused interruption.” Mr. Kim’s case in chapter five.

… My fellow fire inspector at the same office room asked me what I was doing. So, I explained the situation. ‘I conducted a fire safety inspection of an apartment building today. The building was an object for administrative instructions (Haengjeong-Myeonglyeong) for such and such reasons. So, I am now drawing up the papers for issuing administrative instructions.’ I said so. By the way, his thought was different from my thought. He suggested such an opinion that if the sidewalk adjacent to the fourth floor was considered to be ground level, the building could be a structure with two stories above and three beneath ground level. There was something true in what he said. (Informant 21-1: Translated)

In the former case, my informant turned to the firefighters on the scene, while, in his view, the firefighters did not pay attention to his existence. In this case, however, Mr. Kim
turned to his fellow fire inspector, Mr. Lee as Mr. Lee did to him. For the informant in the former case, the firefighters’ gestures were the “expressive movements” (Schutz, 1967) performed by the firefighters who did not seek to express their subjective experiences. For Mr. Kim in this case, by contrast, Mr. Lee’s words were the result of his (Mr. Lee’s) projected “expressive action (speaking)” whose in-order-to motive was to communicate his thoughts (subjective experiences) to “me (Mr. Kim).” The informant in the former case came close to the lived (subjective) experiences of the firefighters through “observation” of their expressive movements (gestures) without any explicit “communicative intent” (Schutz, 1967). In contrast with that case, our Mr. Kim in this case came to the stream of Mr. Lee’s subjective (lived) experiences by means of “participation” in the unfolded expressive action (speaking) that Mr. Lee deliberately shared with him.

From Mr. Kim’s point of view as “participant,” Mr. Lee’s real speaking in accordance with his projected speaking was the indication of his (Mr. Lee’s) subjectively meaningful experiences. And the words produced by his (Mr. Lee’s) actual speaking as a real-ization of the pictured speaking in his mind were the “signs for” (Schutz, 1967) the subjective experiences that he projected to express. In this context, Mr. Kim turned his attention through the “vocal signs (words)” (Berger and Luckmann, 1967) uttered by Mr. Lee to the subjective experiences lying behind the signs (words). In so doing, Mr. Kim “watched” and understood the flow of Mr. Lee’s lived experiences (opinion) of the apartment building for which the signs (words) stood.

In the process in which Mr. Lee’s grasped experiences were placed on top of his previous experiences (inspection) of the building, on the other hand, Mr. Kim, as shown in the above statement from him, experienced a “difference” between his and Mr. Lee’s experiences of the building. As illustrated in chapter four, such an experience prompted Mr. Kim to step out of, and in doing so re-examine his ongoing inspection (experiences) of the building.

Below are the other two examples related to the “social encounterer imposed interruption.”

…By the way, there was a friend of the lady. The friend was a woman. When I was going to give the corresponding first aid treatment to the lady, the friend of the lady was very displeased with what I was going to do, saying “Why! What are you doing now? She is now giving a cry of pain. Don’t you see her bones were broken? Transport her to the hospital at once! Go at once! Show her to the doctor! What are you doing now?” She (the friend) pitched into me loudly.

(Informant 15-1: Translated)

아 저희가 현장을 갔어요 어제 그쪽에 갔는데, 크게 멸나와는 목조화재건물도요. 이게 인자, 그 근방이 전부다 목조건물, 집 인자 그런지역이에요... 저희가 막 갔을때 옆으로 불이 막 번질려 하고 있었어요. 일단 그것을 잡아야, 연소확대방지를 해야하거든요. 그래서 그쪽으로 물을 뿌리고 있었는데, 그때 지휘관이 도착 했어요. 우리한테 와서 지시하는겁니다. 굉장히 화가 납니다. “들어가! 야, 불이 무섭다고 안 들어가는데가 말이돼?” 이러면서, 건물에 불이 났으니까 안에 들어가서 꺼야 된다 인자그런데 생각이죠.

(Informant 3-1)

We ran to the scene. We ran to the scene the day before yesterday. It was a fire in a wooden building (house). All the houses in the neighborhood of the house on fire were wooden houses... When we arrived at the scene, the flames were about to spread to the neighboring houses. Exposure protection was needed for the prevention of fire spread. So we discharged water to the involved houses. At that time, the incident commander arrived at the scene. He came to us and yelled out, “Go into the house! Hey you! Is it sensible not to enter the house because of being nervous about the fire?” His thought was that we should enter the house and extinguish the fire because the house was on fire. (Informant 3-1: Translated)

Of these two cases, the first one is that which I introduced in the preceding section as an example of the officials’ successful construction of the “as-structure.” The process of the above informants’ understandings of their encouterers in question (more exactly, the informants’ understandings of their encouterers’ lived experiences in question) is identical with the process in which Mr. Kim understood Mr. Lee (more specifically, Mr. Lee’s own subjective experiences). For the informants (as also for Mr. Kim), their encouterers’ speech was the “expressive action” in which they sought to “project outward” (Schutz, 1967) the contents of their thoughts (lived experiences) in-order-to communicate them (their thoughts) to “me (the informants themselves).” From my informants’ angle of vision, as was the case with Mr. Kim’s understanding of Mr. Lee, the words spoken by the encouterers (“the friend of the lady” in the first case and “the incident commander” in the second one) were the “indices” (Berger and Luckmann, 1967) of the lived (subjective) experiences of the encouterers as their producers.
Through the “participation” (in the form of “listening to”) in the process in which the encounterers syntactically connected (spoke) their individual words into a meaningful sequence, and in doing so “manifested (objectified)” (Berger and Luckmann, 1967; Schutz, 1967) outward their subjective experiences (thoughts) in the mind, the informants in the above two cases “looked at,” and in doing so grabbed hold of (understood) the stream of the experiences of the encounterers (as being equivalent to Mr. Kim’s grasping of Mr. Lee’s subjective experiences). In contrast with Mr. Kim’s case, however, what the informants “watched,” and in doing so understood in the (participation) process were not only their social encounterers’ lived experiences of the physical things which were equally “within the reach” (Schutz, 1963 b) of them (my informants) and the encounterers as the objects containing common “inter-est: inter (between) + est (to be)” and significance. In the (participation) process, the informants also gazed at, and in doing so grasped their social encounterers’ lived experiences of me (the informant themselves), that is, the encounterers’ “evaluative attitudes” (Turner, 1956) toward me (the informant themselves). Of the grasped subjective experiences of the encounterers, the experiences of physical things were covered with the informants’ formerly constituted experiences of the same things, and in the (covering) process my informants experienced some “problems” with their prior experiences of the things. Such experiences forced my informants to place themselves outside their own experiences of the things, look back, and in doing so reconstitute the experiences of the things at the conscious level. Unlike Mr. Kim’s case, however, the above informants’ experiences of some problems with their prior experiences of the physical things were the ones with the halo of their experiences (understandings) of their social encounterers’ experiences of me (the informant themselves). As shown in the following section, the “mirroring of self” (Cooley, 1998; Schutz, 1973) in their social encounterers (more exactly, in the informants’ understandings of the encounterers’ experiences of me) was of an important import for the informants’ interruption management.

In the field of their work, the officials encounter with various kinds of people such as fellow officials, persons waiting for emergency services, the persons’ family members and

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61 The encounterer’s “total articulated sequence of syntactically connected individual words” (Schutz, 1967, p. 125) is, in other words, “what he or she is saying.” In the first informant’s case earlier, for instance, it was what the friend of the lady said to the informant, that is to say, “아휴 너는 뭐하냐? 사람이 아파죽겠다. 그러면 뭐하냐? 뭐하냐? 뭐하냐?” which was translated above into “Why! What are you doing now? She is now giving a cry of pain. Don’t you see her bones were broken? Transport her to the hospital at once! Go at once! Show her to the doctor! What are you doing now?”
friends, and onlookers. What the encounterers are doing and (or) saying are for the workers are a “perceivable and explicable field of expression” (Schutz, 1973, p. 62) which makes their (the encounterers’) inner life accessible to them (the workers). When the workers apprehend the others’ bodily movements and (or) words as “symptoms” (Schutz, 1963 b) of the subjective (lived) experiences of the others (as conscious living beings), they (the workers) turn (orient) their attention through the symptoms to the others’ stream of consciousness underlying the symptoms, and in doing so “signitively grasp” (Schutz, 1967) the lived (subjective) experiences of the others which the others are having at the moment they (the others) produce the symptoms.

In the process, as exemplified in the above cases, the officials often experience some dissonance between their and the others’ flow of consciousness (experience) of the same physical things (along with their experiences of the others’ attitudes to themselves in many cases). Such experiences motivate the workers to switch the mode of their relating to the encountered physical things from “the-living-in-the-relevance (whereby the relevance itself does not come into grasp of the consciousness)” into “the-reflecting-looking- to-the-relevance” (Schutz, 1973, p. 182).

The next section explains how the officials manage the interruption when the taken-for-granted flow of their relating to the physical things is interrupted by other persons in the field of their work.

**Korean Fire Service Officials’ Socially Caused Interruption Management**

The officials commence their managing of interruptions caused by other persons in the field of their work with their “re-construction” of the “initial” working relation (the “as-structure”) that they have to the physical things in their world of work. In some cases, the management culminates in the officials’ re-construction of the relation (the “as-structure”), leading to the “real-ization” of the relation that they have re-constructed. In other cases, the workers’ management of the interruption is mediated by their other activities of consciousness which are respectively characterized by the so called “They-taking,” “They-affecting,” and “Me-making (Figure 6.3).
Figure 6-3: Korean Fire Service Officials’ Socially Caused Interruption Management Process

When the workers engaged in the activity of what we call “They-affecting” following on the named “They-taking,” their (the workers’) interruption management sometimes consummates in the activity, “They-affecting,” resulting in the real-ization of the “as-structure” that they (the workers) have re-constructed. Otherwise, the officials’ “They- affecting” either instigates them to re-construct the “as-structure” that they have “already” re-constructed or connects through their “They-taking” activity with the activity of what is called “Me-making.”

In cases in which the workers do “Me-making” following on “They-taking” (along with the activity of “They-affecting” sometimes) after their re-construction of the “as-structure,” they (the workers) presents a “reflexive” (Turner, 1956; Michener and DeLamater, 1999) social relationship with the encounterer as “interrupters” to their minds, and in doing so construct a new dimensional working relationship with the-physical-things that are “in-relation-to-the-encounterers,” giving rise to the real-ization of the new dimensional working relationship that they (the workers) have constructed. 62

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62 The officials’ activities of “They-taking” and “Me-making” are the ones “after” their (the officials’) re-construction of the as-structure of the referred physical things. At the time when they (the officials) engaged in such activities as “They-taking” and “Me-making,” the referred physical things are not “individual unique objects” any longer. Rather the things at this point of time, are, for the officials, “more or less well circumscribed objects with more or less definite qualities” (Schutz, 1963 b, p. 305), that is to say, “the- things-in-the-as-structure” that they (the officials) have “already” re-constructed.

As explained below, on the other hand, the workers’ “Me-making” following of their (the workers’) “They-taking” is a process in which , “after” they (the workers) take the encounterers as typified social selves (“They”), they (the
This section explains the officials’ socially imposed interruption management as depicted in Figure 6.3 above. In so doing, the section employs the related cases in the preceding section as exemplars for the management together with two other ones.

**Re-Constructing The “Initial” Working Relation To Physical Things**

The officials’ re-construction of the “initial” working relationship with the physical things that they are concerned about is their construction of the relationship after the interruptions by other persons whom they encounter in their field work.

The object of the workers’ re-construction is the “initial” working relationship that they have to the focused physical things, the “(still) undetermined” relationship that has been already formed when they responded to emergency calls or the instructions from the superior authorities, and in doing so put their specific “self inter-est (I-in-between)” in the-world-of-work that the things are also in, the relationship, what we call the “as-structure,” which is three-layered in structure: an action strategy is layered upon a desirable future state of the physical thing, which is in turn layered on the present state of the thing. Accordingly, the object that the officials are going to re-construct at this stage of their interruption management is the same as that of their previous construction. And their actual re-construction of the object (the “initial” working relation to the focused physical things) that they are going to re-construct is basically identical to their previous construction of the same object. That is to say, the workers’ re-construction is, just like their previous construction, the process in which they (as a determined “self inter-est”) determine their already exiting “(still) undetermined” working relation. And their re-construction as the activity of determination is, as is the case with their previous construction, also characterized by the named “three-layered interweave process” in which they define the present states of the referred physical things from which they envision (project) certain desirable future states of the things upon which they picture (project) some action strategies, through which they (as a determined “self inter-est”) reveal (construct) their relating (the “as-structure”) to the things to the minds.

workers) typify their own selves (“Me”) which they assume if they enter into interaction with the encounterers as typified social selves (Schutz, 1963 b; James, 1890/1981; Mead, 1959). For the workers in the activity of “Me-making,” accordingly, the encounterer before them are not “these particular individual alter egos” (Schutz, 1967). Instead, the encounterer are, for the workers, the encounterers as typified social persons toward or against which “I (the workers)” need to typify “my own” (“Me”). What are meant by the physical things and the encounterers are more clarified in the subsequent explanations of the workers’ “They-taking” and “Me-making” activities.
Despite such a similarity, however, there is a fundamental difference between the worker’s re-construction of the “as-structure” and their previous construction of the structure. The workers’ previous construction is their successful construction before the interruption by other persons, which was shown in the preceding second section in this chapter. When they successfully construct the “as-structure” before the interruptions, they are “unreflectively (Gurwitsch, 1966) and naively (Chapman, 1966)” immersed in the successful construction. In the successful construction, the workers are not concerned with their “act of constructing,” and they are preoccupied with the “as-structure” as it is constructed; in their stream (successfulness) of construction, the officials are not mindful of their “act of constructing,” and they “simply” (Sokolowski, 2000) accept the “as-structure” that they have just constructed. In a word, the workers at this point are in their taking for granted of the “as-structure” constructed by their “act of constructing” that they are not attentively aware of. In this respect, the officials’ construction prior to the interruption by their social encounterers is the construction of which the relevance is simply and unreflectingly accepted by them (the officials) in the “natural attitude” (Schutz, 1966; Gurwitsch, 1966) toward the construction. In the natural attitude toward their construction, the workers pre-consciously integrated the “as-structure” that is going to be constructed (the “as-structure” as the object of construction) and the “as-structure” as it is constructed (the “as-structure” in the construction) into the “as-structure” simpliciter (Gurwitsch, 1966) by means of the very activity of integration (construction of the “as-structure” of construction), and in doing so presented the “as-structure” simply (the integrated simpliciter) to the minds.

For the officials, the so called “social encounterer caused interruption” in the second section in the chapter is the interruption of this taken-for-granted flow (successfulness) of their construction of the “as-structure.” The effects of the interruption on the workers are twofold. For the workers, first, the interruption is the interruption of the continuity (successfulness) of their construction of the “as-structure.” The interruption forces the workers to withdraw from, and in doing so reflect upon their construction-in-the-continuity (successfulness). For the workers, secondly, the encounterers’ interruption are also the interruption of the taken-for-grantedness of

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63 By the phrase “successful construction,” I do not mean that the “result” of the officials’ construction is empirically successful, but rather that the “process” in which the construction itself is made is successful. In the preceding section, I have explained what is meant by the officials’ “successful” construction of the “as-structure.” In association with the “successfulness” of the “result” of the construction by the officials, see the footnotes in the second section in this chapter where I presented two cases (rescuers’ cases) as the exemplars of the so called “physical thing effected interruption.”

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their flow (successfulness) of construction. When the officials enter into a reflection on their construction, the interruption prompts the officials to change the modality of their attitude to the construction from “doxic assurance” (Sokolowski, 2000) to doubt or question. When the workers move from the “unreflective” involvement in their construction to a “reflective turn” (Chapman, 1966) to the construction in response to the interruption by their encounterers, therefore, they do not assert it (the construction) any longer at that moment.

They change its modality; “it was a conviction, but now they make it doubtful or at least questionable” (Sokolowski, 2000, p. 190). It means that the “reflective turn” by the officials in response to the socially imposed interruption is propositional. That is to say, the workers “propositionalize” (Sokolowski, 2000) their previous construction when they reflect on it.

Putting their belief in their former construction into brackets, in other words, the officials turn “the as-structure as it was constructed (the objective side of their already construction)” into their own proposition (judgment), “the as-structure as it was constructed by me,” and reduce the “act of constructing (the subjective side of their already construction)” to their own propositional (judgmental) act, “my act of constructing.” Through such a “propositional reflection (reduction)” (Sokolowski, 2000), the workers sever the object (the “as-structure” that is going to be constructed) of their construction from their prior construction thereof which has been now propositionalized, and in doing so isolate (separate) the object (the “as-structure” that is going to be constructed) of their construction from the “object” (the “as-structure” as it was constructed by me) in their “formerly-taken-for-granted-but-now-propositionalized” construction. In so doing, the workers re-present the “as-structure” that they are going to construct (determine), and then try to make a “new” construction (determination) of the structure while “looking to” their prior construction (determination) that has been propositionalized by them.

64 Within the structure of the officials’ “construction” activity, I recognize “two polar though interrelated aspects” (Natanson, 1966, p. 15): an objective and a subjective side. The former is the object as it is constructed, the latter act of constructing. The relationship between these two sides is understood as comprising two sides of one unity (Natanson, 1978, p. 70). In my view, these two sides are essentially reciprocal: the objective and the subjective demand each other (Natanson, 1978, p. 70). Accordingly, it is inadequate to discuss any one side of the officials’ construction, and leave aside the other side of the “construction.” Further, it is impossible to understand the workers’ “construction” if the two are split off (Natanson, 1978). In explaining the workers’ “re-construction” activity, I in this section sometimes refer to the objective side of their “construction,” the object as it is constructed, and its variance, the object as it is constructed by me (the officials themselves). When I refer to the objective and its variance, however, I do not isolate them from the subjective, the act of constructing, and its variance, my (the officials’) act of constructing. When I refer to the objective side of the officials’ construction and its variance, instead, I always presuppose the subjective side and its variance as the correlates to them.
The officials’ re-construction is this new construction by them in the “propositional attitude” (Sokolowski, 2000) to their previous construction. When the workers take a distance propositionally toward, and in doing so adopt the propositional attitude toward their previous construction that they have been pre-consciously involved in, the previous construction comes into grasp of their consciousness and becomes the target of their concern as a “candidate for verification” (Sokolowski, 2000). The re-construction by the officials in the propositional attitude of their prior construction is, in this aspect, their attempt to verify the “proposal (the prior construction)” that has become questionable or doubtful. When the workers construct the “as-structure” at this point in time, they do not construct the structure simply because they have to construct it. Rather, the workers at this point construct the “as-structure” in order to “find out more accurately what is the case” (Sokolowski, 2000, p. 190). In this sense, the officials’ construction (more precisely, re-construction) from this point in time is their action (purposive behavior) which is geared to experiencing the relevance of their former construction at the conscious level. In the process of re-constructing the “as-structure” in order to know whether “I constructed ‘the’ structure in the right light,” the officials deliberately confirm, disconfirm or modify the relevance of their previous construction of the structure. Below are the examples of the re-construction carried out by the officials in “the interest of relevance,” “in the interest of verification” (Sokolowski, 2000, p. 190).

…근데 아무리 생각해도 제 판단이 맞거든요. 단순 골절이었는데, 단순 골절이었지만 이차 부상방지를 위해서는, 필요한 응급조치가 필요했어요…교통사고 환자였는데…제가 직접 겪었던 것은 아니는데, 비슷한 경우에 응급조치를 안하고 이송을해서 상태가 악화된 경우를 몇 번 봤어요. 또 학교에서, 이런 경우에는 그런식으로하라 배웠고요…환자분을 위해서는 그렇게 했어야 했거든요…(Informant, 15-1)

…But I was, in all probability, right. They were simple fractures. Although they were simple fractures, the corresponding first aid treatment was needed for the prevention of the secondary injury. …She was a patient who had been injured in a car accident… I had not experienced the cases directly. But several times, I had previously seen cases similar to this one in which transportation without first aid treatment had made matters worse. I also learned at school that I must transport the patient after giving the corresponding first aid treatment in cases like this one… For the patient (the lady), the corresponding first aid treatment needed to be given…(Informant, 15-1: Translated)
This is the EMS (Emergency Medical Services) person’s case that I introduced as an exemplar of the officials’ successful construction of the “as-structure” in the first section in this chapter. As shown in that section, she successfully constructed the “as-structure” of the lady (the “initial” working relationship with the lady), which was, in the section, stated as “the lady as a-patient-with-simple-fractures-caused-by-a-car-accident-whom-‘I’-need-to-give-the-corresponding-first-aid-treatment-in-order-to-prevent-the-secondary-injury.” As presented in the second section in the chapter, this successful construction was interrupted by the friend of the lady waiting for her emergency medical services. In response to the interruption, my informant propositionally reflected on the successful construction, and in doing so made it into a proposal for verification.

The informant’s re-construction was the construction in the interest of verification of the proposal. In order to determine (verify) the relevance of her former construction of the “as-structure,” she constructed the same structure “once again.” She defined the present state of the lady (as a physical thing). The present state of the lady in her definition at this point in time was “a-patient-with-simple-fractures-caused-by-a-car-accident.” She projected a desirable future state of the lady. In her “new” project, the desirable future state of the lady was “the-lady-to-be-protected-from-the-secondary-injury.” She also projected an action strategy. The action strategy pictured in her project was “giving-the-corresponding-first-aid treatment.” In the process of interweaving (structuring) these three presented (defined and projected) moments into their whole, the informant constructed the “as-structure” as the whole once again, which can be described as “the lady as-a-patient-with-simple-fractures-caused-by-a-car-accident-needing-the-corresponding-first-aid-treatment-for-the-sake-of-the-prevention-of-the-secondary-injury.” The informant consciously blended the “as-structure” in her re-construction (the “as-structure” as it was re-constructed) with the “as-structure” in her “formerly-taken-for-granted-but-now-propositionalized” construction (the “as-structure” as it was constructed by me), and in doing so mindfully experienced the relevance of her former construction of the “as-structure” (the “as-structure” as the object of her construction) that she was going to construct “initially.” As shown in her statement above, “아무리 생각해도 제 판단이 맞거든요 (I was, in all probability, right),” the result was the confirmation of the relevance the former (previous) construction. On the basis of the result, she annulled the propositional attitude that she adopted to her own lived construction of the “as-structure.”
My informant’s re-construction began with a propositional reflection (attitude) on her previous construction. Her re-construction ended in the “relaxation” (Sokolowski, 2000) of the reflection (attitude). Yet, the informant’s management of the interruption by the friend of the lady did not terminate in the re-construction of the “as-structure” (the “initial” working relation to the lady) in response to the interruption. As shown in the subsequent explanation, her re-construction of the structure was followed by her other management activities such as “They-taking,” “They-affecting,” and “Me-making.” In the process, she constructed a new dimensional working relationship with the lady, which was essentially different from the working relationship (the “as-structure”) that she was going to construct initially. In the end, she failed to realize the above relationship (the “as-structure”) that she re-constructed, which was the same as the relationship (the “as-structure”) that she had previously constructed.

Let us a look at other cases of re-construction as “the test of propositional reflection” (Sokolowski, 2000). The first below is the first response group commander’s case that I introduced as an example of my data analysis in chapter four. This is also one of the cases that I presented in the second section in this chapter so as to show how the officials’ successful construction is interrupted by other persons in their work field.

…근데, 사실상, 건물물상황이 아니었거든요. 크지 않은 불이었고, 말씀드렸다시피 초기 화재였습니다. 낭동창고이기때문에 위험물질이 있었습니다만, 그러저기할 (건물고 안 들어갈 정도로 위험한) 정도…는 아니었습니다. 당연히 들어가야죠. 근데 (얘들이) 만들어가! (Informant 7-1)

…But, as a matter of fact, the situation was not as dangerous as they were scared. The fire was a one and one fire. As I said to you, it was incipient. There were some hazard materials inside the building because the building was a cold storage warehouse. But the materials were not so….(dangerous (as my guys were scared to enter the building). Obviously, an immediate inside firefight was needed. Nonetheless, (they) were not going to enter the building! (Informant 7-1: Translated)

As in the EMS (Emergency Medical Service) member’s case presented earlier, the informant’s re-construction of the “as-structure” in this case was the confirmation of the relevance of his previous construction of the “same” structure. In order to understand this informant’s re-construction process in which he validated his prior construction, we need
to examine the process on the basis of Schutz’s discussion of what he calls the “kernel” and the “horizon” of self-evidency (taken-for-grantedness).

What is taken for granted does not form a closed, unequivocally articulated, and clearly arranged province. What is taken for granted within the prevailing lifeworldly situation is surrounded by uncertainty. One experiences that which is taken for granted as a kernel of determinate and straightforward content to which is cogiven a horizon which is indeterminate and consequently not given with the same straightforwardness. This horizon, however, is experienced at the same time as fundamentally determinable, as capable of explication. It is, to be sure, on hand from the outset not as questionable (in the sense of doubtful) but rather as able to be questioned. As a result, accordingly, what is taken for granted has its explicatory horizons--horizons therefore of determinable indeterminacy. (Schutz, 1973, p. 9)

My informant’s case above is an ice cold storage warehouse fire case that he passed through with his subordinate firefighters. When he ran to the warehouse fire with his firefighters, the fire was “an-incipient-one-and-one-fire” (the present state of the warehouse fire defined by the informant). Because the scale of the fire was small (one-and-one-fire) and the propagation of the fire was in its initial stage (incipient-fire), it was possible “to-suppress-the-fire” (the desirable future state of the fire projected by the informant). In order to suppress the fire, therefore, “an-immediate-inside-firefight” (the action strategy projected by the informant) was required.

The above description from the informant’s statement in the preceding second section is the one of the process in which, before the interruption by his firefighters (his subordinates), the informant successfully constructed the “initial” working relationship with the warehouse fire before his eyes, which was expressed in the section as “an ice cold storage warehouse fire as an-incipient-one-and-one-fire-requiring-an-immediate-inside-fire-fight-for-the-sake-of-suppressing-the-fire.” When my informant constructed the above “as-structure” successfully, the informant lived in the relevance of the successful construction. He neither doubted nor questioned his act of constructing (the subjective side of his construction), namely, his defining act of the present state of the warehouse fire, and his acts of projection of a desirable future state of the fire and an action strategy. He was in his act of constructing (whereby the act of constructing itself did not come into his awareness). And he uncritically accepted the “content” (the “as-structure” as it was constructed; the objective side of his construction) which was “determinately and
straightforwardly” (in Schutz’s words above) constructed through the act of constructing (the subjective side of his construction) that he was in.

The self-evident “as-structure” that the informant constructed through such an unproblematic act of constructing was, however, the “as-structure” (the “kernel” in Schutz’s language above) surrounded by “uncertainty” (the “horizon” in Schutz’s terminology above).

When the informant epoched (suspended) the taken-for-granted nature of his prior construction, and in doing so propositionalized the construction in response to the interruption by his subordinates (firefighters), what he included within his purview for verification was not only the “as-structure” as such (the “kernel” of the construction) in the prior construction. Consequently, he also included, within the purview, the “uncertainty” of the “as-structure” (the “horizon” of the “kernel” of the construction) in the prior construction. In this sense, the re-construction by the informant in this case was not the process in which he only determined the correctness of the “as-structure” itself in his “formerly-taken-for-granted-but-now-propositionalized” construction. The informant’s re-construction was the process in which he also determined the “uncertainty (in the sense of a background of indeterminacy)” of the “as-structure” in the propositionalized construction, which was “indeed un-determined but potentially determinable” (Schutz, 1973, p. 148).

Just as he did in his prior construction of the “as-structure,” my informant focused on such aspects of the warehouse fire as “the scale of the fire” and “the stage of the propagation of the fire,” determined the characters of the focused aspects, and in doing so defined the warehouse fire as “an-incipient-one-an-one-fire.” Based on the definition, he envisioned (projected) “the-fire-brought-under-control,” and pictured (projected) “an-immediate-inside-firefight” in-order-to bring the fire under control. In so doing, my informant ascertained that his prior “judgment” of the warehouse fire, namely, “the warehouse fire as an-incipient-one-and-one-fire-requiring-an-immediate-inside-firefight-for-the-sake-of-suppressing-the-fire” was “basically” right (relevant).

“At this point in time,” what he considered was a possible “danger” of “the-immediate-inside-firefight-for-suppressing-the-incipient-one-and-one-fire.” When he ran to the scene, and saw the warehouse fire as the “as-structure” stated above (the “kernel” of his previous construction), he was not far-sighted enough to think about the possibility that “the-immediate-inside-firefight-for-suppressing-the-incipient-one-and-one-fire” could put his firefighters in
“danger.” (the “horizon” of the “kernel” of the previous construction). The informant at this point turned his attention to the fact that there were some hazard materials inside the warehouse on the fire. As shown in the above statement from him, my informant’s decision (determination) was that “그리 저기 할 (겁먹고 안 들어갈 정도로 위험한) 정도...는 아니었습니다 (The materials were not as dangerous as my guys were scared to enter the building).”

On the basis of such a determination of the extent of “danger” of the hazard materials inside the warehouse, the informant finally re-constructed the “as-structure” of the warehouse fire, which can be depicted as “the ware house as a-not-dangerous-incipient-one-and-one-fire-requiring-an-immediate-inside-fire-fighting-for-the-sake-of-suppressing-the-fire.” In doing so, the informant deliberately matched the “as-structure” in his “formerly-taken-for-granted-but-now-propositionalized” construction with the “as-structure” in his re-construction. The result was the confirmation of the relevance of the “as-structure” in his re-construction. On the basis of the result, my informant annulled the propositional reflection on his former construction of the “as-structure” of the warehouse fire, left the propositional attitude of the former construction, and in doing so terminated his re-construction activity.

As illustrated in the following discussions, yet, the informant’s management of the interruption by his subordinate firefighters did not end in this stage. In realizing the re-constructed “as-structure,” my informant needed his other management activities such as “They-taking” and “They-affecting.” By means of the activities, the informant could realize the “as-structure” that he constructed at this point in time, which was essentially the same as the “as-structure” in his previous construction. Let us take a look at the other two cases including Mr. Kim’s case that we have examined from chapter five.

아파트 옐리베이터 그 문에 인사 사람이 갇혀 있었는데, 출동을 했지요...구조를 해야 했는데, 저에 판단은 인사 에어백 (air bag) 을 사용하는 것이었고, .... 그런데 다른 사람들은 도어 오픈너 (door opener) 를 사용 하자는 걸니다... ... 그렇게들 말씀하셨는데... 생각을 해보니깐, 그게 더 간편하고 빠르겠더라도요... 이 소방서로 인사이동 되어서 온자가 얼마나 안되었을때 일어난 일이었거든요...그전 소방서에서는

65 After my informant told me the statement presented above, I asked the informant that, when he had run to the scene and “had seen” the warehouse fire at first, he had considered whether the fire could have been dangerous. He replied that he had not considered such a possibility “at that time.”
A person was caught in an apartment elevator. We ran to the scene… We had to rescue the person from being caught in the elevator. My judgment was to use an “air bag.”… By the way, other persons (rescuers) suggested to use a “door opener.”… They said so… I thought about that. And I thought that it (the usage of a “door opener”) could be an easier and faster method… I had never experienced this since I began to work at this fire station because of personnel changes… At the former station, we had used “air bag” (in similar cases)… Before I experienced the case, I had not ever thought about the possibility that we could use “door opener” in the case of (rescuing people caught in) elevator… (Informant 5-2: Translated). 66

In this case, my informant’s re-construction (second construction) of the “as-structure” was the disconfirmation (more precisely, the partial disconfirmation) of the relevance of his first construction of the structure. When he ran to the scene, a person was “caught-in-aartment-elevator” (the present state of the person defined by the informant). Because a person was caught in the elevator, the person had to be “rescued-from-being-caught-in-the-elevator” (the desirable future state of the person projected by the informant). In order to rescue the person from being caught in the elevator, for the informant at this point in time, it was natural “to-use-an-air-bag” (the action strategy projected by him), a “fast and easy” method that had been formed out of his past experiences in similar situations.

Above is the informant’s first construction process in which he defined and projected three moments of the “as-structure” of the person on the scene, arranged them into their whole, and in doing so constructed the “as-structure” as the whole, which can be portrayed as “using-an-air-bag-in-order-to-rescue-the-person-caught-in-an-apartment-elevator.”

My informant’s first construction of the “as-structure” was successful, and he was in the successful construction “until” the interruption by his fellow rescuers. When the successful first construction was interrupted by other rescuers, the informant distanced himself from the first construction that he was in, put in propositional doubt the construction, and in doing so initiated

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66 What the informant called “air bag” and “door opener” are kinds of rescue equipments. The so called “air bag” is a pneumatic rescue equipment. What is called “door opener” is a hydraulic rescue equipment. These two kinds of rescue equipments are generally used for lifting heavy things or making a chink in such things as doors, elevators, windows and so on.
his second construction (re-construction) activity while reflecting upon the first construction in propositional attitude.

Compared to the cases mentioned earlier, this informant’s re-construction (second construction) activity is characterized by the “more restricted” critique of the previous (first) construction. When the EMS person in the first case exercised a reduction of her previous construction into merely her own “private” construction in response to the interruption by the friend of the lady, she propositionally targeted all three moments of the “as-structure” of the lady in the previous construction. Her re-construction was a process in which she defined and projected the moments of the “as-structure” (as the object of her re-construction) of the lady in the same way she had previously defined and projected the moments of the same structure of the lady, and in doing so critically tested the relevance of the propositionally targeted three moments of the “as-structure” in her previous construction. Through the process, as shown in her statement presented earlier, the EMS person confirmed the relevance of her previous construction of the “as-structure” of the lady.

In the first response group commander’s case, his reflective critique of his previous construction was more universal than that of the EMS person in the first case. When he exercised a propositional reduction of his previous construction in response to the interruption by his subordinate firefighters, as was the case with the EMS member, he took a distance toward, and in doing so propositionalized all the moments of the “as-structure” of the warehouse fire in the previous already construction. In doing so, however, unlike the EMS person, he also attentively captured a (still) un-determined “background” (horizon) of the (determined) “as-structure” (kernel) in the construction (determination). In this respect, his re-construction was the process in which, as was the case with the EMS member, he defined and projected the moments of the “as-structure” of the warehouse fire in the same way he had previously defined and projected the

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67 Up to now, I have made a distinction between the officials’ construction of the “as-structure” and the as-structure in the officials’ construction. The former is the object of the officials’ construction. The latter is the “as-structure as it is constructed,” which is correlated to the subjective side of the officials’ construction (the act of constructing). Thus, the “moments” of the “as-structure” in the sense of the object of the officials’ construction are different from the “moments” of the “as-structure” in the officials’ construction. That is to say, the former “moments” are respectively “the present state of a physical thing that is going to be defined,” “a desirable future state of a physical thing that is going to be projected,” and “an action strategy that is going to be projected.” The latter “moments” are individually “the present state of a physical thing as it is defined,” “a desirable future state as it is projected,” and “an action strategy as it is projected.” The “moments” of which the “relevance” the officials test in their re-construction activity are the “moments” of the “as-structure” in their “already” construction, that is, the moments as they were defined and (or) projected.
moments of the “as-structure” of the fire, and in doing so critically analyzed the relevance of the propositionalized moments of the “as-structure” in his previous construction. His re-construction was also a process in which, unlike that of the EMS person, he determined (in the sense of explained) the captured un-determined (in the sense of unexplained) “horizon” of the “as-structure,” which he had previously constructed “in its kernel” self-evidently. Through the process of the propositional evaluation of the “kernel” and the determination (in the sense of explanation) of the “horizon” of the previous construction, as shown in the above statement from him, the first response ground commander confirmed the relevance of his previous construction of the “as-structure” of the warehouse fire.

In contrast with these two cases, the above third informant’s reflective critique of his first construction during his second construction (re-construction) was more limited. In other words, when the informant in the third case engaged in a propositional reflection on his first construction of the “as-structure,” he did not propositionally reflect upon all the three moments of the “as-structure” in the first construction. Neither did he pay attention to a possible (potential) problem (horizon) with the “as-structure” (kernel) in the first construction. For verification, the informant only reflected on the “action strategy” that he had projected; on the use of an air bag. The present and future desirable states of the person on the scene that he had defined and projected were left in place and not reflected upon. And a (“still”) un-determined background (horizon) of the “determined” “as-structure” (kernel) in his first construction remained “still” undetermined.

The differences in the scope of the above informants’ reflective concern with their prior construction activities were originated from the differences in the interruptions that they had experienced when their social encounterers’ experiences of physical things were transmitted to them through the process as illustrated in the second section in this chapter.

For the EMS person in the first case above, for example, the (lady’s) friend’s experience of the lady that she (the EMS person) “met” (experienced) through the vocal signs (words) uttered by the friend was “wholesale” interruption of the “core” (kernel) of her construction of the “as-structure” of the lady. Using the words (vocal signs) the way my informant understood them, the lady’s friend spoke (expressive action) to the informant about the present state of the lady, and a desirable future state of the lady in her (the lady’s friend) mind, and an action strategy that, if she (the lady’s friend) had been in the position of the informant, she (the friend) would have carried
out. Those were totally incompatible (viewed from my informant) with the moments of the “as-structure” in the informant’s previous construction. In response to this all-encompassing incompatibility, my informant in this case took a distance toward, and in doing so propositionally targeted (reflected upon) every moment of the “as-structure” in her previous construction.

As presented in the preceding second section, the first response group commander in the second case “watched” (experienced) through his firefighters’ gestures (expressive movement) before his eyes that they (his subordinate firefighters), who “were seized with fear of” an-incipient-one-and-one-fire (the present state of the warehouse fire defined by the commander), “were not going to enter the warehouse” under the situation that an-immediate-insight-fire-fight-was-required (the action strategy projected by the commander) in-order-to-suppress-the-fire (the desirable future state of the warehouse fire projected by the commander). For the first group commander (as also for the EMS person), his subordinates’ experience (understanding) of the warehouse fire that he experienced (grasped) was the one which was completely different from his experience (his construction of the “as-structure”) of the fire. The extensive difference (incongruence) pushed the commander to take a distance propositionally to all the moments of the “as-structure” in his experience (his previous construction of the “as-structure”) of the warehouse fire. In addition, as shown in the above presentation, his subordinate firefighters’ “fear-of-the-incipient-one-and-one-fire” in the commander’s experience (grasping) of the firefighters motivated him (the commander) to think over a possible “danger” (horizon) of “the warehouse fire as an-incipient-one-and-one-fire-requiring-an-immediate-inside-firefight-in-order-to-suppress-the-fire,” the “core content” (kernel) of his experience (his previous construction of the “as-structure”) of the warehouse fire.

For the informant in the third case, as were the cases with the above two informants, what his fellow rescuers said (expressive action) was also the interruption of his first construction of the “as-structure” (experience) of the person on the scene. Unlike the cases earlier, however, what other rescuers said was not (from the informant’s standpoint) the interruption of his experience (the informant’s first construction of the “as-structure”) of the person “with a vengeance” (Sokolowski, 2000). Their saying was not (viewed from the informant) a denial of the self-evident fact that a person was caught in an apartment elevator. They did not say (from the informant’s standpoint) that the person did not need to be rescued from being caught in the elevator. Their saying was not (from the informant’s viewpoint) either
an explicit or implicit request for an explication (in the sense of determination) of any “background of indeterminacy (horizon)” (Schutz, 1973) which was co-given in the “flow (kernel)” of his experience (his first construction of the “as-structure) of the person before his eyes. For the informant, instead, his fellow rescuers’ saying was “only” a suggestion that a door opener instead of an air bag be used “in-order-to-rescue-the-person (the desirable future state of the person on the scene projected by the informant)-caught-in-an-apartment-elevator (the present state of the person defined by the informant).” In this sense, this informant’s re-construction (second construction) activity was the process in which he withheld his “up until now” (Schutz, 1973) belief in “the-use-of-an-air-bag” in response to other rescuers’ suggestion of “the-use-of-an-door-opener,” propositionalized it (the-use-of-an-air-bag), while leaving in place, “undisturbed and without propositional reflection” (Sokolowski, 2000, p. 188), the other two moments in his first construction, and in doing so contemplated and determined which one of “the-use-an-air-bag” and “the-use-of-a-door-opener” could be a more relevant method “in-order-to-rescue-the-person-caught-in-the-elevator.”

Despite the differences in the scope of reflective analysis, however, the way the informants above tested the relevance of the socially interrupted “core (kernel)” of their “former construction was essentially identical; they defined and (or) projected the moment(s) of the as-structure” in the same way they had formerly defined and (or) projected the moment(s) of the “structure,” and in doing so consciously determined (experienced) the relevance of the moment(s) of the “as-structure” in the former construction.

When we examined the first group commander’s case, we have already presented the process in which the commander re-constructed the “as-structure” (as the object of his re-construction) in the same way he had previously constructed the “same” structure of the fire, and in doing so critically tested the “as-structure” itself (kernel; the “as-structure” as it was constructed) in the previous construction. Here, let us look over the remaining two cases once again.

68 As illustrated earlier, the first response group commander’s re-construction activity was not only the process in which he constructed the “as-structure” of the warehouse fire in the same way he had previously constructed the “same” structure of the fire, and in doing so critically tested the “as-structure” itself (kernel) in his previous construction activity. His re-construction activity also included the process in which he explained (determined) the “explicative horizon (horizon of determinable indeterminacy)” (Schutz, 1973, p. 9)” of the “as-structure” in his previous construction.

By “the” process in the statement above, I mean his re-construction activity in a narrow sense (not the process of his explication of the “horizon” of the “kernel” of his “previous” construction).
In the EMS member’s case, her construction activity “before” and “after” the interruption by the friend of the lady was in the same way. When the EMS member had constructed the “as-structure” of the lady at the start, as presented in the first section in this chapter, she had focused on three aspects of the lady, that is, “number of fractures,” “type of break” and “the cause of fractures,” determined the characters of the focused aspects of the lady, and in doing so defined the present state of the lady as “a-patient-with-simple-fractures-caused-by-a-car-accident.” As implied in the above statement from her, her projections of a desirable future state of the lady and an action strategy on the basis of the defined present state of the lady had been guided by her past “indirect” experiences of the cases similar to the lady’s case and her “learning” at school. Guided by such past indirect experiences of similar cases and learning at school, she had projected a desirable future state of the lady (the lady-to-be-protected-from-the-secondary injury) and an action strategy (giving-the-corresponding-first-aid-treatment), which had been taken to be relevant in a taken-for-granted way. In so doing, she had successfully constructed the “as-structure” of the lady, “the lady as a-patient-with-simple-fractures-caused-by-a-car-accident -whom-‘I’-need-to-give-the-corresponding-first-aid-treatment-in-order-to-prevent-the-secondary-injury.”

When this taken-for-granted flow (successfulness) of her first construction was broken off (interrupted) by the friend of the lady, she engaged in the second construction (re-construction) of the “as-structure” of the lady at the conscious level in-order-to validate the truth of the “as-structure” in her “at-first-taken-for-granted-but-now-propositionalized” construction. As shown in her statement above, She focused on the “same” three aspects of the lady that she had first focused on, “number of fractures,” “type of break,” re-determined the characters of the focused aspects of the lady, and in doing so re-defined the present state of the lady as “a-patient-with-simple-fractures-caused-by-a-car-accident.” In the process, the present state of the lady (a-patient-with-simple-fractures-caused-by-a-car-accident) in her “at-first-taken-for-granted-but-now-propositionalized” definition was measured by the present state of the lady (“a-patient-with-simple-fractures-caused-by-a-car-accident) in her second definition (re-definition).

In re-projecting a desirable future state of the lady and an action strategy, she drew on the very past indirect experiences of similar cases and the learning experiences at school that had guided her first acts of projections. Relying on the past indirect working experiences and the learning experiences at the school, the EMS person re-projected a desirable future state of the
lady (the lady-to-be-protected-from-the-secondary-injury) and an action strategy (giving-the-corresponding-first-aid-treatment). In the process, the desirable future state of the lady and the action strategy (I-need-to-give-the-corresponding-first-aid-treatment-in-order-to-prevent-the-second-injury) in her “at-first-taken-for-granted-but-now-propositionalized” projections blended with the desirable future state of the lady and the action strategy (giving-the-corresponding-first-aid-treatment-for-the-sake-of-the-prevention-of-the-second-injury) in her second projections (re-projections). Through the processes, as mentioned earlier, she consciously experienced, and in doing so confirmed the relevance of her first construction of the “as-structure” of the lady.

In the rescuer’s case above, on the other hand, he projected “the-use-of-an-air-bag” as an-action-strategy-in-order (in the sense of sequential arrangement) to-rescue-a-person-caught-in-an-apartment-elevator at the outset, since it (“the-use-of-an-air-bag”) had been (viewed from the rescuer) sufficiently fast and easy for mastery (in the sense of rescue) of the past situations (in which persons had been caught in elevators) “resembling” this “current” situation (in which a person was caught in an apartment elevator). For the rescuer at this point in time, it means, the criteria, fastness and easiness “sedimented” (Schutz, 1973) in his past working experiences was a “scheme of relevance” by which he projected “the-use-of-an-air-bag,” which had been recurringly proven fast and easy to rescue people caught in elevators, as a-taken-for-granted-action-strategy-in-order (in the sense of sequential arrangement) to-rescue-a-person-caught-in-an-apartment-elevator.

When the rescuer, in propositional attitude, neutralized his belief in the fastness and easiness of his “use-of-an-air-bag” in response to other rescuers’ “use-of-a-door-opener,” the “doxic quality” (Sokolowski, 2000) of the criteria, fastness and easiness stayed intact. It still remained as a scheme of relevance whereby he could decide (determine) which one, “the-use-of-an-air-bag” or “the-use-of-a-door-opener,” might be more relevant to-rescue-the-person-caught-in-the-elevator. In his imagination, he placed his “use-of-an-air-bag” and his fellow rescuer’s “use-of-a-door-opener” in-order (in the sense of sequential arrangement) to-rescue-the-person-caught-in-the-elevator, and then carried out these two action-strategies-in-order (in the sense of sequential arrangement) to-rescue-the-person-caught-in-the-elevator. Imagining himself carrying out these two action strategies in question, the rescuer, who put his faith in the criteria, fastness and easiness, consciously experienced which one could be a faster and easier to-rescue-the-person-caught-in-the-elevator. In the process of the imagined execution of his and his fellows’
action strategies, as shown in the above statement from him, the rescuer disqualified his action strategy, “the-use-of-an-air-bag” that he had taken for granted in traditional fashion in natural attitude, and in doing so accepted “the-use-of-a-door-opener,” the action strategy suggested by his fellows.

This informant’s interruption management resulted in the above his re-construction activity wherein his traditional action strategy (the-use-of-an-air-bag) was falsified, and other rescuers’ suggested action strategy (the-use-of-a-door-opener) was adopted, concluding in his “actual” execution (real-ization) of the adopted action strategy (the-use of-a-door-opener) which was newly placed in-order (in the sense sequential arrangement) to-rescue-the-person-caught-in-the-elevator.

Below is Mr. Kim’s case that we have scrutinized from chapter five.

...건축물 관리대장을 살펴보았는데, 그분 말씀대로 지상 이층에 지하 상층 건물 이더라고요…. 근데 제가 보기에는… 건축물 대장상으로는 그렇지만,… 아무리봐도 사실상 오층 건물이었습니다… 완강기 설치는 필요하다고 했습니다. 사시는 분들에 안전을 위해서 필요했어요. 혹시 불이라도 나머는이걸 타고 빨리 내려와야 했거든요…사시는 분들에 안전을 위해서는 행정(영령) 조치가 필요한데 이게 또 법적으로는, 행정(영령) 조치 대상이 아니라 이 말씀이죠. 사실상은 오층건물인데…

(Informant 21-1)

…I looked into the building register. As my fellow fire inspector said, the building was a structure with two stories above and three beneath ground level. Despite the official record of the building register, the building was, to all appearances, actually five stories high, viewed from my angle… I thought that Wangang-Gis (automatic descending life lines) needed to be installed in the building. For the safety of the residents, Wangang-Gis needed to be installed. Because, in the event of fire, the residents could manage to save themselves by descending on Wangang-Gis… For the safety of the residents, administrative instructions (Haengjeong-Myeonglyeong) were needed. But the problem was that the building was not an object for administrative instructions in the eye of the law. The building was actually five stories high, though… (Informant 21-1: Translated)

Mr. Kim’s re-construction activity was a process in which he modified the relevance of his first construction of the “as-structure” of an apartment building. Mr. Kim’s statement above is the one related to the beginning of his re-construction of the “as-structure.”
When he visited an apartment building for a fire safety inspection, the building before him was “an-apartment-building-of-five-stories-not-equipped-with-Wangang-Gis” (the present state of the building defined by Mr. Kim). Because Wangang-Gis were not installed in an apartment building of five stories, the building must be “equipped-with Wangang-Gis” (the desirable future state of the building projected by Mr. Kim). In order to let Wangang-Gis be installed in the building, Mr. Kim needed “to-enforce-administrative-measures-to-give-the-building-representative-instructions-to-set-up-Wangang-Gis” (the action strategy projected by Mr. Kim).

Above is Mr. Kim’s first presentations (definition and projections) of three moments of the “as-structure” of an apartment building. Through the presentations, as shown in chapter five, Mr. Kim successfully constructed the “as-structure,” “the apartment building as an-object-for-administrative-instructions (Haengjeong-Myeonglyeong),” a condensed expression of “the apartment building as an-apartment-building-of-five-stories-not-equipped-with-Wangang-Gis-requiring-administrative-instructions-in-order-to-let-Wangang-Gis-be-installed.”

Mr. Kim’s first construction of the “as-structure” was directed by a relevance scheme sedimented in his past fire safety inspections: A building violating the fire safety inspection law is an object for administrative instructions (Haengjeong-Myeonglyeong). The self-evident characters of the apartment building in his first definition of the building situation, that is, “an-apartment-building-of-five-stories-not-equipped-with-Wangang-Gis,” made Mr. Kim bring the above relevance scheme stored (sedimented) in his past working experiences into relief, whereby he recognized the building before him as “the building violating the fire safety inspection law.” Falling back on the scheme of relevance brought into relief, Mr. Kim at this point posited as taken-for-granted that the building should be “equipped-with-Wangang-Gis” and therefore he needed “to-force-the-building-representative-to-install-Wangang-Gis-by-means-of-administrative-instructions,” an administrative measure with the legal implication of being able to compel adherence.

For Mr. Kim, on the other hand, his fellow fire inspector, Mr. Lee’s thoughts of the building situation (the number of the stairs of the apartment building) was a “wide-ranging” interruption of his (Mr. Kim’s) first construction of the “as-structure” of the building. The apartment building situation (the apartment building situation as it was thought by Mr. Lee) in Mr. Lee’s thoughts was not (viewed from Mr. Kim) only different from the apartment building situation (the apartment building situation as it was defined Mr. Kim himself) in his (Mr. Kim’s)
self-evident definition of the building situation (as the object of Mr. Kim’s perception). Mr. Lee’s thoughts of the building situation that Mr. Kim grasped (understood) in the conversation with him (Mr. Lee) also signaled (viewed from Mr. Kim) him (Mr. Kim) that the apartment building could not be, unlike the apartment building (the apartment building as it was inspected by Mr. Kim himself) in his first fire safety inspection, an object for administrative instructions.

As Mr. Kim stated above, he looked into the building register of the apartment building. And he came to know that “the number of the stairs of the building” of the building register “corresponded to” “the number of the stairs of the building” in Mr. Lee’s thoughts (opinion). Despite “the official number of the stairs of the building (two stories above and three beneath ground level)” of the register, however, the perceptual evidence (Schutz, 1973) of the number of the stairs of the building, which was “immediately” given to Mr. Kim, “directly displayed” (Sokolowski, 2000) him (Mr. Kim) that the real number of the stairs of the building was five stories above the ground.” On the basis of such an “official” and an “immediately evident” evidences, Mr. Kim re-defined the present state of the apartment building as “an-apartment-building-of-two- (and- yet- five)-stories-not-equipped-with-Wangang-Gis.” In the re-definition (second definition) process, Mr. Kim did not disconfirm the relevance of his first definition of the present state of the building, “the building as an-apartment-building-of-five-stories-not-equipped-with Wangang-Gis.”

“At this point,” the present state of the apartment building in his re-definition let Mr. Kim turn his attention to another scheme of relevance embedded in his past working experiences (fire safety inspections), as it were: A building threatening the safety of residents is an object for administrative instructions. For Mr. Kim, the present state of the apartment building in his second definition had the potential to threaten the safety of the residents in the case of fire. If counting on the above scheme of relevance, the apartment building must be “equipped-with Wangang-Gis” (the desirable future state of the apartment building “tentatively” re-projected by Mr. Kim). It meant (viewed from Mr. Kim) that the building was an object to which “administrative-instructions-applied” (the action strategy “tentatively” re-projected by Mr. Kim).

The present state of the apartment building in Mr. Kim’s re-definition, however, did not only have the potential to threaten the safety of the residents in the case of fire. The building of the present state of the apartment building in his second definition was also the building which did not officially violate the fire safety inspection law. If trusting in the relevance scheme that he
relied on at first, it meant (viewed from Mr. Kim) that the apartment building was not an object requiring administrative instructions.

“At this point in time,” Mr. Kim experienced an incompatibility of two *schemes of relevance* in the grasp of his consciousness. Due to such an incompatibility of these two *relevance schemes* which he had not “up until now” (Schutz, 1973) experienced, Mr. Kim at this point could not either confirm or disconfirm the relevance of his first projections of a desirable future state of the apartment building and an action strategy. And this incompatibility motivated him to engage in his further re-construction activity with his supervisor, Mr. Yang, as presented in chapter five.

When Mr. Kim referred the above puzzling situation to his supervisor, Mr. Yang, what he (Mr. Kim) kept in his mind was the “as-structure” that he “tentatively” re-constructed under the guidance of the *relevance scheme*, “a building threatening the safety of the residents is an object for administrative instructions,” which can be expressed as “the apartment building as an-apartment-building-of-two-(and-yet-five)-stories-not-equipped-with- Wangang-Gis-still-requiring-administrative-instructions-in-order-to-let-Wangang-Gis-be-installed.” In the social interaction with Mr. Yang, as illustrated in chapter five, Mr. Kim captured a possible “problem” (in the sense of “horizon” mentioned earlier) with the “as-structure” (in the sense of “kernel” mentioned above) in his “tentative” re-construction; if he issued-administrative-instructions to the representative of the-apartment-building-of-two-(and-yet-five)-stories-not-equipped-with-Wangang-Gis in-order-to-let-Wangang-Gis-be-installed, it could be perceived “as a kind of governmental heavy-handedness” (the “horizon” of the “as-structure” in Mr. Kim’s “tentative” re-construction). In the process of explicating the captured problem with the “as-structure” in his “tentative” re-construction, as depicted in chapter five, Mr. Kim solved the incompatibility of the above two *schemes of relevance* imbedded in his past working experiences in such a way as depicted in chapter five. In so doing, he projected a new action strategy, *Haengjeong-Jido* instead of the action strategy (administrative instructions; *Haengjeong-Myeonglyeong*) that he projected at first, and finally re-constructed the “as-structure” of the building, “the building as an-apartment-building-of-two-(and-yet-five)-stories-not-equipped-with-Wangang-Gis (the present state of the building in Mr. Kim’s re-definition)- requiring- Haengjeong-Jido (the action strategy in Mr. Kim’s re-project)- in-order-to-let-Wangang-Gis-be-installed (the desirable future state of the building in Mr. Kim’s re-project).”
With the above three cases Mr. Kim’s case is compared in several aspects. Mr. Kim’s re-construction activity was his propositional reflection upon every moment of the “as-structure in his first construction. In this respect, Mr. Kim’s re-construction has something to do with those of the informants in the first two cases of the three cases presented earlier.

In the process of reflecting on his first construction activity propositionally, on the other hand, Mr. Kim explained a “horizon” surrounding the “as-structure” that he constructed in the very process of propositional reflection. At first glance, on one hand, his re-construction process appears to have a thread of connection with that of the first response group commander in the second case. Unlike the commander’s case, however, the “horizon” that Mr. Kim explained in the process of his re-construction was not one of the “horizons” of the “as-structure” in his “first” construction. Rather, the “horizon” that he explained in his re-construction process was one of many potential “horizons” of the “as-structure” that he “tentatively” re-constructed in the very process of the re-construction of the “as-structure.” As demonstrated in chapter five, the issue (in the sense of “horizon”) that Mr. Yang raised, and accordingly Mr. Kim attentively captured was the possibility of “governmental heavy-handedness” in the event that Mr. Kim forced the representative of the apartment building not violating the fire safety inspection law but threatening the safety of the residents to set up Wangang-Gis by means of administrative instructions, a coercive administrative measure. The issue (horizon) that his supervisor pointed out, and Mr. Kim turned to was not the possibility of “governmental heavy-handedness” that would result if Mr. Kim ordered the representative of the apartment building violating the fire safety inspection law to install Wangang-Gis in the building by means of administrative instructions. Rather, the issue that Mr. Kim paid attention to with his supervisor, Mr. Yang was one of the issues (horizons) surrounding the “as-structure” (kernel) that Mr. Kim “tentatively” re-constructed with the help of his sedimented relevance scheme, “a building threatening the safety of the residents is an object for administrative instructions.” It was not one of the issues (horizons) surrounding the “as-structure” (kernel) that he (Mr. Kim) constructed at the start under the direction of his other imbedded relevance scheme, “a building violating the fire safety inspection law is an object for administrative instructions.” In this aspect, Mr. Kim’s re-construction activity is distinguishable from the first response group commander’s re-construction activity by which he (the commander) attended to, and in doing so explained a possible “danger” (a horizon) of the warehouse fire “as an-incipient-one-and-one-fire-needi-
an-immediate-inside-firefigiht-for-the-sake-of-suppressing-the-fire” (the “as-structure” in his first construction of the “as-structure” of the fire).

When Mr. Kim constructed the “as-structure” of the apartment building at first, he focused on the “immediate evidences” (Schutz, 1973) in the direct grasp of his perception of the building, and in doing so defined the present state of the building. When he re-constructed the “as-structure” of the apartment building after the interruption by Mr. Lee, Mr. Kim focused on an “officially appresented aspect” (the official record of the building register of the apartment building) of the building along with the (remembered) perceptual data that he previously acquired, and in doing so re-defined the present state of the building. When he first projected a desirable future state of the apartment building and an action strategy, Mr. Kim was dependent upon a scheme of relevance stored in his past working experiences. In projecting a desirable future state of the apartment building and an action strategy after the interruption by Mr. Lee, he referred to another scheme of relevance along with the scheme of relevance “already” in the grasp of his consciousness.

Mr. Kim re-constructed the “as-structure” in order to test the relevance of the “as structure” that he had formerly constructed. As were the cases with the three informants presented above, in this sense, his re-construction activity was “in the interest of verification” (Sokolowski, 2000), in the interest of relevance. However, the way Mr. Kim verified the relevance of the “as-structure” in his former construction was different from that of the informants in the three cases. In order to test the “as-structure” in their former construction, as shown in the above presentation, the informants in the three cases re-constructed the “as-structure” of their referred physical things in the same way they had formerly constructed the structure of the things. In re-constructing the “as-structure” of the referred physical things, in other words, the informants explicitly and reflectingly “repeated” the very ways by which they had implicitly and unreflectingly constructed the “as-structure” of the physical things (apart from the first response group commander’s explication of an “horizon” surrounding the “as-structure” in his previous construction). In so doing, they consciously experienced the relevance of the “as-structure” in their former construction. In contrast to the informants in these three cases, Mr. Kim did not only consciously reiterate the very ways whereby he had pre-consciously constructed the “as-structure” of the apartment building at first in order to examine the “as-structure” in the first construction. As described above, he also carried out other available ways in order to confirm or
disconfirm *the* “as-structure” in his first construction, such as “paying attention to the official record of the building register,” and “referring to another *scheme of relevance* sedimented in the stock of fire inspection practices which had been formed out of his past working experiences.” In this facet, Mr. Kim’s re-construction activity is also distinct from those of the three informants in the cases.

In comparison with the three cases, on the other hand, Mr. Kim’s re-construction was neither a complete confirmation nor a perfect disconfirmation of *the* “as-structure” in his construction. In the process of re-defining the present state of the apartment building, Mr. Kim did not invalidate the present state of the building in his first definition. In his social interaction with his supervisor, Mr. Kim projected a new action strategy, *Haengjeong-Jido* (administrative guidance), and in doing so disqualified the action strategy in his first projection, administrative instructions (*Haengjeong-Myeonglyeong*). In the process of re-projecting a desirable future state of the apartment building, however, he confirmed the relevance of the desirable future state of the building (the apartment equipped with *Wangang-Gis*) in his first projection of a desirable future state of the building, while referring to a *relevance scheme* which came to his consciousness when he engaged in the very act of re-projection of a desirable future state of the building. In this sense, Mr. Kim’s re-construction activity was his modification of *the* “as-structure” in his first construction of *the* “as-structure.”

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69 In the case of the third informant (a rescuer) that I presented earlier, *the* “as-structure” that the informant constructed “at first” was “using-air-bag (a “projected” action strategy)-in-order-to-rescue-the-person (a “projected” desirable future state of the person before his eyes)-caught-in-an-apartment-elevator (the “defined” present state of the person before his eyes). *The* “as-structure” in his re-construction (second construction) was “using-door-opener-in-order-to-rescue-the-person-caught-in-an-apartment-elevator.” One might argue that this informant’s re-construction (second construction) was not a “disconfirmation” but a “modification” of *the* “as-structure” in his “first” construction, since although, in the re-construction process, he disqualified the action strategy of *the* “as-structure” in his “first” construction, he retained the other two “moments” (the present state, and the desirable future state of the person in front of him) of *the* “as structure” in the “former” construction.

If the rescuer in the process of re-construction had reflected upon “all three moments” of *the* “as-structure” in his “former” construction propositionally, and in doing so had disconfirmed an action strategy in his “former” projection, and confirmed the other “two moments” in his “former” definition and projection, we could say that his re-construction activity was a “modification” of his “former” construction of *the* “as-structure.” As shown in the above presentation of the informant’s case, however, what he reflected propositionally in the re-construction process was only “the action strategy” in his “former” projection of “an action strategy.” The other two moments of *the* “as-structure” in his “former” construction were left in place and not reflected upon. When he engaged in the act of re-projection of an action strategy, in other words, the other moments “were” (viewed from the informant) the moments in “the-formerly-taken-for-granted- and-still-now-taken-for-granted” definition and projection. *From the rescuer’s point of view*, his disconfirmation of the action strategy in his “first” projection was the “disconfirmation” (from my viewpoint, a partial disconfirmation) of his “first” construction activity itself.
Mr. Kim’s interruption management ended in his re-construction of the “as-structure” of the inspected apartment building, setting in motion the real-ization of the re-constructed “as-structure,” a modified one of the “as-structure” in his “first” construction, “the apartment building as an-object-for-Haengjeong-Jido.”

The officials’ re-construction of the “initial” working relationship (the “as-structure”) with their focused physical things is the first stage of their management of the interruption by other persons of their prior successful construction of the relationship (the “as-structure”) with the things. The workers’ successful construction of the relationship (the “as-structure) before the interruption is their taken-for-granted construction of the relationship (the “as-structure”). In the self-evidently successful construction of the “as-structure,” the “as-structure” that is going to be constructed (the object of the workers’ construction) and the “as-structure” as it is constructed (the “object” in their construction) are pre-consciously combined into the “as-structure” simpliciter. And the “as-structure” simply (the combined simpliciter) is presented, as such, to their mind.

From the officials’ viewpoint, the interruption by their social encounterers is the interruption of this taken-for-granted successfulness of their prior construction. In response to the interruption, they stand back and reflect upon their “construction-in-the-successfulness (completeness).” In the process in which the officials move from the immersion in the construction to the reflection on the prior construction, they change their attitude of the construction from conviction to doubt or question. What happens at this point is that they bracket (quote) their prior construction, transform it into a proposal for verification, and in doing so recognize the “as-structure” in the prior construction (the “as-structure” as it was constructed) in the form of the “as-structure” in my prior construction (the “as-structure” as it was constructed by me). By the propositional reflection (recognition), the officials separate the object of their construction (the “as-structure” that is going to be constructed) from their prior construction thereof that has been doubtful or questionable. In so doing, they artificially dissolved the “as-structure” simpliciter in the mind into the “as-structure” that is going to be constructed and the “as-structure” as it was constructed by me. As a result, they are left with two kinds of “as-structures”; (1) the “as-structure” in the propositionalized construction (the “as-structure” as it
was constructed by me), and (2) the “as-structure” as the object of their construction (the “as-structure” that they are going to be constructed).

In this context, the officials’ re-construction (re-determination) is their “new” construction (determination) of the “as-structure” that they are going to construct, concerned with the “as-structure” in their “formerly-taken-for-granted-but-now-propositionalized” construction. In this sense, the workers’ re-construction activity is characterized by their construction of the “as-structure” in the interest of verification of their own previous construction of the same structure, their action (purposive behavior) of which the in-order-to motive is to determine the relevance of their own lived construction of the “as-structure.”

As connoted in the cases that I presented above, the workers’ re-construction activity as the propositional critique of their previous construction activity is multiform. In some cases, they re-construct parts of the “as-structure” that they constructed previously, and in doing so test the relevance of their previous construction of the “as-structure.” In other cases, the officials re-construct the “as-structure” on the whole, and in doing so experience the validity (relevance) of their previous construction of the “as-structure.” Sometimes, to use the terms of Schutz (1973), they pay attention to the “horizon” of unquestioned (or undoubted) but questionable (or doubtful) element(s) that the “as-structure” (“kernel”) in their previous construction carries along, explain the “horizon,” and in doing so analyze the relevance of their previous construction of the “as-structure.”

In the process of re-constructing the “as-structure” in order to verify the relevance of the “as-structure” in their former construction, on the other hand, the workers often follow the very ways at the conscious level, by which they formerly constructed the “as-structure” at the pre-conscious level. In many cases, however, they also carry out other available ways and their former ways side by side in re-constructing the “as-structure. In cases in which the workers effect other available ways and their former ways at the same time, as exemplified in Mr. Kim’s case above, they occasionally experience an incongruity (incompatibility) of the ways in the grasp of their consciousness. In such cases, they try to solve (answer) the experienced incongruity. In the process in which they answer the incongruity in certain ways, the workers re-construct the “as-structure,” thereupon they decide the relevance of the “as-structure” in their former construction of the “as-structure.”
In spite of such variance in the officials’ re-construction activity, however, what is common in the variance is that they re-construct the “very” “as-structure” that they are formerly going to construct. In many cases, the workers re-construct the “as-structure” of which the “content” is the same as the “as-structure” in their previous construction, resulting in a confirmation of the previous construction of the “as-structure.” In many cases, they also re-construct the “as-structure” whose “content” is different from the “as-structure” in their previous construction, leading to a disconfirmation or a modification of the relevance of the previous construction of the “as-structure.” Whatever the “as-structure” (the “as-structure” as it is re-constructed) in the officials’ re-construction is, the “as-structure” (the “as-structure” that is going to be constructed) as the object of their re-construction is identical to that of their previous construction. At this stage of interruption management, the workers are still “in” the “structure” of the working relationship that they are going to construct “initially,” “in” the “as-structure,” a whole composed of three moments; the present state of a physical thing, a desirable future state of a physical thing, and an action strategy.

In some cases, the officials terminate their interruption management in their re-construction of the “as-structure” (the “initial” working relationship). Otherwise, their re-construction activity is followed by another interruption management activity, what we call “They-taking.” Of the four cases illustrated above, Mr. Kim and a rescuer culminated their interruption management in their re-construction of the “as-structure.” In the cases of the other two informants, their re-construction activity was followed by their (the informants’ ) “They-taking” activity. In the events that the workers disconfirm or modify their prior construction of the “as-structure,” as implied in the cases earlier, they consummate their interruption management in their re-construction activity. In cases in which the officials confirm the relevance of their prior construction of the “as-structure,” their re-construction as a confirmation of their prior construction activity is followed by their “They-taking” activity.

The subsequent discussion handles the officials’ management of the interruptions by encounterers in the field of their work after their re-construction of the “initial” working relationship (the “as-structure) with the physical things in their world of work, which begins with their “They-taking” activity.

“They-Taking”
What is called “They-taking” is the process in which the officials construct the “personal types” (Schutz, 1967, 1973) of the face-to-face social encounterers who interrupt their successful construction of the “as-structure,” and in doing so take the encounterers in their given concrete immediacy (“Thou’s”) as the “personal types” (“They”s) idealized by means of the construction.

The officials’ “They-taking” process is composed of two steps. To begin with, the officials abstract the encounterers’ experiences from their settings in the encounterers’ streams of consciousness, and “thereby render them (the encounterers’ experiences) impersonal” (Schutz, 1967). The lived experiences of the encounterers that the workers at this point lift out of their settings in which they (the lived experiences of the encounters) occur, and in doing so “freeze them into slides” (Schutz, 1967, p.187) are the ones that the workers themselves directly experience through the experiencing process as depicted in the preceding second section in this chapter; the encounterers’ lived experiences of the physical things that are commonly referred to by both of them (the encounterers and the workers) as they are experienced by the workers, or the encounterers’ lived experiences of the physical things and the workers as they are experienced by the workers.

Once the officials “take a cross section of” (Schutz, 1967, p. 187) their experiences of the encounterers’ experiences, and in doing so, “fix and posit as invariant” (Schutz, 1973, p. 81) the encounterers’ experiences in their experiences of the encounterers’ experiences, they (the officials) postulate agents behind the experiences (the encounterers’ experiences in the officials’ experiences), persons who have the fixed and invariant, and accordingly the repeatable and typical experiences—short, “personal types.” For the officials at this point, on the other hand, the physical things (the physical things as they are re-experienced) in their re-experiences of the physical things (more exactly, their re-constructions of the “as-structure” of the physical things)

70 The terms, “Thou” and “They” in this section are the ones which are derived from Schutz’ discussion of the so called “We-relationship,” (directly experienced social relationship) and “They-relationship” (indirectly experienced social relationship). While explaining his “We-relationship,” and “They-relationship,” Schutz describes the encounterer in the named “We-relationship” as “Thou,” “an Other” experienced (grasped) “in person” (as a unique individuality) (Schutz, 1963, b, 1973). On the other hand, Schutz uses the term, “They” in depicting the encounterer in his “They-relationship,” which is characterized by “an Other” experienced as a “type” (Schutz, 1967, 1973). Referring to Schutz’s concepts, “Thou,” and “They,” I in this manuscript apprehend the officials’ understandings (experiences) of the encounterers in concrete situations “after” their re-construction activity as the process in which they (the officials) have “types” (“They”s) for the encounterers, by which they understand (experience) the encounterers. For a detailed understanding of Schutz’s “Thou,” and “They” concepts along with his “We-relationship,” and “They-relationship,” see Schutz (1963b, 1967, 1973).
are the typical situations within which the models of agents whom they (the officials) postulate as being gifted with the typical experiences live. By placing the assumed (postulated) models of agents with the typical experiences into the typical situations, the officials construct the typical persons (personal types) who have the typical experiences under such typical situations.

The moment the workers construct types of persons through a “synthesis” of the experiences (the reified experiences of the encounterers) in abstraction from their individual settings (the encounterers’ streams of consciousness) and their (the workers’) re-experiences of the physical things, they (the workers) transport the constructed types back into the encounterers before their eyes, and in doing so identify the encounterers with the types. The instant the workers change the constructed types back into the encounterers, and in doing so treat the encounterers and the types without discrimination, the encounterers in front of them (the workers) are transformed (viewed from the workers) from the individual persons with their own unique characteristics living within their own distinct “biographical situations” (Schutz, 1963 b) into the typified persons with the typical characteristics (the experiences fixed by the workers through their act of abstraction) living in the typical situations given by the workers. From this point in time, to use Schutz’s terms, the face-to-face encounterers are not (from the workers’ point of view) “Thous” any longer. For the workers at this point in time, they (the encounterers) are “Theys” (types).

As examples of the officials’ “They- taking” process, let us look at the cases of the three informants that we have examined from the beginning of this chapter, that is, the cases of the first response group commander, an EMS (Emergency Medical Services) member and a firefighter.

…당연히 들어가야죠. 근데 (בעד) 만들어가! 위험하지도 않는 (불안) 데, 겁먹은거지. (Informant 7-1)

…Obviously, an immediate inside firefight was needed. Nonetheless, (they) were not going to enter the building! They were scared of (the fire) that was not dangerous. (Informant 7-1: Translated)

This is the first response group commander’s case. What this commander read (experienced) in the bodily movements (gestures) produced by his subordinate firefighters through his reading (experiencing) process presented in the second section in the chapter was
that they (his firefighters) “were-not-going-to-enter-the-cold-storage-ware-house-because-of-fear-of-the-fire-in-the-ware-house.” On the other hand, the warehouse fire in the commander’s re-experience of the warehouse fire was, as shown in his re-construction activity illustrated above, “a-not-dangerous-fire-requiring-an-immediate-inside-fire-fight.”

When the commander constructed an “ideal type” (Schutz, 1967, 1973) of his firefighters after his own re-experience of the warehouse fire, he took a cross section of his prior experience of the firefighters’ experiences of the warehouse fire, and in doing so froze the firefighters’ experiences of the warehouse fire (that is, they “were-not-going-to-enter-the-ware-house-because-of-fear-of-the-fire) in his prior experience of the firefighters’ experiences of the fire. He froze it into a hard and fast (that is, a repeatable and typical) experience— that is, a sate of being in which they were not going to enter the warehouse because of fear of the fire. Then, the commander put together this frozen experience with his own re-experience of the warehouse fire (“a-not-dangerous-fire-needing-an-immediate-inside-fire-fight”). In so doing, the commander constructed a type of person with the frozen experience under the warehouse fire situation in his re-experience of the warehouse fire. This type of person can be understood as “the-fire-fighter-who-is-scared-of-the-fire-that-is-not-dangerous.”

After constructing this person type, the commander related the constructed type to the firefighters before his eyes, and in doing so emphasized the type with the firefighters. The moment he connected the constructed ideal type to his subordinate firefighters, and in doing so regarded the type and the firefighters in the same light, the firefighters were changed from “concrete individuals” into “typified persons.” From this point in time, the firefighters were not (viewed from the commander) “Thous” to any further extent. Instead, they were (viewed from the commander) “they (a type).” More specifically, they were, for the commander, members of the type, “the-fire-fighter-who-is-scared-of-the-fire-that-is-not-dangerous.”

Let us look at the cases of an EMS person and a firefighter.

…그러니까 그분말씀은 환자가 많이 아파하니까, 또 골절이 되어있으니까, 빨리 병원에러가서 의사한테 보여야 한다. 더 그런 말씀이셨는데요… 그런데 잘 모르잖아요. 아무래도 저보다는 의학 상식이 떨어지니까…용급 조치를 해야하는데, (환자 상태를) 잘 모르시고 화물내시는거다 처음엔 그렇게 생각했었어요. (Informant 15-1)
…So, what she (the friend of the lady) was saying was that I should transport the lady to the hospital at once in order to let her (the lady) be shown to the doctor because she was crying in pain due to the fractures. …By the way, she (the friend of the lady) was not familiar with the patient’s bodily state. Her medical knowledge was not better that mine…The lady was the patient to whom I needed to give the corresponding first aid treatment. At first, I thought that she (the friend of the lady) was angry with me because she was not familiar with the patient’s bodily state. (Informant 15-1: Translated)

The incident commander’s thought was that we should enter the house and extinguish the fire because the house was on fire…(Generally speaking), once a fire breaks out, as I said to you, we have to keep the fire from spreading from house to house before anything else. The building (the house) which is already on fire is what can not be avoided, because the building (the house) is already destroyed by a fire…For this reason, the incident commander had no idea and gave the subordinates a piece of his mind unconditionally. …He looked only on one side of the shield. He must have thought of the situation collectively…Because the house on fire alone was in his sight, he said to us in that way (“들어가! 야, 불이 무섭다고 안 들어간다는게 말이돼?”, “Go into the house! Hey you! Is it sensible not to enter the house because of being nervous about the fire?”). From our viewpoint, however, he was an illiberal man… Even if we had said our thoughts to him, he would have given no ear to our counsel. He would not have listened to what we said. Surely, he would not have listen to our thoughts. (Informant 3-1: Translated)

What the informants in the cases above read (experienced) into what the Others said (expressive action) to them through their reading (experiencing) processes depicted in the second section in the chapter were the Others’ attitudes. These attitudes involved, for example, the Others’ experiences of physical things (“the lady” as a physical thing in the first case, and “the fire in a wooden house” in the second case) and the informants themselves” as they were experienced by the informants. The physical things in the Others’ attitudes toward the physical
things were different from the physical things in the informants’ experiences of the physical things. And the informants’ self images “mirrored in” (Cooley, 1998; Schutz, 1973) the Others (more exactly, in the informants’ experiences of the Others’ attitudes toward the informants themselves) were “negative.” 72

In response to the differences in the physical things in the informants’ experiences of and the Others’ attitudes to the physical things, the informants re-experienced (re-constructed the “as-structure” of) the physical things at the conscious level. The results were the confirmations of their prior experiences of the physical things.

The informants’ constructions of the types of persons of the Others were after their re-experiences (their re-constructions of the “as-structure”) of the physical things. First, the informants separated (abstracted) the Others’ attitudes of the physical things and themselves (the informant themselves) that they (the informants) experienced from the subjective contexts (the Others’ streams of consciousness) in which they (the Others’ attitudes) occurred. In so doing, the informants objectified (in the sense of reified) the Others’ attitudes toward the physical things and themselves, and consequently rendered them anonymous (impersonal). Next, the informants displayed the objectified (reified) attitudes with the physical things in their re-experiences of the physical things for backgrounds. In the process, my informants constructed the ideal types which had such attitudes under such backgrounds.

After constructing the types of persons, my informants correlated the constructed types with the Others before them, and in doing so typified the Others as “persons like the types.” (Schutz, 1973). At the same time they endowed the types with “conscious lives like the Others.” (Schtuz, 1973).

Through this process, the EMS person in the first case earlier grasped the friend of the lady as “a-non-specialist-who-was-not-familiar-with-the-bodily-state-of-the-patient-and-accordingly-was-angry-with-me.” The firefighter in the second case typified, and in doing so understood the incident commander in his eyes as “an-illiberal-incident-commander-who-had-no-idea-and-gave-the-suboridnates-a-piece-of-his-mind-unconditionallly.”

72 This understanding follows Cooley’s (1998) notion of the “looking glass self,” often characterized as follows: “I am not who I think I am; I am not who my friends think I am; I am who I think my friends think I am.”
The officials’ “They-taking” activity is the process in which they typify the Others who interrupted their successful construction of the “as-structure,” and in doing so recognize (take) the unique Others standing across from them face-to-face (“Thous”) as persons of types (“Theys”) constituted in the process of typification.

The types constructed in the process of “They-taking” function as reference points (Schutz, 1973) on the basis of which the workers orient themselves to “the-formerly-unique-but-now-typical-Others” in front of them. In this respect, the workers’ interruption management subsequent to their “They-taking” activity is their “They (type)-orientation” (Schutz, 1967, 1973) of the Others before them. In some cases, the officials’ “They-taking” activity is followed by their so called “They-affecting” activity. In other cases, the workers’ “They-taking” activity initiates their named “Me-making” activity.

In cases in which the real-izations of the “as-structure” in the officials’ re-construction is dependent upon the “actual” actions of the Others, the officials generally try to affect “the-formerly-unique-but-now-typical” Others. The first response group commander’s case is one such case. As shown in his re-construction activity above, the “as-structure” of the warehouse fire in his re-construction was “a-not-dangerous-incipient-one-and-one-fire-requiring-an-immediate-inside-fire-fight-for-the-sake-of-suppressing-the-fire.” From the commander’s point of view, the subordinates’ actual “immediate-inside-fire-fight” was absolutely needed “for-suppressing-the-not-dangerous-incipient-one-and-one-fire.” He tried to affect his subordinate firefighters like “the-fire-fighter-who-is-scared-of-the-fire-that-is-not-dangerous.”

On the other hand, there are cases in which the workers themselves are able to real-ize the “as-structure” in the their re-construction on their own responsibility. In such cases, if they have expectations that their certain “social interactions” could lead the Others to “have conscious experiences of a desirable sort” (Schutz, 1967, p. 159) with regard to their (the workers’) real-izations of the re-constructed “as-structure,” they undertake to affect the “formerly-unique-but-now-typical” Others as well. The EMS member’s case above is an example. In disregard of the opposition of the friend of the lady, she was able to “give-the-corresponding-first-aid-to-the-lady (patient)-with-simple-fractures-caused-by-a-car accident-for-the-sake-of-the-prevention-of-the-secondary-injury” on her own responsibility. At this point in time, she had an expectation that she might manage to bring about, in the consciousness of the friend of the lady, a necessity for “giving-the-corresponding-first-aid-treatment-to-the-lady (patient)-with-simple-factures-caused-
by-a-car-accident-for-the-sake-of-the-prevention-of-the-second-injury,” and in doing so let the friend relent toward her. She strived to affect the friend of the lady, “a-non-specialist-who-was-not-familiar-with-the-bodily-state-of-the-patient-and-accordingly-was-angry-with-me.” In contrast to the EMS person’s case, however, the firefighter, as shown in his statement earlier, had no expectation that talking (in the sense of “social interaction”) to the incident commander regarding his thoughts (experience) about the wooden house fire could cause a change in the commander’s thoughts about the fire. Under the situation that he did not need to use as means for his ends (the real-ization of the “as-structure” of the wooden house fire in his re-construction) the action (as it were, “exposure protection”) of the incident commander, he did not struggle to affect the commander like “the-illiberal-incident-commander-who-has-no-idea-and-gives-the-subordinates-a-piece-of-one’s-mind-unconditionally.” Instead, the firefighter made his “Me” responding to the commander as “an-illiberal-incident-commander-who-had-no-idea-and-gave-the-subordinates-a-piece-of-his-mind-unconditionally.”

The officials’ “They-taking” described above is their “They-taking” activity which occurs immediately occurred after their “re-construction” activity. In some cases, the workers also engage in another round of “They-taking” after their “They-affecting” activity. In those cases, the types that the workers construct at this round of “They-taking” are “subject to constant revision” (Schutz, 1967) on the basis of their additional experiences of the typified Others, which are acquired in their “They-affecting” activity. I will briefly demonstrate this issue when I present the “They-taking” of the EMS member above after her act of “They-affecting.”

“They-Affecting”

The officials’ “They-affecting” activity is their “social interactions.” The “in-order-to” motives (Schutz, 1963b, 1967, 1973) of the social interactions are to affect the “present” experiences (the Others’ experiences of the physical things, or the Others’ experiences of the physical things and the officials themselves, which the officials lift out of their total factual contexts that is, the Other’s subjective streams of consciousness and in doing so freeze into slides) in the typified Others, and in doing so to bring about certain “future” experiences (the typified Others’ experiences of the physical things, or the typified Others’ experiences of the

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73 According to Schutz (1967), “an interaction exists if one persons acts upon another with the expectation that the latter will respond, or at least notice” (Schutz, 1967, p. 158). By “social interaction” in this chapter, on the basis of Schutz’ notion of “interaction,” I mean persons’ acts of orientations toward other persons of which the “in-order-to” motives are to evoke definite reactions from “the” others, whether the motives are either the persons’ final goals or their intermediate goals (Schutz, 1963 b, 1967, 1973).
physical things and the officials themselves, which are fantasized in the future perfect tense by the officials) in the typified Others. As designated in Schutz’s “questioning and answering example” below, the workers’ “They-affecting” activity is based on the assumption that that the “for-the-sake-of-which” (the “in-order-to” motives) (Schutz, 1967; Kaelin, 1987) of their “social affecting” actions will become the “because” motives of the expected behaviors of their typified partners in front of them.

Any form of social interaction is founded upon the constructs related to the understanding of the Other and the action pattern in general. Take as an example the interaction of consociates involved in questioning and answering. In projecting my question, I anticipate that the Other will understand my action (for instance my uttering an interrogative sentence) as a question and that this understanding will induce him to act in such a way that I may understand his behavior as an adequate response. (I: “Where is the ink? The Other points at a table.) The in-order-to motive of my action is to obtain adequate information which, in this particular situation, presupposes that the understanding of my in-order-to motive will become the Other’s because-motive to perform an action in-order-to furnish me this information….Our example shows that even the simplest interaction in common life presupposes a series of common-sense constructs…all of them based on the idealization that the actor’s in-order-to-motives will become because-motives of his partner and vice versa. (Schutz, 1963 b, p. 322)

Referring to the “questioning and answering” example supposed by Schutz above, let us take a look at the cases of the first response group commander and the EMS person that we have examined, along with the case of another EMS person.

By the way, actually speaking, the guys are not going to enter a building (on fire) in general, if they are scared at all. Egging on? It is not useful in general. So, I entered myself at the head, taking a fire hose in hand. In a word, I signaled to my guys that you (his subordinate firefighters) did not need to be scared and that the fire was not dangerous. They came with me. The fire was successfully extinguished. (Informant 7-1: Translated)
The commander’s “social interaction” that he projected in his mind was “to enter the warehouse himself at the head, taking a fire horse in hand.” The “in-order-to” motive for the sake of which he projected such a social interaction was “to let his firefighters, who were scared of the fire that was not dangerous (the commander’s typification of his firefighters), know that the-fire-was-not-so-dangerous-as-they-were-scared” (the commander’s affecting the “present” experiences of the fire in the typified firefighters and his bringing out of certain “future” conscious experiences of the fire in the typified firefighters).

When the commander projected (fantasized) such a social interaction “in-order-to” bring about such “future” experiences in his subordinate firefighters in his typification, paraphrasing Schutz’s statement above, he (the commander) anticipated that the firefighters (in his typification) would understand his “actual” social interaction. That is, the commander anticipated that they would understand “his-entering-the-ice-cold-storage-warehouse-at-the-head-, taking-a-fire-horse-in-his-hand” as an indication that “the-fire-was-not-so-dangerous-as-they-were scared” (the “in-order-to” motive of the commander’s social interaction). And the commander anticipated that this understanding (the transition of the commander’s “in-order-to” motive to the typified firefighters’ “because” motive in the commander’s imagination) would induce them (the firefighters in his typification) to act in such a way that he might understand their behavior as “an adequate response” (for example, “entering the warehouse”).

The commander’s judgment in phantasy (imagination) was (viewed from the commander) “correct.” And his social affect on the firefighters (who were scared of the fire that was not dangerous) was (from the commander’s point of view) “successful.” Consequently, the commander’s interruption management succeeded in the realization of the “as-structure” of the warehouse fire in his re-construction with the help of his subordinate firefighters, who interrupted his first construction of the “as-structure” of the fire.

Below is the case of another EMS person that I interviewed for the study.

...‘당신도 보다시피, 단순 만취자다.’ 머 그런식으로 이야기했죠. ...그런데, 그 경찰관이하는말이 당뇨병 환자면 술냄새가 날 수 있다 그렇게 이야기 하더라고요…. …당뇨환자경우에는, 그렇지만 대로, 술냄새가 나오. 인술린이 떨어지게 되면 모델에서 술냄새가 난다고. 알콜냄새가. 아차 싶더라고. (당뇨병 환자인지를) 확인했어요 했는데, 그냥 술로 봤거든. 그래서 그 양반한테 물어봤죠. 의식이 좋았어요. 당뇨혹 가지고
… As you see, this person got dead-drunk. I said to the police in that way. … By the way, the police said that if the person was a diabetic, we could also smell liquor on his breath. In the case that a person is a diabetic, as the police pointed out, the person has an alcoholic breath if insulin becomes insufficient. I realized O my! I did not ascertain (whether he was a diabetic). My thought was simply that he got dead-drunk. So I asked the person whether he was a diabetic. He did not lose consciousness. He said that he was a diabetic. I immediately transported him to the hospital. … It was true that he took wine. Although he also took wine, I transported him to the hospital because he was a diabetic…. (Informant 9-1: Translated)

When the EMS person in the above case arrived at the scene in response to an emergency call from the communication center, there was a man who collapsed under the influence of drink. At almost the same time as he arrived at the scene, the police also arrived at the scene. In the cases of people who are simply dead-drunk, as far as my informant knew from the EMS team operation rule, the police should take care of such people, and let them go home after they recover from their intoxication. So, he asked the police to take care of the drunken person. Unexpectedly, the police expressed a different opinion that the man was down in pain, and accordingly he (the police himself) did not need to take care of the man. From my informant’s point of view, however, the man was surely under the influence of drink, because he had an alcoholic breath. In light of his past working experiences, the informant thought that the policeman, who expressed such an opinion under the situation that he should take care of the drunken person, was one of the police officer forcing their work on the EMS people.

This is a brief description of what the informant said to me with regard to his first construction of the “as-structure” of the person on the scene, the police’s interruption of the first construction of the “as-structure,” his re-construction of the “as-structure” of the person on the scene, and his “They-taking” of the police who interrupted his first construction activity.

At the start, he defined the present of the person on the scene as “a-person-who-was dead-drunk.” He projected a desirable future state of the person, “the-person-who-would have-been-taken-care-of- by-the-police.” He projected and executed an action strategy, “asking-the-police-to-take-care-of-the-person.” In the process of asking the police to take care of the person, my informant “encountered” (experienced) the police’s opinion (experience) of the person who
was down, which was different from his viewpoint of the person. In response to the different opinion, he re-constructed the “as-structure” of the person, through which he confirmed the relevance of his first construction of the “as-structure” of the person. By joining the police’s opinion (experience) of the person in his experience of the police to the person situation in his re-experience of the person on the scene, he constructed a person of type with such an opinion under such a situation, “the-police-who-force-their-work-on-the-EMS-people,” imputed the constructed type to the policeman before him, and in doing so, typified the “concrete” policeman as one of “the-police-forcing-their-work-on-the-EMS-people.”

The above statement from the informant is related to his “social interaction” to affect the policeman (as one of “the police-forcing-their-work-on-the-EMS-people”) in association with the realization of the “as-structure” of the person on the scene in his re-construction after his “They-taking” of the policeman in front of him.

As shown in the statement above, the informant’s “social interaction” that he projected to affect the typified policeman was “to-say-to-the-typified-policeman-in-the-way-of-‘당신도-보다-시피-단순-만취자-다’; ‘As-you-see,-this-person-got-dead-drunk’.” The “in-order-to” motive of his social interaction, if we paraphrase the earlier statement from Schutz, was “to-let-the-typified-policeman-take-care-of-the-drunken-person” which presupposed that the understanding of his “in-order-to” motive would become the typified police’s “because” motive to perform (more exactly, to project and to perform) an action in-order-to take care of the drunken person.

In the process in which the informant actually said to the typified policeman in this way that “당신도-보다-시피-단순-만취자-다; As-you-see,-this-person-got-dead-drunk” in-order-to-let-the-(typified)-policeman-take-care-of-the-drunken-person, however, he “newly” experienced (captured) the lived experience of the policeman (in his typification) of the person who was down. Unlike the first response group commander’s case, the experience of the policeman of the person on the scene (당뇨병 환자면 술냄새가 날 수 있다; if the person is a diabetic, we could smell liquor on his breath) in the informant’s “new” experience (capture) of the police motivated him (the informant) to “re-engage” in the re-construction of the “as-structure” of the person on the scene.

Let us take a look at the EMS person’s case which we have examined from the beginning of the chapter.
...So, I explained about the bodily state of the patient (lady)… I explained the reason why the corresponding first aid treatment was needed (for the patient)….If I explained such things to her, I thought that she would understand the necessity for giving the corresponding first aid treatment to the patient, and her anger would be pacified. However, my thought was just my thought. She stuck to her own opinion that the lady should be transported to the hospital at once… She was very angry with me, and said “What can you do? Are you a doctor? If there is some problem with her (the lady), can you be responsible for that?” She was a person who did not enjoy understanding…. She was a person who was (basically) distrustful of the EMS people. (Informant 15-1: Translated)

As presented earlier, the EMS person in this case recognized (took) the friend of the lady, who interrupted her first construction of the “as-structure,” as “a-non-specialist-who-was-not-familiar-with-the-bodily-state-of-the-patient (lady)-and-accordingly-was-angry-with-her (the EMS person herself).” As shown in the above statement from her, my informant “at this point” had a subjective expectation that she could act upon the “present” attitudes of the lady and herself in the (typified) friend by means of her own certain effort, and in doing so bring about certain “future” attitudes of the lady and herself in the (typified) friend. The certain “future” attitudes to be brought about in the (typified) friend that the informant fantasized (in the future perfect tense) with such an expectation were “the-understanding-of-the-necessity-for-the-corresponding-first-aid-treatment-for-the-lady,” and “the-pacified-anger-toward-herself.” The certain effort (in the sense of social interaction) that the informant pictured in-order-to act upon the “present” attitudes in the (typified) friend, and in doing so bring about the fantasized “future” attitudes in the (typified) friend was “to-explain-the-existing-bodily-state-of-the-lady-and-the-necessity-for-the-corresponding-first-aid-treatment-for-the-lady-to-the-(typified)-friend-of-the-lady.”

When the informant “actually” explained what she pictured to the (typified) friend of the lady in-order-to-let-her (the friend)-understand-the-necessity-for-the-corresponding-first-aid-treatment-and-relent-toward-her (the informant herself), therefore, she anticipated that the
(typified) friend’s conscious understanding through the explicatory sentences uttered by her (the informant) of her (the informant’s) “in-order-to” motive would motivate her (the friend) to act in such a way that she (the informant) might understand her (the friend’s) behavior as an adequate response (for instance, the friend’s agreement with the corresponding first aid treatment for the lady). Contrary to the informant’s anticipation, however, the (typified) friend of the lady stuck to her “present” opinion (attitude) of the lady, and was angry with her (the informant).

“At this point in time,” my informant bracketed the prior type that she ascribed to the friend of the lady, and in doing so constructed “another” personal type of the friend. The informant took a cross section of her experience of the (typified) friend of the lady. The cross-section that the informant lifted out of the (typified) friend was the (typified) friend’s attitudes toward the lady and her (the informant herself) which she (the informant) experienced through the harsh worlds uttered by the (typified) friend. Then, my informant postulated a model of agent behind the attitudes that she abstracted from their factual context (the friend of the lady). For the informant at this point, her social interaction (the informant’s “They-taking” activity) with the (typified) friend of the lady was the “place” in which the postulated agent with the abstracted attitudes was. By placing the agent with the attitudes into the social interaction situation in which the assumed “reciprocity of motives” (Schutz, 1963 b) was not realized, the informant constructed a personal ideal type, namely, “the-person-who-does-not-want-to-understand-and-is-basically-distrustful-of-the-EMS-people.” By applying the construed type to the friend of the lady, she recognized (took) the friend “from now on” as “a-person-who-did-not-want-to-understand-and-was-basically-distrustful-of-the-EMS-people,” not as “a-non-specialist-who-was-not-familiar-with-the-bodily-state-of-the-patient (lady)-and-accordingly-was-angry-with-her (the informant herself).”

My informant’s subsequent interruption management was a process in which she made her “Me” responding to the friend of the lady as “a-person-who-did-not-want-to-understand-and-was-basically-distrustful-of-the-EMS-people.”

The officials’ “They-affecting” activity is their “direct” social interactions with the typified other persons who interrupted their first construction of the “as-structure,” based on the idealization that the “in-order-to” motives of their own social interactions will become the “because” motives of the expected behaviors of the typified other persons (Schutz, 1963 b, 1967,
Through the social interactions, the workers try to affect the “present” conscious experiences in the typified Others, and in doing so bring about certain conscious experiences in the typified Others which they (the workers) project (in the future perfect tense) in conjunction with the real-ization of the “as-structure” in their re-construction.

In cases in which their effort to affect the typified Others is “successful,” the officials’ interruption management concludes in their “They-affecting” activity, leading to the real-ization of the “as-structure” in their re-construction. The first response group commander’s case above is such a case. In the process of affecting the typified Others, on the other hand, the officials experience through the typified Others some problems with the “as-structure” in their re-construction from time to time, which induce them to re-engage in the re-construction of the “as-structure.” Of the two EMS person cases presented earlier, the first one is one such case. In cases in which their effort to affect the typified Others is not “successful,” as is the case with the other EMS person above, the workers experience through the “already” typified Others “new” types in the Others who have been “already” typified. In those cases, the workers make their own types, namely “Me” responding to the experienced “new” types of the Others under the situation that they do not expect to affect the Others any longer.

In the next part, we examine the officials’ typifications of their own selves subsequent to their typifications of their social encounterers.

“Me-Making”

The officials’ “Me-making” activity is the process in which they (the officials) make (construct) their own personal types (“Me$s”) in-relation-to the Others as the personal types (“Theys”) that they (the officials) have already constructed through the preceding their “They-taking” activity.

The officials’ “Me-making” activity as “the process of self-typification” (Schutz, 1967) is composed of two steps. First, as depicted in Figure 6.4 below, the workers connect (relate) “the-Others-as-the-constructed-types” (as we shall call them from now on, “the-Others”) to “the-physical-things-in-the-as-structure-in-the-re-construction” (as we shall call them from now on, “the-physical things). In so doing, the workers anticipate the “course-of-action types” (Schutz, 1967) from “the-Others-in-relation-to-the-physical-things.” When the workers are involved in their “Me-making” activity, the physical things are not perceived “as insulated” (Schutz, 1963 b) by them. For the workers at this point in time, instead, the physical things are “the-physical-
things-in-the-as-structure-in-their-re-construction.” In other words, the physical things are, for the workers at this point, “the-physical-things” of which the (re-defined) present states need to be manipulated into their (re-projected) desirable future states by the action strategies that they (the workers) re-project. In this respect, the workers’ anticipation of the course-of-action types from “the-Others-in-relation-to-the-physical-things” is their (the workers’) anticipation of the typical responses from the-Others to the action strategies that they re-project for the physical things. Such anticipation on the part of the officials is based on the so called “if...,then...” typification schema (Schutz, 1973) embedded in their past working experiences, which is characterized by “If I (the officials themselves) take an action in accordance with the action strategy that I (the officials themselves) re-project, then the-Other(s), who take(s) me-as-type-A (the officials themselves “mirrored in” the-Other(s)), will conduct him or herself (or themselves) in-the-manner-of-type-Z (the course-of-action type(s) from the-Other(s)).”

Figure 6.4: Korean Fire Service Officials’ Self-Typification Process

Once the officials anticipate the course-of-action types from the-Others on the basis of the “if ..., then ...” typification schema sedimented in their past working experiences, they
project their own course-of-action types that are going to respond to the-Others’ course-of-action types in their imagination (anticipation). In so doing, the officials determine their own “Mesa” (“personal types”) performing their projected course-of-action types, which are either adaptive or non-adaptive to the “Mesa” (“personal types”) “mirrored in” the-Others.

As the examples of the officials’ “Me-making” activity, let us take a look at the cases of the EMS person and the firefighter that we have examined.

...그분 말씀 무시하고 제가 헛소리와 응급조치를 하값아요. 그러면, 특히 그런 분들이 민원제기를 많이하세요... 요즘은 인터넷 많이들 쓰지아요. 글귀인 걸 올리더거나, 전화를 한다거나, 병원에 빅리가야하는데 구급대원이 알지도 못하면서 지체했다, 머 그런식으로. 그러면, 제가 배포로 혼이나요. 팀장님 하던 빅리가 가지고 교육받아요 돼고, 소장님한테 빅리가 가지고 교육받아요 돼고, 경위서 써야죠... 혹시 짐개나 받지 않을까 겟도 냐요..... 구급대원으로서, 또 한자분을 위해서는 그렇게 (응급조치를) 했어야 했는데, 어떻게 없었어요. 민원 (제기) 쪽을 신경 안 쓰지 않았어요... 한자분한테는 옳지 못하다는 걸 알면서도, 그냥 (응급조치 없이병원에) 모셔다 드렸어요.... (Informant 15-1: Translated)

...Suppose that I had my own way of giving the corresponding first aid treatment to the patient (the lady) overriding the protestations of the friend of the lady. If we (the EMS personnel in general) do that, other people like the friend of the lady will lodge complaints against us (the EMS personnel in general) before the authorities more particularly... As you know, the internet has been widely used these days. Through the internet or through the telephone, she (the friend of the lady) would have lodged a complaint against me before the authorities to the effect that under the situation that immediate transportation to the hospital was needed, the EMS person (my informant herself) delayed the transportation as if knowledgeable about doing so. If that happens, I will obviously be severely scolded (from my superiors). I will be called to the leader of the medical team, and have to receive moral lecture from the leader of the medical team. I will be called to the head of the fire company and have to receive moral lecture from the head of the fire company. I have to write down the complicated circumstances of an affair.... I was also just becoming nervous lest I should be subjected to disciplinary punishment... As an EMS person, and for the patient, I should have given the corresponding first aid treatment to the patient (the lady). However, it was an unavoidable circumstance. I could not help considering the possibility of a complaint (from the friend of the lady)... Although I knew that it was wrong for the patient (the lady), I transported (the patient) to the hospital (without giving the corresponding first aid treatment to the patient)... (Informant 15-1: Translated)
...I did my own will with no change… Because the flames had steadily spread. Because the fire spread had to be prevented before everything... Surely, I would catch hell later for sort of not following his instructions (the informant’s anticipation)… From the commander’s point of view, I can be a subordinate who did not respond to the instructions given by him... He will give me a sharp scolding (the informant’s anticipation). For all that, I did my own will with no change. Because I am a firefighter first of all. ….After returning to the fire station, I got hell from him severely…. (Informant 3-1: Translated)

In the case of the EMS member, she related (connected) the-friend-of-the-lady (the friend of the lady as a-person-who-did-not-want-to-understand-and-was-basically-distrustful-of-the-EMS-people; the friend of the lady in the informant’s typification) to the-lady (the lady as a-patient-need the-correcting first aid treatment; the-lady-in-the-as-structure-in-the-informant’s-re-construction). In so doing, the informant imagined the course-of-action type from “the-friend-in-relation-to-the-lady” founded upon her “if…,then…” typification schema imbedded in her past working experiences, which, in this particular lady case from the informant, can be expressed as “if I (the informant herself) really give the corresponding first aid treatment to the lady, then the-friend, who recognize me as one of the-EMS-person-failing-to-one’s-place (the informant’s “Me” mirrored in the-friend), will lodge a complaint against me (the informant herself) before the authorities through the internet or through the telephone (the course-of-action type from the-friend in the informant’s imagination).

After anticipating the course-of-action type from “the-friend-in-relation-to-the-lady,” the informant pictured her own course-of-action type that was going to respond to the-friend’s course-of-action type in her anticipation, that is, “transporting-the-lady-to-the-hospital-without-the-correcting first aid treatment.” In so doing, she determined her own “Me” (personal type) performing her pictured course-of-action type, that is to say, “an-EMS-person-worrying-about-the-complaint-from-the-friend,” which was adaptive to the “Me” mirrored in the-friend (the friend of the lady as a-person-who-did-not-want-to-understand-and-was-basically-
distrustful-of-the-EMS-people), that is, “one of the-EMS-person-failing-to-know-one’s-place.”
The informant’s interruption management culminated in her (as an-EMS-person-worrying-about-the-complaint-from-the-friend) transporting the lady (as a-patient-needing-the-corresponding-first-aid-treatment) to the hospital without the corresponding first aid treatment.

In the case of the firefighter above, my informant connected (related) the-incident-commander (the incident commander as an-illiberal-incident-commander-who-had-no-idea-and-gave-the-subordinates-a-piece-of-his-mind-unconditionally; the incident commander in my informant’s typification of the incident commander) to the-wooden-house-fire (the wooden house fire as a-fire-spreading-from-house-to-house-requiring-an-immediate-exposure-protection; the-wooden-house-fire-in-the-as-structure-in-my- informant’s-re-construction). In so doing, the informant anticipated the typical future act from “the-commander-in-relation-to-the-wooden-house-fire” on the basis of the coupling “if event X, then mode of conduct Y” (Schutz, 1973, p. 196) imbedded in him, which, in this particular case from my informant, can be described as “If I (the informant himself) continue to discharge water to the involved houses, then the-commander, who understands me as one of the-subordinate-not-responding-to-the-instructions-given-by-one’s-senior (the informant’s “Me” mirrored in the-commander), will severely reprove me for my disobedient behavior some time later (the typical future act from the-commander in the informant’s anticipation).

After deducing the typical future act from “the-commander-in-relation-to-the-wooden-house-fire,” the informant projected his own typical future act that was going to respond to the-commander’s typical future act in his deduction, namely, “continuing-discharge-water-to-the-involved-houses.” In the process of projecting his own typical future act in response to the deuced typical future act from the-commander, the informant decided (in the sense of idealized) his own “Me” (type) performing his projected typical future act, that is to say, “one of the-firefighter-being-firm-in-one’s-convictions,” which, in this particular wooden house fire case from the informant, was non-adaptive to the “Me” mirrored in the-commander, “one of the-subordinate-not-responding-to-the-instructions-given-by-one’s-senior.” The informant’s interruption management consummated in realizing his conviction with the result that he had a severe scolding from the-commander as anticipated.

As shown in the above presentation, the officials’ “Me-making” activity is a process in which they construct a “reflexive” social relationship with “the-Others-in-relation-to-the-
physical-things.” The officials’ “Me-making” activity is also the process in which they construct a working relationship with “the-physical-things-in-relation-to-the-Others.”

The relationship between these two processes is understood, to use Natanson’s (1978, p. 70) technical term (Natanson, 1978, p. 70), as “comprising two sides of one unity,” the act of “Me-making.”

The moment the workers respond to emergency calls or the instructions from the superior authorities, as presented in the first section in this chapter, they locate themselves in the work-world that the physical things are in. When they locate themselves in the work-world that the physical things are in, they determine their “I” which is “to-be-between” them and the physical things. Through such a determination of their “I-in-between,” namely “self inter-est: \( \text{inter} \) (between) + \( \text{est} \) (to be),” the workers come to have a working relation with the things in their world of work. The “as-structure” that we have examined is the working-relationship that is “initially” formed when the workers determine their “I” which is “to-be-between” them and the physical things in the work-world.

Before their “Me-making” activity, the workers have engaged in the construction of the “initial” working relationship with the physical things on the basis of their determined “I-in-between.” When the workers involved in their “Me-making” activity, and in doing so try to anticipate specific actions from the Others whom they have typified in-relation-to the physical things “in” the “as-structure” that they have constructed up to now, however, they experience an incompatibility of the “self” (“I-in-between”) existing between them and the physical things and the “self” mirrored in the typified Others. At this point in time, the officials take a distance toward the “self” (“I-in-between”) existing between them and the physical things, and in doing so reflect upon it (“I-in-between”) propositionally along with the “self” mirrored in the typified Others. From this point in time, the officials’ construction of the working relationship with the physical things in their world-of-work is not the “up-to-now” construction of the “initial” working relationship founded upon the “self” existing between them and the physical things any longer. Rather, their construction “at this point” is a new dimensional working relationship with the physical things “already” in the “initial” working relationship.

The officials’ construction of a new dimensional working relationship is characterized by the process in which they consider their prior exiting “self” between them and the physical things and the “self” mirrored in the typified Others all together, and in doing so construct (determine)
their own “self,” whereby they relate themselves to the physical things, and at the same time to the (typified) Others.

In the case of the EMS person of the above two cases, the “self” (“I-in-between”) that she had when she responded to an emergency call from the communication center was “one of an-EMS-member-providing-emergency-medical-services-for-the-people-requesting-services.” The “self” mirrored in the friend of the lady (in her typification) on the scene was “Me-like-the-EMS-person-failing-to-know-one’s-place.” She considered these two selves, and typified herself as “an-EMS-person-worrying-about-the-complaint-from-the-person (the friend of the lady in this particular case)-who-does-not-want-to-understand-and-is-basically-distrustful-of-the-EMS-people,” by which she related herself to the lady on the scene requesting her medical services and at the same time to the friend of the lady (in her typification). In the case of the firefighter, he ran to the fire in a wooden house fire as a “firefighter” for which the responsibility was to “successfully” suppress the fire. His “social self” mirrored in the incident commander (as an-illiberal-commander-who-had-no-idea-and-gave-the-subordinates-a-piece-of-his-mind-unconditionally) was “one of the-subordinate-not-responding-to-the-instructions-given-by-one’s-senior.” In his “Me-making” activity, the firefighter reflected on these two selves propositionally, and in doing so determined himself as “one of the-firefighter-being-firm-in-one’s-convictions,” whereby he related to the wooden house fire, and at the same time the incident commander (in his typification).

As exemplified in these two cases, the official’ interruption management at its final stage, their “Me-making” activity is a process in which they construct their “working self” by which they relate themselves to the physical things in their work-world, and at the same time construct their “social-self,” whereby they relate themselves to the Others in their social-world, mulling over “the-meaning-of-the-physical-things-in-relation-to-the-meaning-of-the-Others” in order to handle their given working situations successfully.
CHAPTER 7

CONCLUSION

This is a grounded analysis of how Korean-street level fire service officials make sense of the situations in which they find themselves. The study has showed the officials’ sensemaking process as one in which they consciously update the initial working relationship that they have to the physical things in their world of work, or actively construct a new dimensional working relationship with the physical things in-relation-to the social encounterers in the field of their work. This chapter discusses the study’s implications and limitations.

Implications

Various scholars have recognized that “the routine, taken-for granted aspects of organizational life are far less concrete and real than they appear” (Morgan, 1980: 617). As a result, they (e.g., Porac, Thomas & Baden-Fuller, 1989; Ranson, Hinings & Greenwood, 1980; Thomas, Clark & Gioia, 1993; Weick, 1995, 2001) have actively explored the effort to understand the conscious meaning construction side of organizational life, and the body of their efforts has come to be called “organizational sensemaking.” Notwithstanding their insightful discussions, however, our understanding of the sensemaking phenomenon in organizations remains somewhat fragmented to the present day.

Sensemaking is conscious meaning construction. “Meaning” is bounded to the being of which it is meaning. “Meaning is also united with I for which it is meaning. “Meaning” is “something” that I have relative to the being “outside.” This dissertation expands on other contemporary treatments of sensemaking by showing how Korean street-level fire service officials do emergency management work in terms of the meaning construction perspective founded on social behavioristic and phenomenological ideas. In conjunction with the study of organizational sensemaking, this study shows that the something that I (as an organizational actor) have to the being “outside” which environs me is the relation that I have to the being which is given to me. The findings in this study tell us that meaning construction is relation
construction. The findings inform us that conscious meaning construction is a process in which I (as an organized actor) continuously step back from my construction of relation to the being “out there,” critically look at it (my act of construction), and in doing so actively construct a new possible relation to the being in-which (relation) I am able to be. In this aspect, my study clarifies what is meant by sensemaking by individuals in organizations.

Secondly, this study offers useful information for improving fire service management systems. This is an empirical study of Korean fire service workers’ daily work in terms of the sensemaking process. In this study, I have shown the process in which workers organize their experiences of (inanimate) things and persons that they encounter in the field of their work. From the managerial point of view, the process that I have presented in this study helps fire service managers to identify what they are able to do in order to bring about certain experiences of a “desirable” sort in the workers. Take as an example the case of the EMS person that we have examined in chapter 6.
head of the fire company. I have to write down the complicated circumstances of an affair…. I was also just becoming nervous lest I should be subjected to disciplinary punishment… As an EMS person, and for the patient, I should have given the corresponding first aid treatment to the patient (the lady). However, it was an unavoidable circumstance. I could not help considering the possibility of a complaint (from the friend of the lady)… Although I knew that it was wrong for the patient (the lady), I transported (the patient) to the hospital (without giving the corresponding first aid treatment to the patient)… (Informant 15-1: Translated)

This is the informant’s statement related to her Me-making activity, which we have already looked at in chapter 6. This informant transported a patient (a lady) who needed corresponding first aid treatment to the hospital without administering the corresponding first aid treatment. This transport was based on the informant’s apprehension that “if I (the informant herself) give the corresponding first aid treatment to the patient, then the friend of the patient, who sees me as an EMS personnel who doesn’t know her place, will lodge a complaint against me before the authorities through the internet or the telephone.

In the preceding chapter 6, we have explained the informant’s apprehension above in terms of the so called “if….then…” typification schema stored in her past working experiences. If we more closely scrutinize the informant’s “if….then…” typification schema, we find out that the structure of her imbedded typification schema is, more precisely, “if…,then …with the result that …,” which can be expressed, in this particular patient case, as “if I (the informant herself) give the corresponding first aid treatment to the patient, then the friend of the patient, who sees me as an EMS personnel who doesn’t know her place, will lodge a complaint against me before the authorities through the internet or the telephone with the result that I will get a good scolding from the head of the fire company and the leader of the medical team and could be subjected to disciplinary punishment. This type of analysis informs the managers (the head of the fire company and the leader of the medical team in this particular case) what they are able to handle in order to lead the workers to have conscious experiences of a “desirable” sort in similar future situations. In this particular case, what is implied is a change in the response pattern from the head of the fire company and the leader of the medical team to the EMS employee in the event that she is firm in her convictions in similar future situations.

In chapter 6, I have presented four models with regard to the process in which the fire service workers organize their experiences in daily emergency and disaster situations. Fire service managers can utilize these models as useful managerial tools by which they understand
how workers actually organize their experiences in various emergency and disaster situations. In
doing so managers learn what they are able to do in order to bring about certain conscious
experiences of a “desirable” sort in workers in the case of emergency and disaster situations
similar to the given situations.

Lastly, I want to indicate that my dissertation is a qualitative study of Korean settings.
Human beings have their own mental models for thinking and action. I expect that my study of
an emergency management system in a different cultural area can provide an informative signal
to the U.S. sensemaking researchers and emergency practitioners to review their mental models
-- which are otherwise taken for granted and not readily accessible to them. On the other hand,
the sensemaking perspective is a relatively new one to the public administration audience. I
believe that the study can be an opportunity to help them understand this valuable lens for
understanding the behavior of people in public organizations.

Despite what some organization theories imply, organizations are neither mere control
systems nor simple transformation processes. Rather, organizations are “human systems” (Pondy,
Frost, Morgan and Dandridge, 1983) that are composed of thinking actors who construct the
“realities they inhabit” (Isabella, 1990). Organizational members do not respond to the situations
that play upon them, but to the meanings (realities) which they assign to the situations. In other
words, individuals in organizations do not merely react to the surroundings (situations). Rather,
they “build up their actions” (Blumer, 1978) in the light of interpretations, which are derived
from a process of self-interaction (thinking). The sensemaking perspective investigates the
meaning (reality) construction side of organizational life that “mindless conceptions of
organization” (Pondy and Mitroff, 1979) have for the most part failed to grasp. For public
administration scholars who have been relatively familiar with the “causal functional approach”
(Schutz, 1963 a) for understanding the behavior of individuals in public organizations, the
sensemaking perspective introduced in this study will be an occasion for them to realize that the
real basis of the pattern of behavior exhibited by public officials is not the external situations
given to the officials but the meanings the given situations have for the officials.

As designated in chapter two, the meaning (reality) of everyday life is constituted in my
“here and now.” My “here and now” is not identical with others’ “here and now,” because my
“here” is their “their” and my “now” does not fully overlap with theirs (Berger and Luckmann,
1967, p. 23). As a matter of course, my meaning of something is different from others’ meanings
of the same thing. In public organizations, in this context, the emergence of multiple images (meanings) may not be pathological when the member agents and situations come together. In this sense, I suggest that my study stimulates public administrators to think over the importance of the tolerance of ambiguity in their organizations rather than the necessity for the elimination of ambiguity.

**Limitations**

For all such implications, however, the study has at least two limitations. I saw through the data collected two faces of the sensemaking process of Korean street-level fire service officials, namely, the “social encounterer caused sensemaking,” and the “physical thing effected sensemaking.” Given these two faces of sensemaking, I have focused in this study on one face: the social encounterer caused sensemaking. I focused on this because it was more frequently alluded to by my informants, and accordingly appeared to me more vividly. In chapter 6, I have discussed the physical thing effected sensemaking along with the social encounterer caused sensemaking. As compared with the social encounterer caused sensemaking, however, my handling of the physical thing effected sensemaking is not exhaustive.

In this study, I have delineated Korean fire service officials’ sensemaking in three stages: noticing, interpretation, and action. I have also tried to demonstrate the Korean fire service officials’ sensemaking in three contexts: the ecological, the institutional, and the social relational. Yet my effort to understand the officials’ sensemaking in its contextual terrain is perhaps still incomplete..

The sensemaking by the Korean street-level fire service officials is a zigzag process in which they suspend action from their experiences in the outward situations, map out new experiences, and put back into action the new experiences. In doing so they interweave themselves with the situations within the new experiences. In this zigzag process, Korean fire service officials actively contextualize the working situations (ecological context) that they are forced to handle. In the process, the officials consciously update the conceptual tools (institutional context carried as mental schemata) that they employ to handle their surroundings. In many instances, the officials do their sensemaking in interactions with others (social relational context). In order to understand the officials’ sensemaking process, accordingly, it is necessary to
examine these three contexts in which the sensemaking occurs. However, I have not explicitly tackled the engagement of these three contexts, focusing instead on the three stages of sensemaking. A fuller exploration of the contexts and their interaction with the three stages remains for future analysis.

The following three questions, not fully engaged in this study, hinge on future analysis of the three contextual elements. How do Korean street-level fire service officials, through the process of conscious meaning construction, enact their problematic situations and adjust their meanings to the enacted situations? How do the officials consciously draw upon existing institutional practices in the constructions of meaning and develop these institutional practices through such meaning constructions? How do they, through social interactions with others, accomplish the meanings of problematic situations? In this respect, the study from chapter two to chapter six is not conclusive, and, in this sense, my study of the sensemaking process of Korean fire service officials is still in progress.
APPENDIX A

HUMAN SUBJECTS COMMITTEE APPROVAL

OFFICE OF THE VICE PRESIDENT FOR RESEARCH
HUMAN SUBJECTS COMMITTEE
TALLAHASSEE, FLORIDA 32306-2763
(850) 644-8673 • FAX (850) 644-4382

APPROVAL MEMORANDUM

Date: 5/26/2005

To: Jeong Hong-Sang
1951 North Meridian Rd. #26
Tallahassee, FL 32303

Dept: PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION AND POLICY

From: Thomas L. Jacobson, Chair

Re: Use of Human Subjects in Research
A study on the Sensemaking Process of Korean firefighters

The forms that you submitted to this office in regard to the use of human subjects in the proposal referenced above have been reviewed by the Secretary, the Chair, and two members of the Human Subjects Committee. Your project is determined to be Exempt per 45 CFR § 46.101(b) 2 and has been approved by an accelerated review process.

The Human Subjects Committee has not evaluated your proposal for scientific merit, except to weigh the risk to the human participants and the aspects of the proposal related to potential risk and benefit. This approval does not replace any departmental or other approvals, which may be required.

If the project has not been completed by 5/24/2006 you must request renewed approval for continuation of the project.

You are advised that any change in protocol in this project must be approved by resubmission of the project to the Committee for approval. Also, the principal investigator must promptly report, in writing, any unanticipated problems causing risks to research subjects or others.

By copy of this memorandum, the chairman of your department and/or your major professor is reminded that he/she is responsible for being informed concerning research projects involving human subjects in the department, and should review protocols of such investigations as often as needed to ensure that the project is being conducted in compliance with our institution and with DHHS regulations.

This institution has an Assurance on file with the Office for Protection from Research Risks. The Assurance Number is IRB00000446.

Cc: Ralph S. Brower
HSC No. 2004.358
Appendix B

Informed Consent Form (in English)

I freely and voluntarily and without element of force or coercion, consent to be a participant in the research project entitled “A Study on the Sensemaking Process of Korean firefighters.”

The research is being conducted by Jeong, Hong-Sang, who is a Ph. D student at Florida State University, for his doctoral dissertation. I understand the purpose of his research is to better understand how Korean firefighters handle the problems that they face in real emergency or disaster situations.

I will be asked to answer a prepared questionnaire. The total time commitment would be about one hour. I understand that I will be tape recorded by the researcher. These tapes will be kept by the researcher in a locked filing cabinet. I understand that only the researcher have access to these tape records and that they will be destroyed by June 01, 2007. All my answer to the questions will be kept confidential to the extent allowed by law and identified by a subject code number. My name will not appear on any of the results.

I understand there is a possibility of a minimal level of risk involved if I agree to participate in this study. I am also able to stop my participation at any time I wish.

I understand that this consent may be withdrawn at any time without prejudice and penalty. I have been given the right to ask and have answered any inquiry concerning the study. Questions, if any, have been answered to my satisfaction.

I understand that I may contact Jeong, Hong-Sang at hrrower@mail.fsu.edu for answers to questions about this research or my rights. The results will be sent to me upon my request. If I have questions about my rights as a subject/participant in this research, if I feel I have been placed at risk, I can contact the Chair of the Human Subjects Committee, Institutional Review Board, through the Office of the Vice President for Research, at jh5898@fsu.edu.

I have read and understand this consent form. I will have a copy of this consent form to keep.

(Subject)                                      (Date)
별첨 (B) 인터뷰 동의서

나는 나의 자유 의사에 의해 이하의 “한국 소방 대원 들의 의미구조과정에 대한 연구”에 피조사자로서 참가 할 것에 동의한다.

이 연구는 플로리다 주립대학에 박사과정에 재학중인 정홍상이 그의 박사과정 논문을 위해 준비중인 것으로, 본 연구를 통해 정홍상은 한국의 소방대원들이 실제상황에서 어떻게 업무를 수행하고 있는지에 대해 알고 싶어 하는 것으로 나는 이해하고 있다.

나는 연구자가 준비한 질문에 답 할 것이며, 답변시간은 대략 한시간 정도 소요될것이다. 녹음된 테이프는 연구자에 의해 안전한 장소에 보관될 것이다. 녹음된 테이프는 연구자만 접근할 수 있는 것으로, 2007년 6월 1일 이내에 완전 파기 되어질 것이다.

나의 인터뷰 내용은 연구 목적에 외에 사용되지 않으며, 나의 신상과 관련된 어떤 정보도 나의 희생을 포함하여 절대 외부에 공개되지 않는 것으로 알고 있다.

나의 인터뷰 내용과 관련하여 나는 어떠한 불이익도 받지 않을 것이며, 인터뷰 도중 필요하다고 판단될 시 언제든지 인터뷰를 중지할 권한이 내게 있다.

인터넷도중 공급한 사항에 대해 무엇이든지 하시라도 질문할수 있고, 나의 질문에 대해 연구자는 성실히 답변할 의무가 있다. 인터뷰가 끝난 이후에도 언제든지 공급한 사항이나 나의 권리에 대해 연구자 외 그의 지도교수( Ralph S. Brower)에게, 연구자의 진화-------- 와 그의 지도교수의 이메일 rbrower@mailer.fsu.edu 을 통해 질문할수 있고, 연구자와 그의 지도교수는 그 질문에 대해 성실히 답변할 의무를 지닌다. 만약 내가 본연구의 참가자 또는 대상으로서의 나의 권리에 대해 의문을 가지거나, 만약 내가 최소한의 위험에 처했다고 느끼면, 나는 플로리다 주립대학의 심사위원회에 다음과의 이메일 즉, jih5898@fsu.edu 를 통해 공급한 사항에 대해 문의할 수 있다. 나의 인터뷰 내용이 연구자의 연구에 사용되는 것을
내가 원하지 않는 경우 언제든지 이를 요구할 수 있고, 연구자는 나의 요구를 수용할 의무를 또한 가진다.

상기의 내용을 읽고 이에 동의하며 만약을 위해 이 동에서 사본을 보관한다.

(피조사자)  (말짜)
APPENDIX B

INTERVIEW MATERIAL (IN ENGLISH)

Introduction

For my doctorate dissertation, I am gathering stories about the everyday work life of Korean firefighters. I thought that as a Korean firefighter, you’d be a particularly good person to talk to. (Place tape recorder out and explain its use).

Questions

1. I believe that there are times when Korean firefighters encounter dilemmas, uncertainties and ambiguities in their work in real emergency or disaster situations. Would you take a minute to think about such situations that you have recently experienced that left a vivid memory? And if a situation comes to mind, go ahead and tell me when you are ready.

1 a. (Alternative prompt if no story is forthcoming) Can you think of a time when you had some difficulty (or difficulties) in proceeding your work in real situations? What was that like?

1 b. (If details are not forthcoming, consider the following as a prompt) How was the situation different from other situations that you had encountered? Could you tell me more about the problem(s) that you had in this situation?

2. How did you recognize the problem(s)?

2a. How did you recognize the situation was different from earlier situations that you had encountered?

2b. What encouraged you to recognize the problem(s)?

2c. What encouraged you to recognize the difference(s) between this situation and earlier situations?

3. What was (or were) the way(s) that you developed to handle the situation?

3a. (If details are not forthcoming, consider the following as a prompt) Could you tell me more about the way(s) you handled the situation?

3b. If you handled this situation differently than previous situations, how did it proceed differently?

3c. How did you develop (alternatively, learn, or know) this (these) way(s) for handling the situation?
3d. What encouraged you to develop this (these) way(s) for handling the situation?

3e. What did you expect when you handled the situation in that (or those) way(s)?

4. What did you physically do after developing (alternatively, learning, knowing) this (these) way(s) for handling the situation?

4a. What circumstances encouraged you to put this (these) way(s) of handling the situation into action?

4b. If there was (were) some difference(s) between what you realized in your mind and what you actually did, how was (were) it (they) different?

4c. (optional) What generated this (these) difference (or differences)?

5. What happened to the real emergency or disaster situation after you handled it?

5a. How did the real situation change if at all?

5b. (optional) What do you think contributed to the change in the real situation?

5c. What would have happened in the situation if you had not handled the situation in that (or those) way(s)?

6. Did your handling of the situation change over the length of your involvement in the real situation? (if yes) Could you explain that?

6a. (optional) What encouraged you to make these changes?

7. In the real situation, who was (or were) (an)other firefighter(s) involved?

8. What was his (or their) position(s)?

8a. How did his (their) positions make a difference in the situation?

9. What was the nature of your relationship with him (or them)?

10. How was your relationship with him (or them)?

11. How did he (or they) contribute to your handling of the problem(s) in the situation if at all?

12. When other firefighters have similar problems in their work in an everyday emergency management context, what do you do usually?

12a. In those cases, how do you know that other firefighters have these problems with their work?
12b. When you have some problems with your work in everyday emergency management, do others do something like what you do with them?

13. Is there anything I didn’t ask that I should have asked?

14. Can you think about anyone else who would be a good person to talk to who might have found themselves in this type of situation? Can you also think about anybody else who would be a good person to talk to who might see these things very differently than you do?

15. May I contact you later if I need to clarify something you have said?

Conclusion

Tell them they’ve been very helpful and thank them for their participation.
도입
박사학위 논문과 관련하여, 저는 한국에 소방대원들이 어떻게 실제 상황에서 업무를 수행하고 있는지에 대한 자료를 수집하고 있습니다. 소방대원의 한정으로서, 선생님이 저의 논문과 관련하여 소중한 자료를 제공해 줄 수 있을 것이라 생각합니다. (카세트 테이프에 답변 내용이 수록 될것을 설명하고 동의를 구함)

질문
1. 제가 생각하기에는 실제상황에서 업무 수행과 관련하여 어떻게 처리해야할지 불확실하거나 애매하거나 한 상황이 많은것이라 생각됩니다. 그런 상황과 관련하여 경험하셨던 경험을 잠시 생각해 보시고 생각나면 말씀해 주십시오.

1(가) (질문자가 답변하지 않으면) 업무수행과 관련하여 고란을 겪었던 일이 있었담 구체적으로 어떤경우였는지 말씀해 주실 수 있으시겠습니까?

1(나) (자세한 설명을하지 않는 경우) 그때 그상황이 일반적인 업무수행상황과는 어떤 점에서 차이가 있었습니까? 그때 처했든 문제점을 보다 구체적으로 말씀해 주실 수 있으시겠습니까?

2. 어떻게 그문제를 문제로 인식하셨습니까?

2(가). 그상황이 일반적인 상황과 다르다는것을 어떻게 아셨습니까?

2(나). 그문제를 문제로 인식하게끔 만들었던 요인이있다면?

2(다). 그상황이 다른상황과 다른 다는것을 알게끔 만들었던 어떤 요인이 있다면?

3. 어떻게 그 상황에 대처하셨습니까?
3(가) (자세한 설명을 하지 않는경우) 그상황에 대해 선생님이 대처했든 방법들을 보다 구체적으로 말씀해 주시면 감사하겠습니다.
3(나). 그때 선생님이 대처했든 방법말고 만약 다르게 행동하셨다면, 상황은 어떻게 되었을까요?
3(다). 그런 대처방법을 어떻게 생각해 내셨습니까? (배웠습니까?, 아셨습니까?)
3(라). 그런방법을 생각해 내시게끔 만들었던 어떤 요인이 있더간리 생각하셨습니까?
3(마). 그방법을 적용하실때 어떻게 상황이출러가리라 생각하셨습니까?
4. 그방법을 생각하시고난다음에 어떻게 실제로 행동하셨습니까?
4(가). 그런 행동을하신 머특별한 이유라도 있다면동 안
4(나). 생각했던 것과 실제 행동사이에 머 차이점이 있었다면 구체적으로 어떤 차이가 있었습니까?
4(다) (선택). 무엇이 그런 차이를 만들었습니다까요?
5. 선생님의 대처리후 실제 그상황은 어떻게 진행되었습니까?
5(가). 실제상황이 선생님의 대처리후 바뀐게 있다면 구체적으로 어떤점이?
5(나)( 선택) 왜 그렇게 바뀌었다고 선생님은 생각하실니까?
5(다). 선생님처럼 행동하지 않았다면 그상황은 어떻게 되었을까요?
6. 그상황이종료될때까지선생님의 대처방안이 바뀐게 있습니까? (답변이그렇다고 했을때). 어떻게바뀌었는지 설명해 주실 수 있을까요?
6(가) (선택). 대처방안을 다르게했든 머특별한 이유라도 있었습니다?
7. 그때 그상황에서 다른 소방대원들은 누구누구가 있었습니까?
8. 그분들의포지션은?
8(가). 선생님께서 그 상황을 그렇게 했을 때 그런 동료분들의 포지션이 특별한 영향이라도 준게 있다면 말씀해 주실수 있을런지요?

9. 그분들과의 그때 그업무처리와 관련하여 어떤식으로 업무분담이었던지?

10. 그분들과의 그때 관계는 어떠셨습니까?

11. 그런식으로 선생님이 그상황에 대처하는데 있어 그분들이 어 كانواetro운 도움을 준게 있었다면 말씀해 주실수 있을런지요?

12. 만약 다른소방대원들이 그들의 업무수행과 관련하여 어떤 문제점에 봉착했다면 선생님께서는 일반적으로 어떻게 하십니까?

12(가). 일반적으로, 선생님께서는 다른소방대원들이 업무수행 상황에서 어떤문제점에 봉착했다는 것을 어떻게 아십니까?

12(나). 선생님께서 일반적으로 업무수행과 관련하여 어떤문제점에 봉착했을때, 다른소방대원들은 선생님이 그들이 문제점에 봉착했을때 하시는것과 비슷하게 행동하는지요?

13. 지금까지 질문이외에 제가 머특별히 빠뜨리기라도 하게 있다면 말씀해 주시겠습니까?

14. 본 저의논문 자료수집과 관련하여 특별히 도움을주실수 있겠다 생각되신분이라도 게신다면 축하해주실 수 있으시겠습니까? 지금 말씀하신 그상황에 대한선생님의 대처방안과 또 다르게 대처했을수도 있겠다, 또 그런경험을 가지고 있었다 싶은분이라도 게신다면?

15. 자료 분석을하다가 의문나는게 있더면선생님께 다시한번 연락드려도 될런지요?

결론

그들의협조가 상당히 도움이 되었다는말과함께, 감사의말을 전함.
REFERENCES


Brower, R.S. (1999). All the World's a Stage. *Public Integrity Summer*. 221-238.


BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH

Education

• Askew School of Public Administration and Policy, Florida State University, Tallahassee, Florida. Ph. D., October 2006.
• Graduate School of Public Administration, Korea University, Seoul, Korea. Master of Public Administration, August 1992.
• Department of Public Administration, Korean University, Seoul, Korea. Bachelor of Public Administration, March 1990.

Professional Experiences

• Research Analyst, Florida Public Affairs Center at FSU (1999 ~ 2005)
• Instructor, Department of Public Administration, Korea University, Korea (1996 ~1997)
• Graduate Assistant, Graduate School of Public Administration, Korea University, Korea (1990 ~ 1992)

Teaching and Research Interests: Organizational Sensemaking, Institutions and Organizations, Organizational Theories, Organizational Learning, Organizational Development, Qualitative Research Methods, Human Resource Management, Emergency Management, Philosophy in Public Administration.