**Making Time / Making Temporality for Engaged Scholarship**

Joshua B. Barbour & Dawna I. Ballard

The University of Texas at Austin

J. Kevin Barge

Texas A&M University

Rebecca Gill

Massey University


Joshua B. Barbour (Ph.D., University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign) is an assistant professor and Dawna I. Ballard (Ph.D., University of California at Santa Barbara) is an associate professor of Communication Studies in the Moody College of Communication at The University of Texas at Austin. J. Kevin Barge (Ph.D., University of Kansas) is a professor and the Head of Communication at Texas A&M University. Rebecca Gill (Ph.D., University of Utah) is a senior lecturer in the School of Management at Massey University.

Address correspondence to Joshua B. Barbour, The University of Texas at Austin, Department of Communication Studies, 2504A Whitis Ave. (A1105), Austin, TX 78712-0115, 512-471-5251. E-mail: barbourjosh@utexas.edu

## Making Time / Making Temporality for Engaged Scholarship

## Abstract

Research on engaged scholarship has demonstrated that it requires substantial investments of time and requires the negotiation of research partners' multiple, differing time horizons. Although the importance of time as a resource in research collaborations is generally recognized, the implications of temporal difference among research partners need further exploration. Drawing on the meso-level model of organizational temporality, we develop a heuristic framework for analyzing the temporal enactments, temporal construals, and the designable features of temporality in key practices of engagement, namely, co-missioning, co-designing, and co-enacting. The framework is illustrated with the authors' firsthand accounts of multiple engaged research projects that highlight concrete strategies for managing the temporal difficulties of long-term engagement. The framework and its application make contributions to the theory and practice of engaged scholarship and the communicative study of time and temporality.

Keywords: engaged scholarship, time, temporality, organizational change, research collaboration

**Making Time / Making Temporality for Engaged Scholarship**

Scholarship takes time. In applied organizational communication research, spending time makes it more likely that researchers will see revealing glimpses of organizational life, generate knowledge that will be adopted by organizations under study, and make meaningful contributions to practice and theory (Barge & Shockley-Zalabak, 2008; Van de Ven & Johnson, 2006). Extended time in the field can help, and may be necessary for, moving beyond surface understandings of organizations and communities to a deeper, richer, and more complex engagement with the challenges they face and their management of them (Tracy, 2013). In particular, engaged scholarship can require substantial, long-term investments of time to build and sustain the research collaborations that are its hallmark (Simpson & Seibold, 2008). Indeed, the temporal difficulties of engaged scholarship merit particular attention not just because of the time investments needed, but also because engaged scholarship involves bringing together organizations that experience time differently (Barge, 2015; Simpson & Seibold, 2008) and operate in different temporalities (Ballard, 2009; Ballard & Seibold, 2006).

Engaged scholarship is defined by its emphasis on co-generative theorizing, knowledge creation for/by research stakeholders (Deetz, 2008), and "close work and learning with stakeholders" (Seibold, 2005, p. 15), which distinguishes it from broader efforts to translate or apply scholarship. The "recursive and reflexive practices that build a bridge between the pursuits of the academy and those of practitioner communities" can require commitments of years or decades (Simpson & Seibold, 2008, p. 270). For research partners—a generic term we use to include researchers, practitioners, and pracademics (Posner, 2009)—to create research that is mutually beneficial, they may need to make investments of time at discrete moments to accomplish particular projects or make investments over time as needed for recurring involvement (Seeger, 2009). For example, Seibold (2005) described the day-to-day commitment

required of his engaged scholarship in this way: "Over the course of my career being engaged has meant being deeply and intimately connected to a number of nonacademic organizations and communities" (p. 16). In concrete terms, that connection meant spending, on average, about one day per week for decades, working with over 75 government, health, service, and business organizations in more than 50 countries (Simpson & Seibold, 2008).

Existing scholarship highlights the need to invest time to generate knowledge that is insightful, generative, and relevant for multiple research partners (Barge & Shockley-Zalabak, 2008; Van de Ven & Johnson, 2006). However, it does not address the practical realities of long-term engagement and the necessary negotiation of temporal difference (Barge, 2015; Simpson & Seibold, 2008). Developing the deep and intimate connections described by Seibold (2005) requires not just spending time, but spending time in particular ways. It requires attention to multiple temporal issues inherent to the practice of engaged research, issues explicated in Ballard and Seibold's (2003) meso-level model of organizational temporality (MMOT).

In their theorizing, time refers to discrete, quantifiable, and independent moments, and bringing attention to temporality encompasses broader processes of change and emergence that accompany the passage and experience of time (Ballard & McVey, 2014; Ballard & Seibold, 2006). Tightly interwoven as to sometimes be inseparable, temporal issues often concern time, and time-related issues often concern temporality. As a result, the words are often used interchangeably for stylistic reasons, though they are distinct. Time may be thought of as measurable resource and material constraint. Temporality involves how actors conceive of time, how actors map activities to time, and how actors relate to time (Ancona, Okhuysen, & Perlow, 2001; Ballard, 2009).

Our goal in this article is to create a framework that research partners can use to manage the investments of time and to knit together different temporalities. We develop the framework

by bringing together Ballard and Seibold's model (2003, 2006) and Dempsey and Barge's (2014) synthetic explication of the collaborative practices central to engaged scholarship. We illustrate the framework with the authors' firsthand accounts of multiple, long-term engaged projects (see Figure 1) to provide examples of the sorts of temporal difficulties that may be encountered and approaches that have worked. The framework and our application of it make contributions to the theory and practice of engagement by explicating the temporal dynamics of engaged scholarship and offering concrete recommendations for navigating its difficulties (Seibold, 2005; Simpson & Seibold, 2008). We also contribute to the study of time and temporality an exemplar of temporal design (Ballard & McVey, 2014) that brings attention to the visible and invisible in temporal performances and interpretations (Ballard & Seibold, 2003, 2006) and how they unfold over long-term engagements. We conclude by discussing the implications of these contributions for efforts to understand, support, and manage change through engagement (Seibold, 2016a, 2016b).

## The Temporality of Engaged Scholarship

A key challenge for engaged scholarship is that research partners must negotiate competing ideals for the temporal aspects of communication and work (Ballard & McVey, 2014). Moreover, just investing more time, in and of itself, will not likely create successful engagement. Simpson and Seibold (2008) argued that the practice of engaged scholarship must necessarily accommodate organizations' "time horizons" and that doing so can be a source of conflict (p. 276). Barge (2015) explained that temporal difference is a key source of tensions in engaged scholarship in that it involves meshing differing "timescapes," that is, differing orientations of activities and people to time and differing preferences about the "pace and rhythm of conversations" (pp. 189-190). For example, he argued that in multi-stakeholder dialogue, participants may want conversations to be faster-paced to keep moving through problems and others may want conversations to be slower-paced to give time to talk through all concerns.

Arguing for methodological flexibility and innovation in the broader interest of doing communication research that makes a difference, Seeger (2009) posited that the time-intensive nature of knowledge creation means that scholars tend to focus, look for efficiencies, and employ "well-worn norms, traditions, and methods" (p. 16). Scholars may "shy away from investigating problems that are relevant to policy makers and other practitioners" in part because of the time required and the frictions between the rhythms and rituals of academic life (Seeger, 2009, p. 16). Engaged research projects typically involve diverse methods; broad, interdisciplinary expertise from multiple sources; and teams of researchers, practitioners, and pracademics. Such research can be at odds, Seeger argued, with requirements to "generate numerous publications within relatively short time frames" (p. 16).

Central to such observations is the notion that when they work together, research partners face differing temporal opportunities and constraints and manage them differently. Simpson and Seibold (2008) and Barge (2015) made convincing cases for the need to take account of such temporal difference in engaged scholarship, but stopped short of explaining how to do so. Accordingly, we develop a framework of questions about temporal difference related to practices of engaged scholarship that can be used by research partners as they work together. Dempsey and Barge (2014) argued that the key choices that research partners must make regarding the preparation, planning, and execution of projects involve: (1) Co-missioning: Conversations that help negotiate the focus and scope of inquiry, navigating the "occasionally divergent needs of both academics and their partners," (2) Co-designing: Conversations that help design research to attend to the requirements and standards of all stakeholders, and (c) Co-enacting: Conversations that help create mechanisms that allow all involved to deliberate about the "meaning, utility, and implications of knowledge" being generated (p. 679). Our analysis demonstrates that these conversations also involve negotiating temporal differences among research partners, and the

framework should be of heuristic value in that it offers pragmatic questions and surfaces

tentative practical recommendations for future problem solving related to these practices.

**Developing A Heuristic Framework for the Temporality of Engagement**

Our proposed framework builds on the idea that temporal difference is grounded in the

pacing and rhythms of the day-to-day work of research partners. According to MMOT, actors

negotiate competing conceptions of time in and through their participation in activities that

require different amounts of time spent in different ways (Ballard, 2009) (e.g., activities such as

scheduling an interview, pitching an idea, writing a grant proposal, making a conference

presentation, making a sales call, teaching a semester-long class, recruiting a new client).

"Activity cycles" are "the temporal 'containers' of work processes" and are shaped by how long

work takes and the variability of the tasks involved (Ballard & McVey, 2014, p. 193). The length

of time needed to complete a given task may range from a few minutes to several years, and the

tasks involved can vary in multiple ways (e.g., Is it the same work repeated every hour, day, or

week? Is what it means to perform a task well understood by all or a few? Is it easy to determine

or difficult?). Activity cycles reflect and facilitate entrainment with particular temporal structures

(Ancona & Chong, 1996; Ballard, 2009). Even when research partners' work activities tend to

take the same time spent in similar ways, they may not find themselves at the same place in those

cycles at the same times, or they may be involved in other projects that capture their time.

Differing conceptions of time negotiated by research partners involve "shared

experiences of time (intersubjective sense), personal conceptions of time (subjective sense), as

well as institutionally driven, formal temporal parameters on members' work processes measured

in clock time (objective sense)" (Ballard & Seibold, 2006, p. 319). Here, intersubjective time is

reflected in the "practices and values shared by a group" (e.g., industry, occupational, and work-

group norms; organizational culture) and mediated through temporal, communicative structuring

(Ballard, 2009). For example, Ballard's recent effort to study teamwork at a child abuse treatment and advocacy organization (CATA, a pseudonym) involved different, *intersubjective*, conceptions of time because of the range of professions involved. Law enforcement officers, prosecutors, social workers, forensic interviewers, and academics had conceptions of time that stemmed from their professional identities and the activity cycles associated with their work (e.g., investigating a case, prosecuting a case, shepherding a case through the system). *Subjective* temporalities stemmed from individual-level factors, such as their status and history with CATA. Finally, *objective* temporalities were enabled and constrained by external pacers such as a schedule of meetings with external stakeholders that dictated when they could work together.

Objective, subjective, and intersubjective temporalities are created and reflected in research partners' enactments and construals of time. **Enactments** are how "work group members 'perform' time" (Ballard, 2009, p. 208), such as flexible work schedules, linear project designs, fast/slow work pacing. For example, Ballard, Inman-Ramgolam, and Solomon Gray (2017) explored how screening calls, closing doors, or blocking out calendars reflect varied enactments of separation—the extent to which organizational members are available for interaction in time and space. **Construals** are how "organizational members 'interpret' or orient to time" (Ballard, 2009, p. 208) (e.g., as scarce, abundant, urgent, future, past, present) (Ballard, 2009; Ballard & Seibold, 2006). For example, Ballard and colleagues (2017) showed how enactments such as separation were driven by construals of time as scarce.

During engaged projects, partners need to be able to identify and consider the multiple temporalities, which are reflected in enactments and construals, and by doing so can bring into view designable features of temporality and assist with navigating tensions among them (Ballard & McVey, 2014). Put another way, attention to enactments and construals should help partners make and perform more effective choices about how they will work together. The heuristic

framework thus consists of three clusters of questions that should be raised in iterative

conversations among research partners to address the meshing of temporalities in engaged

scholarship. The first two clusters focus on surfacing, problematizing, and evaluating temporal

issues. Building on the insights generated, the third focuses attention on how they might make

changes in the research engagement and test out possible interventions to produce desirable

outcomes for all research partners.

The first cluster of questions focuses on identifying partners' temporal enactments.

Because enactments are visible (Ballard, 2009; Ballard & Seibold, 2006), their temporal

dimensions should be most readily identifiable. Questions include (a) How are activities mapped

to time by different partners? (Ancona et al., 2001), and (b) What are the relevant day-to-day

performances of time? These questions can elicit examples of activity coordination, technology

use, and feedback processes that reflect particular forms of flexibility, linearity, punctuality, and

so forth (Ballard & Seibold, 2003). For instance, in the CATA project, the child advocacy

organization requested and set weekly meetings at the outset of a multi-year project. The timing

of these meetings (a particular enactment) suggested a particular rate of involvement (i.e.,

regular, consistent) relative to their other ongoing commitments that communicated the high

level of importance with which they viewed the project and the considerable resources that they

would invest.

Reflecting on relatively more visible temporal enactments initially should help research

partners identify the temporal construals that may become apparent only as they work together

(Ballard, 2009). Thus, the second cluster of questions (particularly relevant during the co-

designing phase) should focus on unearthing temporal construals by discovering (through direct

or indirect observation) how actors relate to time (Ancona et al., 2001; Ballard & Seibold, 2006).

The key questions are (a) How do partners orient to time? (b) How do partners make

interpretations of time, and (c) What are they? Interpretations and orientations can include

notions of scarcity; abundance; urgency; lassitude; and past, present, and future time foci

(Ballard & Seibold, 2003). In the CATA example, three high-ranking members of the

organization, including a co-founder, regularly attended the weekly meetings. The presence of

this founder's voice in these steering meetings suggested a strong past temporal focus (a

particular construal) that drew on the historical foundation of the organization as a critical

benchmark for future decisions. Although the project was described (internally and to the agency

partners) as "charting the future" of the organization, the backdrop focused on building lessons

from the past to (re)consider how to move forward.

Enactments and construals in mind, the third cluster of questions should focus on how to

intervene into the unfolding research process by making decisions regarding the designable

features of temporality. Questions include (a) What are the choice points available to actors as

they spend time and negotiate temporalities? (b) How and through what means might partners try

to intervene? And, (c) how might activity cycles be altered to influence communication? For

example, Ballard and McVey (2014) highlighted designable features of temporality, including

making windows of time smaller or larger and altering the level of task variability, which

together would shape interaction and reflect activity cycles (Ballard, 2009). The choice in the

CATA project to have weekly meetings reflected the existence of a broader array of possible

choices about how they could have managed the project (e.g., to meet or not, how frequently,

where, the purpose and audience of meetings).

In sum, if research partners are to create and sustain rich collaborations, it is important to

gain insight into how critical practices associated with engaged scholarship, such as co-

missioning, co-designing, and co-enacting, intersect with and are influenced by time and

temporality. Therefore, the guiding question that animated the following analysis was, *How are*

*temporal enactments, construals, and the designable features of temporality evident in the co-missioning, co-designing, and co-enacting of engaged scholarship*? Addressing this question should demonstrate the value of the framework, provide examples of what applying it involves, and highlight concrete recommendations for practice.

## Researcher Stories

To illustrate the framework, we draw on the authors' firsthand accounts of multiple, long-term engaged projects: a pair of studies of regulatory information processes at nuclear power plants (i.e., the reactor safety unit or RSU project, Barbour & Gill, 2014) and a toxic waste storage facility (i.e., the TWSF project, Barbour & James, 2015); an academic, industry, and governmental collaboration to create an innovation district in New Zealand (i.e., the GrowNorth project, Gill et al., 2016); and the RP$^2$ Prosperity Game, a large group intervention designed to bring members of underrepresented groups into science, technology, engineering, and math (STEM) disciplines (Barge, Barbour, & Isaacson, 2014; Barge et al., 2008). These projects represent a diversity of timelines and activities in different stages of completion (see Figure 1). They all involved (or will involve) engagement for an extended duration (per calls to do so in Barge & Shockley-Zalabak, 2008; Van de Ven & Johnson, 2006). For example, the RP$^2$ Prosperity Game rekindled collaborations that started fifteen years earlier, and the GrowNorth project aims to make research-based policy and investments that last years into the future. The timelines demonstrate interweaving and overlapping efforts to create reports and journal articles, to collect data while working with stakeholders, and to participate in insight-generating research for and by the scholars, practitioners, and pracademics involved.

### Co-missioning

**Enactments and construals.** Co-missioning involves the planning and negotiation of the joint aims and purposes for projects among partners (Dempsey & Barge, 2014). For example, in

the co-missioning of the RSU project, Barbour and Gill (2014) crafted a scope of work through conversations with RSU members. They also created a separate research document that put the scope of work into the language of theory (e.g., statements of specific hypotheses and research questions that drew on relevant theoretical terms). The scope of work focused on project deliverables, and the research document focused on academic ones—each of which were enabled and constrained by distinct temporal enactments (especially speed, punctuality, scheduling, separation, and flexibility) and construals (especially urgency, scarcity, present and future foci). For instance, while the practical scope of work envisioned a process with a discrete beginning and end and a short-term focus (including specific timing for observations to give the partners control of access to sensitive sites), the research design document envisioned a long-term trajectory of data gathering, analysis, and reporting without a definite end. All involved experienced urgency, but at different time scales: Participants intervened daily in the safety processes of nuclear power plants, so insights needed to be implemented quickly. Researchers accommodated these requirements as they came to understand them, but also faced their own pressures to publish based on the effort. These two texts, and the conversations that produced them, facilitated a mix of flexible and fixed timing, loose and focused precision, fluid and tight separation.

Managing differences during co-missioning also includes responding to differences in research partners' expectations regarding the timing of outcomes and evaluations. For example, in the RP$^2$ project, a Design Team was created to provide input and guidance regarding game structure, desired outcomes and deliverables, and assessment (Barge et al., 2014). The Design Team wanted an evaluation of what, if any, effects the initiative would have on broadening the participation of underrepresented groups in STEM disciplines. Assessing if greater numbers actually entered STEM disciplines or if the infrastructures were put into place to accomplish this

outcome would have necessitated an incredibly expansive activity cycle (i.e., long-term, taking years, and highly variable). However, the project was to be executed in a few months, a much shorter time frame, and could not be widened. The researchers could only evaluate short-term effects of participating in the game. Conversations between the Design Team and research partners centered on competing conceptions of time and their relationship to what outcomes could be achieved and measured given the project constraints. The ongoing nature of co-missioning during the $RP^2$ project was due, in part, to temporal tensions for the evaluation of project outcomes, which involved fundamental conversations about the main purpose of the project. Convening the Design Team at different moments in the process created a conversational space that supported understanding, reflection and invention—efforts to understand partners' needs and desired outcomes without judging them while still questioning and investigating existing terms and conceptions to support the collaborative invention of new vocabularies and approaches (Deetz, 2008).

        **Designable features of temporality in co-missioning.** Reflecting on our experiences, we would suggest that research partners need to plan for and anticipate visible and not yet visible temporalities. These research exemplars suggest action steps that may help manage time and temporality during co-missioning conversations: The time available, the number and timing of objectives, the documents created, the timing of outcome indicators, and the spacing and timing of co-missioning conversations are or contain multiple designable features of temporality that can be considered. Of course, the time available for engagement may shape the number and scope of project objectives. Researchers should consider creating multiple, intermediate documents (e.g., scopes of work, research documents) to organize project objectives attendant to temporal difference. These monotemporal artifacts (Ballard & Seibold, 2004) visibly reflect how stakeholders enact time and can be used to create shared maps for eventual research outcomes.

For instance, researchers may widen the timing of projects to accommodate each partners'

important outcomes, or they may have to consider identifying proxies for longer-term outcomes

that can be assessed in the time available. At the same time, conversations about the focus and

scope of engaged projects should be an ideal space for explicit conversations about how actors

relate to time. These conversations can help all involved manage the conflicts associated with the

pacing of project evaluations and evaluations of stakeholders by their respective constituencies

(Deetz, 2008).

**Co-designing**

  **Enactments and construals.** Co-designing conversations involves negotiating how

projects will be conducted and can include explicit conversations about the timing of

interventions (Dempsey & Barge, 2014). In the RSU study, partners pushed back on the project

plan, arguing it would not be timely. For instance, in an anonymous survey, a participant noted,

"Still not sure how anything that you are doing is going to benefit us. Especially when you said

that it would be 1 year before you submit your report to us. That would be unacceptable. That

would not provide any timeliness for anything that you observed during your assessment…Don't

see how anything good can come from this." To manage this concern, the researchers tried to

argue for the engagement as an opportunity for partners to reflect on their work regardless of the

timing of the report—separating the timing of intervention by different partners to account for

urgency at different time scales.

  To manage these temporal differences in the RSU study, the researchers conducted a

findings workshop after completing the principal wave of data collection, a workshop modeled

on Seibold's (2016a) recommendations for facilitating team development. The RSU made time

for this workshop during one of only two all-hands annual meetings. At the workshop, the

researchers shared preliminary findings, but held off on making recommendations, instead

creating space for participants to amplify, challenge, add, and modify findings, and develop their own action items. The design sought to accommodate both a need for swifter intervention and for making sense of data slowly. It also allowed for gathering additional data during the workshop itself (the TWSF project took a similar approach, Barbour & James, 2015).

The co-design of timelines, deadlines, and milestones can reflect the interests of stakeholders and recognize the temporal differences that can make meeting particular deadlines difficult. For example, in the RP$^2$ Prosperity Game, the timing of the analyses and reporting needed to work around academic rhythms. The discussion of findings had to wait for the summer. With GrowNorth, the time available for design, data collection, and analysis was bound by the timing of two stakeholder summits (see Figure 1). Co-designing conversations can attend to the practical difficulties of long-term engagement as well, including tracking and remembering projects' temporal flow by recording project timelines, maintaining data inventories, and creating time-stamped field notes to aid future recall.

Our experience suggests that the extended duration of projects and shifting expectations may (a) prompt the need for the improvisational redesign of research methods over time and (b) necessitate the use of intensive, overlapping, mixed methods to take advantage of propitious moments during engagement. For example, in the RP$^2$ Prosperity Game, researchers planned to obtain online informed consent from participants during the pre-game survey, but they realized as they went to implement the study that some participants would not have completed the online form. They redesigned (and submitted revisions to IRB) to accommodate multiple forms of informed consent. They also collected data at multiple points in time, before, during, and after the game, to attune measurement to the intense, fast-paced, 1.5-day long prosperity game. They surveyed participants and interviewed game organizers and in-game facilitators before and after the game. They used game worksheets that supported game play and collected data of interest,

photographed game play at key points to record the players' positions, retained flipcharts

generated during game play, embedded trained student observers at each stakeholder-team table,

and fielded roaming observers during the game.

The lengthy duration of many engaged projects and need for moments of intense data

gathering means they can be at once time intensive and punctuated by delays and doldrums.

They can be exhausting too. For instance, the RSU project required approximately 10 months of

paperwork and background checks (e.g., fingerprinting, FBI interviews, drug testing) for security

clearance (see Figure 1). The time needed for bureaucratic safety and security requirements was

new to the researchers, but routine for the RSU. Even in preparing to dress properly for site

visits, the researchers realized time constraints that regular employees of the RSU took for

granted (e.g., where to find steel-toed safety shoes, especially for women?).

The doldrums and delays of engagement demand stamina. Co-designing conversations

can consider making space for cycles of effort and rest. An MMOT-informed reading highlights

that delays and doldrums may be thought of as involving a muted, frustrating urgency to

complete a task more quickly *or* opportunities to use doldrums to good effect. Conceiving of

delays as exhausting and needing to be survived emphasizes the scarcity of time, passing without

meaningful action, and yet they may also be thought of as useful.

**Designable features of temporality in co-designing.** The timing of partners'

interventions, proposed project timelines, the selection and crafting of methods, the intensity of

different project time periods, and the framing of design choices in terms of time commitment,

timing of key activities, and multiple temporalities provide a partial list of the designable

features of temporality in co-design that need to be considered. Our reflections on these

exemplars highlights concrete strategies that may useful for co-designing conversations:

Research partners should have co-designing conversations that address the temporality of the

work to be undertaken and the scheduling of data gathering, analysis, and deliverables should be done with an eye toward competing requirements for time. Highlighting timing in co-designing conversations as an important issue for the research can also make explicit the expectations for how projects will unfold as they are enacted. Partners should seek collaborators who can stand to be around each other for a long time. To help anticipate and navigate the problems of competing temporalities, partners should develop their capacity for using mixed overlapping methods and their improvisational skill at creating new research designs in light of shifts and disruptions.

**Co-enacting**

  **Enactments and construals.** Co-enacting involves reflection about the meaning and implications of data (Dempsey & Barge, 2014, p. 679). Challenges can arise in the timing of reflection and action-oriented conversations and managing the endings of research engagements. First, co-enacting conversations are needed to manage the timing and sequencing of shared reflection and action. In the RSU project, inspired by conversations and interviews with the research team, the leadership team drafted and circulated a new communication plan, before data collection was complete (see Figure 1) and without consulting with the research team. For the RSU, the safety-focus of their work meant the speed of implementing insights was critical, a reading that emphasized immediacy. Separating the timing of action taken by research partners allowed the RSU to act quickly, and complicated data collection and analysis by introducing new conversations about how they ought to be communicating, which were of interest but were also entangled with the project itself. The timing of our waves of data collection, the previous selection of methods that allowed for modification, and an approach that allowed for "theory-shaping and reformulation throughout the process" (Seibold, 2005, p. 15) meant the project could be sensitive to the change without undermining the rigor of the data collection and analyses.

  A second challenge is when and how to mark the end of engaged projects. Assuming that

that particular research projects occur during discrete periods and do not migrate to future

projects ignores that partners can and do revisit prior projects and rekindle old relationships. For

example, the RP[2] Prosperity Game built on work began fifteen years earlier in the Circle of

Prosperity Initiative (Barge et al., 2008), rekindling a network of consultant, academic, and

nonprofit organizations that had also grown to include many others. Barbour and James' (2015)

work with a regulatory compliance team in the TWSF project came to a "close" after they

completed their workshop, delivered a report, and turned to writing research articles. However,

the close was only a pause. The team contacted the researchers two years later to ask for input on

repeating the project as part of their continuous improvement. They reused the measures and

then produced their own scholarship on continuous improvement in waste management, which

they presented at a conference. And, the GrowNorth Project saw their research effort as about

shaping the future of a region by catalyzing an innovation district around the particular needs and

strengths of that place (e.g., not another Silicon Valley, but a distinctively Kiwi space and time).

Inasmuch as researchers, practitioners, and pracademics were co-owners and co-makers of the

research and its insights, the creation of the GrowNorth space would engender a continuous

enactment and refinement of the practical theories generated in and through the engaged

scholarship that sparked them.

  Negotiating these challenges can involve revisiting earlier co-missioning and co-

designing conversations and the negotiation of expectations and advocacy about how fast or

slow, focused or gradual the execution of the work needs to be. In a key piece of correspondence

in the GrowNorth project, for instance, the researcher challenged a sense that was developing

among the steering committee regarding "industry time" versus "university time," where

industry was implicitly celebrated for working quickly and university for working slowly. The

researcher argued that the bifurcation risked reifying the university as obstinately slow when, in

fact, it is the exigencies of the research and other considerations (e.g., semester rhythms) that

influence speed. In other words, in this correspondence between partners, the researcher sought

to make the case for the strengths of different temporalities, concluding:

> …the issue is not about 'speed' or timing, but … about recognizing differing core
> purposes, sets of resources, and conditions of work that foster efficiency and speed. I
> worry that dividing the steering committee into 'industry speed' and, by implication,
> 'university speed' and 'government speed' problematically simplifies something that has
> to do more with resources and focus. By focusing on speed, we miss the bigger point that
> we all have competing demands on our time and are all in some way working with scarce
> resources. To 'fix' the problem of speed, then, does not mean that the steering committee
> needs to work faster (per se) but needs to work with (and through, and together) an
> understanding of these more intractable problems.

On one hand, this exemplar makes clear the need to be aware of time and to address it explicitly,

but also to recognize the more fundamental implications of temporality. It is not just about time

as a resource, but temporality, the enactment and construals of particular conceptions of time.

**Designable features of temporality in co-enacting.** In the thick of co-enacting engaged

research, it can be difficult to be mindful of and responsive to competing temporalities.

Designable features of temporality in co-enacting may be found in unfolding choices researchers

make in response to emerging data, the interventions of other partners, and delays in the research

process as well as in choices about how and when to bring projects to a close. These stories

highlight strategies for managing temporal difficulties: Being aware of the temporal frictions that

may be encountered in co-enacting engaged scholarship make co-missioning and co-design all

the more important and, of course, co-enacting can spark renewed co-missioning and co-

designing. Partners can close/pause projects by making explicit openings for re-visitation,

Perhaps most importantly, partners should make space for meta-conversations, as in the

GrowNorth project correspondence, about timing and temporality to advocate not just for their

own temporalities but also for the need to negotiate temporal difference in the first place.

**Discussion**

This framework makes contributions to theory and practice in multiple ways relevant to this special issue. First, it builds on Simpson and Seibold's (2008) observation that engagement necessitates negotiating multiple, different time horizons by explicating how that negotiation might be supported by asking questions about temporal enactments and construals, and the designable features of temporality in the practice of engaged scholarship. For example, the assumption that academics have longer time horizons and work at a slower pace due to their need to conduct research and analysis and that practitioners have a quicker tempo as they need to respond quickly to a dynamic, changing environment is one that resonates with the experiences of many (e.g., Seeger, 2009). It is also possible to point to fast-paced, quick-tempo, time-limited moments in academic work (e.g., meeting a special issue deadline, publishing articles on the tenure clock), and slower-paced, slower-tempo, open-ended work in collaborator organizations. The point is to bring attention to these kinds of assumptions as oversimplifying and provide instead a framework that questions the presenting temporalities and how they might be negotiated.

Reflecting on our experiences using the heuristic framework also pointed to concrete ideas for practice. First and foremost, the application of the three clusters of questions can surface specific designable features of temporality (Ballard & McVey, 2014) in engaged scholarship (summarized in Table 1). Academics, practitioners, and pracademics should ask these questions to bring temporality into co-missioning, co-designing, and co-enacting conversations. The specific stories highlight difficulties that are likely to be encountered and recommended specific approaches that worked in practice. This analysis also opens areas for inquiry regarding the further articulation and development of skills and practices for engaged scholarship. The stories highlight the need not only for conflict management skills (e.g., as

discussed in Van de Ven & Johnson, 2006) but also the importance of concomitant skills such as translation (fluency in multiple temporalities) and improvisation (creating innovative strategies to manage temporal frictions).

Second, this framework extends the study of time and temporality in MMOT (Ballard & Seibold, 2003, 2006) by building on Ballard and McVey's (2014) efforts to account for multiple temporalities in communication and work design. Ballard and McVey's work on time and communication departed from previous approaches that treated design processes as only episodic, and their analysis of the designable features of temporality brought needed attention to the brevity or extended nature of time windows and the variability of tasks. The framework offered here builds on this focus by emphasizing the visible and hidden natures of temporal enactments and construals and the iteration of practices over time.

*Temporal enactments* as observable performances involve a type of visible temporality more easily recognized by research partners and taken for granted in the proposal and timeline drafting during co-missioning. In contrast, *temporal construals* as orientations and interpretations involve hidden temporalities, less easily understood or known, that are more often unearthed during the data collection and reporting phases. Researchers, practitioners, and pracademics can intervene by identifying the designable features of temporality and then planning for seen and even unsurfaced temporalities. At the same time, the research stories demonstrate the need for approaches that avoid reifying practice in discrete phases or stages. Co-missioning, co-designing, and co-enacting were fluid and overlapping. Instead of linear, discrete transitions between stages of practice, partners revisited each to greater or lesser degrees as projects unfolded.

As such, future research should focus on issues of how multiple temporalities are managed in the course of research generally, and engaged scholarship more specifically: How and when should reflective pauses be built into projects to talk explicitly about time? Or, when

should the flow of people acting in time be disrupted in the moment to talk about time? How can

partners anticipate differences in time horizons (short-term versus long-term) and time angles

(differing partner perspectives on time), and then design and revise projects accordingly? How

can researchers, practitioners, and pracademics intervene in enactments of temporality when

planning for and executing the interweaving of particular activity cycles?  For example, can they

intervene by changing practices such as scheduling of meetings, data collection, and final

reporting versus sharing findings?  How might they advocate with each other about the

fundamental value of different temporalities, attempting to shift construals of temporality and

enrich, for example, oversimplified notions of university and industry time?

Engaged scholarship can be a powerful vehicle for facilitating positive change (Barge &

Shockley-Zalabak, 2008; Deetz, 2008; Seibold, 2016a). Seibold's (2005, 2016b) work, in

particular, demonstrates a commitment to creating and implementing interventions, through and

of research, that generate positive change. The framework we propose here builds on this

commitment by providing a set of theoretical and practical tools that allow partners to describe,

critique, and intervene in and through engaged scholarship. As such, this effort makes broader

contributions to change processes, because the practice of engaged scholarship provides models

for the facilitation of reflective, knowledge-intensive, multi-stakeholder change management

(Lewis & Seibold, 1998). Engagement is itself central to the successful negotiations of the

tensions in temporalities. Convening understanding, reflective, and inventive conversations

(Deetz, 2008) while attending to temporal difference will help make those negotiations work,

because, as a wise pracademic in the RP[2] project refrained, "People support what they create."

Engaged scholarship, embodied in the deep, intimate, and time-consuming connecting between

research partners (Seibold, 2005), is about bolstering resources for reflection, discovery, and

change (Simpson & Seibold, 2008). Researchers, practitioners, and pracademics can encourage

the generation and implementation of insights by investing time but also by understanding,

accepting, and managing temporality.

**References**

Ancona, D., & Chong, C. (1996). Entrainment: Pace, cycle, and rhythm in organizational

behavior. *Research in Organizational Behavior, 18*, 251-284.

Ancona, D. G., Okhuysen, G. A., & Perlow, L. A. (2001). Taking time to integrate temporal

research. *Academy of Management Review, 26*, 512-529. doi:10.2307/3560239

Ballard, D. I. (2009). Organizational temporality over time: Activity cycles as sources of

entrainment. In R. Roe, M. J. Waller, & S. R. Clegg (Eds.), *Time in organizational

research* (pp. 204–219). London: Routledge.

Ballard, D. I., Inman-Ramgolam, D., & Solomon Gray, E. (2017). Modern times, modern spaces:

Interaction genres and multiminding in network-based work. In D. I. Ballard & M. S.

McGlone (Eds.), *Work pressures: New agendas in communication* (pp. 91-108). New

York, NY: Routledge.

Ballard, D. I., & McVey, T. (2014). Measure twice, cut once: The temporality of communication

design. *Journal of Applied Communication Research, 42*, 190-207.

doi:10.1080/00909882.2013.874571

Ballard, D. I., & Seibold, D. R. (2003). Communicating and organizing in time: A meso level

model of organizational temporality. *Management Communication Quarterly, 16*, 380-

415. doi:10.1177/0893318902238896

Ballard, D. I., & Seibold, D. R. (2004). Organizational members' communication and temporal

experience: Scale development and validation. *Communication Research, 31*, 135-172.

doi:10.1177/0093650203261504

Ballard, D. I., & Seibold, D. R. (2006). The experience of time at work: Relationship to

communication load, job satisfaction, and interdepartmental communication.

*Communication Studies, 57*, 317-340.

Barbour, J. B., & Gill, R. (2014). Designing communication for the day-to-day safety oversight of nuclear power plants. *Journal of Applied Communication Research, 42*, 168-189. doi:10.1080/00909882.2013.859291

Barbour, J. B., & James, E. P. (2015). Collaboration for compliance: Identity tensions in the interorganizational regulation of a toxic waste facility. *Journal of Applied Communication Research, 43*, 363-384. doi:10.1080/00909882.2015.1083601

Barge, J. K. (2015). Consulting as collaborative co-inquiry. In G. R. Bushe & R. J. Marshak (Eds.), *Dialogic organization development: The theory and practice of transformational change* (pp. 177-194). Oakland, CA: Berret-Koehler Publishers.

Barge, J. K., Barbour, J. B., & Isaacson, K. (2014). *Playing the prosperity game: Assessing the impact of large group interventions*. Paper presented at the annual meeting of the National Communication Association, Chicago, IL.

Barge, J. K., Lee, M., Maddux, K., Nabring, R., & Townsend, B. (2008). Managing dualities in planned change initiatives. *Journal of Applied Communication Research, 36*, 364-391. doi:10.1080/00909880802129996

Barge, J. K., & Shockley-Zalabak, P. (2008). Engaged scholarship and the creation of useful organizational knowledge. *Journal of Applied Communication Research, 36*, 251-265.

Deetz, S. (2008). Engagement as co-generative theorizing. *Journal of Applied Communication Research, 36*, 289-297. doi:10.1080/00909880802172301

Dempsey, S., & Barge, J. K. (2014). Engaged scholarship as democratic conversation. In L. L. Putnam & D. K. Mumby (Eds.), *The SAGE handbook of organizational communication: Advances in theory, research, and methods* (pp. 665-688). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Gill, R., Zorn, T. E., Balli, F., Marsh, K., Caughney, T., Child, R., & O'Brien, R. (2016). *GrowNorth smart innovation district: Initial report*. Retrieved from

http://www.massey.ac.nz/massey/fms/Colleges/College of Business/Grow North/Grow North Report May 2016.pdf

Lewis, L. K., & Seibold, D. R. (1998). Reconceptualizing organizational change implementation as a communication problem: A review of literature and research agenda. *Communication Yearbook, 21*, 92-151.

Posner, P. L. (2009). The pracademic: An agenda for re-engaging practitioners and academics. *Public Budgeting & Finance, 29*, 12-26. doi:10.1111/j.1540-5850.2009.00921.x

Seeger, M. W. (2009). Does communication research make a difference: Reconsidering the impact of our work. *Communication Monographs, 76*, 12-19. doi:10.1080/03637750802684006

Seibold, D. R. (2005). Bridging theory and practice in organizational communication. In J. L. Simpson & P. Shockley-Zalabak (Eds.), *Engaging communication, transforming organizations: Scholarship of engagement in action* (pp. 13-44 ). Cresskill, NJ: Hampton Press.

Seibold, D. R. (2016a). Facilitating team development in embedded organizational work groups. In J. Waldeck & D. R. Seibold (Eds.), *Consulting that matters: A handbook for scholars and practitioners* (pp. 197-216). New York, NY: Peter Lang.

Seibold, D. R. (2016b). Perspective on organizational consulting: Personal reflections and a design approach. In J. Waldeck & D. R. Seibold (Eds.), *Consulting that matters: A handbook for scholars and practitioners* (pp. 11-30). New York, NY: Peter Lang.

Simpson, J. L., & Seibold, D. R. (2008). Practical engagements and co-created research. *Journal of Applied Communication Research, 36*, 266-280. doi:10.1080/00909880802172285

Tracy, S. J. (2013). *Qualitative research methods: Collecting evidence, crafting analysis, communicating impact*. Hoboken, NJ: Wiley-Blackwell.

Van de Ven, A. H., & Johnson, P. (2006). Knowledge for theory and practice. *Academy of*

    *Management Review, 31*, 802-821.

Table 1.

*Exploring the Multiple Temporalities in Engaged Scholarship*

| | **Temporal Enactments** | **Temporal Construals** | **Designable Features of Temporality** |
|---|---|---|---|
| **Exemplary questions** | *What are the performances of time, and how do actors map time to activities?* | *How do actors relate to, orient to, and interpret time?* | *What are the choice points available to actors as they spend time and negotiate temporalities?* |
| **Co-missioning** | Planning documents (e.g., scope of work, research documents) | Reflected in scarcity and urgency associated with differing time scales; focus on short-term versus long-term trajectories | Time available for the project; the number and timing of objectives; the documents created in planning; expectations about outcomes and evaluation; space and timing of co-missioning conversations about focus and scope |
| | Iterative co-missioning conversations throughout the project as well as during formation (e.g., design team in RP$^2$ project) | Through fixed/fluid views of the future (i.e., linear or improvisational planning) | |
| | Timing of evaluation and outcomes | Through long- and short-term focused evaluations; present-, past-, and future-focused outcomes | |
| **Co-designing** | Timing of interventions, discussions of findings, and milestones | Through urgency that unfolds at different time scales | Timing of partners' interventions; scheduling project timelines (e.g., milestones and work/rest periods); selecting particular methods; framing of design choices in terms of time, timing, and multiple temporalities |
| | Detailed record keeping (e.g., timelines, inventories, time-stamped field notes) | Long-term revisiting of data for designs that emphasis extended duration | |
| | Delays and doldrums | Muted, frustrating urgency | |
| | Multiple, mixed methods for extended duration and surprises | Reflected in intense focus on propitious moments; delay and surprise framed as a problem (present focus) versus possibility (future focus); improvisational orientation | |
| **Co-enacting** | Partners act before research is "complete" | Focused on immediacy | Space to reopen co-missioning and co-designing; choices about closing/pausing projects; advocacy for temporalities and approaches sensitive to temporal difference |
| | (Un)ending engagement | Visioning an open-ended or closed-ended future | |
| | Competing temporal expectations for unfolding projects timelines | Oversimplification of "industry time" versus "academic time" as less urgent and time-sensitive | |

Figure 1.

*Approximate Project Timelines*
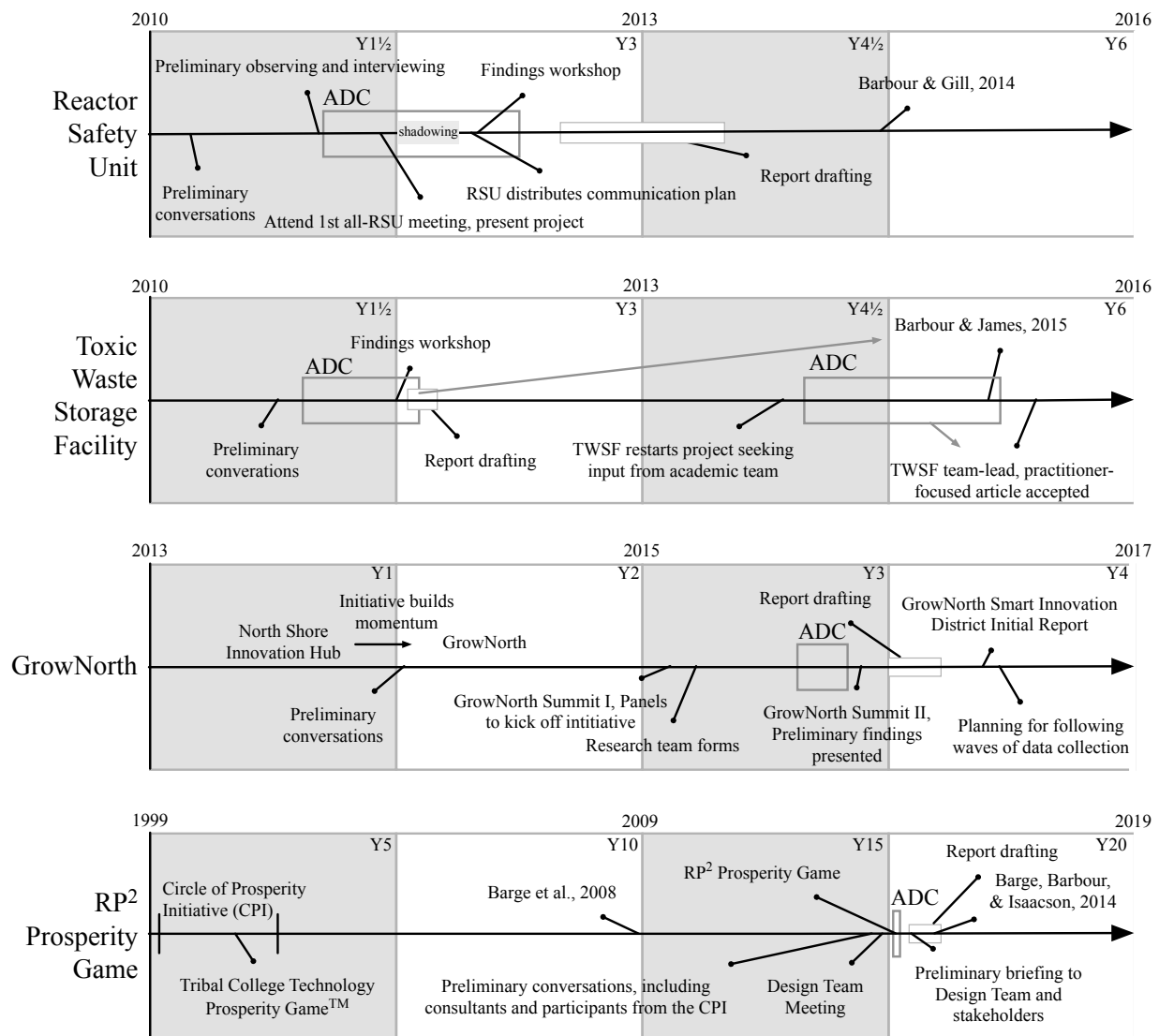


*Notes.* Active data collection (ADC) covers the approximate span of the formal data gathering for each focal project. Preliminary conversations mark the beginning of the focal projects, including early meetings that sparked the research or initiated the collaboration that would conduct the research. The time scales are not equal across the timelines, which are demarcated in 1.5, 1.5, 1, and 5 year increments respectively.