

# Family narratives through the eyes of an adult child of divorce

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## Abstract

*In the present study the authors explore an adult's retrospect recall of viewpoints of his parents divorce by applying Q methodology. The study design consists of a single case study where the authors apply Q methodology with various conditions of instruction. By applying Q methodology the authors seek to explore various family narratives in an attempt to look for coherence or divergence between significant people surrounding the subject "Magne" and himself. All viewpoints are studied according to the way Magne himself believes he and other people understood the divorce-process. The Q-sort consists of 28 statements selected to represent both child and adult viewpoints, and also viewpoints regarding both the divorce process and child living arrangement. The Q-sort 4x7 matrix ranges from -3 to +3. The factor analyses resulted in three clear-cut factors. Results show some coherence and some diversity between the viewpoints of significant people in Magne's life. Magne's viewpoints as a child and his viewpoints as an adult seem to be very similar. Q methodology seems to be an efficient way of studying family narratives. Among other things the method clearly helps to give an impression of similarities and divergences between the various family narratives from one person's standpoint.*

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**Key words:** : divorce, living-arrangements, family-narratives, adjustment, Q-methodology

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## I. Introduction

In this study the authors explored various stories and viewpoints that might be represented in the memory of an adult child of divorce. Defining meaning and some sort of congruence in the divorce narrative is recommended for child recovery and adjustment after divorce. The authors applied Q methodology. The subject was instructed to sort the statements according to his beliefs of significant people in his family and surroundings. Analyses through Q methodology indicated coherence or divergence between opinions and stories held by significant people surrounding Magne from his point of view. It is well known that parental divorce can affect the offspring in negative ways even during adulthood; therefore, the study of narratives of adult children of divorce is very relevant.

## II. Literature review

### Offspring adjustment after parental divorce

Parental divorce during childhood has been found to represent a risk factor for adjustment problems among both children and adolescents, both in international and Norwegian studies (Amato, 2001; Amato & B. Keith, 1991a; Størksen, 2005; Størksen, Røyamb, Holmen, & Tambs, 2006). Even among adult offspring parental divorce represents a risk factor for adjustment problems such as depression (Gilman, Kawachi, Fitzmaurice, & Buka, 2003; O'Connor, Thorpe, Dunn, & Golding, 1999; Størksen, Røyamb, Gjessing, Moum, & Tambs, 2007) and of experiencing a divorce in one's own adult life (Amato, 1996; Amato & DeBoer, 2001; O'Connor et al., 1999; Størksen et al., 2007; Wolfinger, 2003). In an Icelandic study (Jónsson, Njardvik, Olafsdóttir, & Grétarsson, 2000), young adult offspring of divorced parents reported more negative experiences, and looser family ties than young adult offspring with parents who remained married. One study identified an increased risk of frequent job changes (Rodgers, 1994). Parental divorce or separation during childhood has been associated with problem drinking (Hope, Power, & Rodgers, 1998; Wolfinger, 1998) and smoking (Wolfinger, 1998) during adulthood. Results from Amato and Keith's meta-study of adult children of divorce (Amato & Keith, 1991b) demonstrated an elevated risk of one-parent family status, more psychological adjustment problems, behavior/conduct problems, and a lower educational attainment

among adults who had experienced parental divorce compared to adults with no such experience.

There are indications that the parent-child relationship mediates most of the association between parental discord and divorce, and adult offspring psychological well-being (Amato & Sobolewski, 2001). Many other studies support the notion that different aspects of the parent-child relationship can explain the association between parental divorce and adult offspring adjustment to some extent (Laumann-Billings & Emery, 2000; O'Connor et al., 1999).

The findings highlight the continuing importance of relational closeness between parents and children in the post-divorce family. Such relational closeness between the child and both parents in the post-divorce family might depend on a common ground of communication about the divorce event, because diverging stories between the family members may represent a source of loyalty conflict and incongruence in the child.

## Stressors and protective factors

In “the divorce-stress-adjustment perspective” outlined by Amato (2000), divorce was described as a process that can trigger various stressors for the child. Several of the stressors mentioned by Amato are related to living arrangements. For the children of divorce practical changes, such as where to live and plans for visits to the non-residential parent, might be the most apparent changes. Living arrangements can potentially activate loyalty conflict in the child. The child can experience strong feelings of loss of a parent. Parental conflict often relates to the children’s living-arrangements and is known to be one of the most stressing factors related to divorce for the children involved (Amato & Keith, 1991a). In “the divorce-stress-adjustment perspective,” it is assumed that the children’s adjustment after divorce will vary with the amount of stressors that are triggered (Amato, 2000).

However, stressing factors alone cannot fully explain child adjustment after divorce. Positive factors in the child’s life also have an impact on child adjustment, and these factors may protect against potential stressors related to divorce (Amato, 2000). Protective factors may include individual, interpersonal or structural resources. They may also include demographic variables, such as a secure economic situation. One of the protective factors mentioned by Amato was “definition and meaning of divorce” (Amato, 2000: 1271). In other words it is important for the child to have access to adults that help the child to a coherent and meaningful story or narrative of the divorce.

## Social construction theory

A core element of social construction theory is that reality is socially created through the individual's social interaction (Gergen & Gergen, 2003). Social construction theory claims that social routines and establishment of various roles are important elements in a child's developing worldview. For young children the subjective social world is taken for granted as the "sole reality," and therefore early social development during childhood is very influential on an individual's later worldview. According to social construction theory, individuals make sense of their social observations of themselves and others by ordering these experiences into scripts. Thus, various meaning systems are organized into different scripts. Scripts are useful both for guiding action and for understanding it. Dominant scripts are the most vivid and influential scripts for individual judgment and action (Atwood, 1997).

In addition a person can possess alternative scripts. "Even when the individual conforms to the dominant script, awareness of the other scripts has therapeutic relevance because awareness brings awareness of choice"(Atwood, 1997: 21). In this study the authors explored whether an adult child of divorce has an awareness of alternative ways of dealing with a divorce to the way the subject himself has experienced.

According to social construction theory, scripts may be altered and new scripts may be added in relation to life changes, for instance, marriage. "Individual scripts merge to form a third script when two individuals join together as a couple"(Atwood, 1997: 28). Thus, the original scripts of individuals – which are often based on experiences from the past – are merged together in a couple-script. Therefore, individual childhood scripts may have influence on adult life and marriage, but may also be altered by happenings in adult life such as the involvement with a new partner. Q methodology has previously been applied in various studies with a social constructional foundation, e.g. a study on young adults' constructions of gender conformity and nonconformity (Brownlie, 2006), and a book on the social construction of lesbianism (Kitzinger, 1987).

## Narratives of divorce

Another branch of social construction theory is narrative theory and therapy. In a narrative approach to therapy, White and Epsom (1990) described how stories or narratives of one's life tell one not only what has happened previously in one's life. In many ways, one also lives in accordance with one's personal stories. A person's story of one's life history is merely a selection of some key situations and happenings that one consciously or

more unconsciously chooses to focus on. Some people have a tendency to focus solely on failure, pain and sorrow. In these cases a therapist needs to focus on positive exceptions to the individual's leading story. These positive exceptions consist of positive happenings and situations that occur to all people. However, these happenings are not always recognized as a significant part of the story of people in pain. These positive happenings and situations may include themes as mastery, control, joy, hope, pride and optimism. By highlighting positive exceptions to the leading story, a new and revised story may emerge that can lead the client to live in accordance with a story consisting of mastery and growth in a troubled life situation (White & Epston, 1990).

Experiencing divorce is related to symptoms of anxiety and depression (Størksen et al., 2007), and the situation may often be characterized by high levels of conflict (Amato & Keith, 1991a). Positive aspects of marriage and family life might be defocused in times like these, and the children may, therefore, develop a life story or a narrative characterized by sorrow, loyalty conflict, loneliness, and low mastery.

Some Norwegian family therapists have brought ideas similar to narrative theory into mediation and family therapy with divorcing families (Haaland, 2002; Tjersland, 1992, 1996). Based on a research project that involved 38 divorcing families, Tjersland (1992) concludes that the story (or narrative) on which the couples base their future cooperation sometimes needs to be re-written. The original idea of Tjersland (1992) and colleagues was to focus mediation on the present situation and future cooperation. However, even if Tjersland and his group do not conclude that old conflicts and difficulties should be a main focus of mediation, they do conclude that recognizing difficult feelings and working towards a story about the past that the couple can tell their family and friends may help the family move forward. This story can help and guide the adults in their future cooperation as parents (Tjersland, 1996).

Children and adults in many ways act together in creating the child's story. The created story is an important part of the child's development and identity formation (Haaland, 2002). Adults help children put words to happenings in the child's life. In this way adults have a great influence on children's development and identity formation. Therefore, it is of great importance that parents and others are able to help children to a story that covers reality but also leads to understanding and hope (Haaland, 2002; White & Epston, 1990). The authors' question is to what extent adult children of divorce have consistent family stories or narratives of divorce with the potential of helping them in their future adjustment and development in their original and new families, and in life in general. An exploration of this area can help further indicate which areas should be in focus when intervening with children and their divorcing parents.

## Main objective

In the present study, the authors aimed to explore an adult child's various stories or narratives of the event of his parents divorce and of the living-arrangements that were made for the children. Q methodology was applied in order to explore whether this method could be suitable for illuminating various family stories or narratives.

## III. Research Method and Design

Q methodology is a method that combines both quantitative and qualitative research traditions (Brown, 1991/1992, 1996; Dennis & Goldberg, 1996). There can be misunderstandings and confusions related to Q methodology (Thorsen, 2006; Watts & Stenner, 2005), since its quantitative features make it a rather unusual qualitative research method (Curt, 1994). Stenner and Stainton Rogers (2004) called it *qualiquantological*. Some used only the quantitative aspects of the method without regard to the philosophy, which Q methodology is based upon (Thorsen, 2006). Others turned to qualitative methods to escape quantitative logic (Watts & Stenner, 2005). Such qualitative methods could be discourse analysis (Jones & Norris, 2005), narrative analysis (Crossley, 2000), or phenomenological analysis (Smith, 2001). According to Watts and Stenner (2005: 69), it would be unfortunate and make little sense if qualitative researchers were to reject Q methodology for the mathematics incorporated into it, since the method "was *designed* for the very purpose of challenging the dated, Newtonian logic of 'testing' that continues to predominate in psychology." Q methodology provides a structure for data analysis through Q factor analysis while keeping subjectivity intact during this procedure. According to Stephenson (1953: 254), the methodology "can be applied to any subjective operations of a person, for *projections* as much as for retrospections."

Q methodology focuses on subjective aspects of human behavior (Stephenson, 1961c) and is therefore very suitable for studies of emotional experiences and discrimination between emotions. This was exemplified by Stenner and Stainton Rogers' study (2004), where each participant sorted the same sample of statements under four conditions of instruction, which corresponded to four social emotions: Love, Jealousy, Joy and Embarrassment. The method can be conducted with a group of participants to explore common or diverging subjectivity among several individuals, or it can be conducted as a single case study, where the one individual is instructed to respond according to several

conditions of instruction (Brown, 1980; Stephenson, 1953), thereby illuminating intra-individual differences. The same statements can have quite different significance to the individual under varying conditions of instruction (Stephenson, 1953: 195). Q methodology can illuminate substantive thought and transitive feeling tones that complete the whole expression of subjective experience (Allgood, 1999).

The area of exploration for this present study was investigated by applying Q methodology with a single-case design and multiple conditions of instruction. "Such Q-sorting no doubt does injustice to the complexities of the subjectivity, but at times it also perhaps helps the subject to make some sense of her perceptions"(Stephenson, 1974: 10). The Q-sorting process leads to operant factors. With multiple conditions of instruction, some operants that emerge are self-referred while others are not (Stephenson, 1974). An example of a non-self-referent operant would be when a respondent refers to how another person reacts to an event such as a divorce.

In this study, the authors recruited a young adult child of divorced parents and instructed the person to sort the randomly numbered statements under multiple conditions of instruction according to a forced distribution. This allowed the respondent to rank order each statement in accordance with his or her preferences and in relation to all the other statements within the limits of a forced distribution. Some find the forced distribution challenging, but then it does what it is supposed to do, namely accentuate preferences. PQMethod 2.11 (Schmolck, 2002) was used to analyze data.

## Q-Sample

Two interviews were conducted with two Norwegian adult children of divorce in their mid-thirties. In addition to statements created from literature (e.g. Størksen, 2005), these interviews were important sources of statements for the Q-sample.

Two dimensions were considered in the creation of the Q-sample. First, the authors wanted statements that covered both the child and the adult perspective of the divorce event. Second, the authors wanted to explore viewpoints of both the actual divorce event and also viewpoints related to living-arrangements that were made for the children. The Q-sample was, therefore, structured in a Fisher's balanced block design (Brown, 1980; Stephenson, 1953). As shown in Table 1, this Q-sample has four categories. Each category has seven statements, resulting to 28 statements as shown in Appendix A.

Table 1. Distribution of statements in the Q-sample.

	Child perspective, A	Adult perspective, B
Experiences related to the divorce, C	A x C	B x C
Experiences related to the living-arrangements, D	A x D	B x D

## P-set

An adult child of divorce was recruited from the South-West of Norway. The subject was given both written and verbal information about the study's purpose and design, and was subsequently presented with all his ethical rights according to Norwegian ethical standards for research. The subject signed an informed consent sheet that he was willing to participate. This study has been approved by the NSD (The Norwegian Social Science Data Services). Some details regarding the subject that are not of importance for the results of this study have been altered in order to secure the subject's anonymity. The subject was given the pseudonym "Magne." Magne's parents divorced when Magne was in his early school years. At the time of the divorce, Magne had one younger sister.

## Q-Sorting

In order to explore the various viewpoints of the divorce, Magne was given the following eight conditions of instructions: Sort the cards according to the way you think seems most like or most unlike the way:

- 1) you looked upon the situation as a child (*Short title: 'As a child'*)
- 2) you understand the situation today (*'Today'*)
- 3) you think your mother experienced the situation (*'Mother'*)
- 4) you think your sister experienced the situation (*'Sister'*)
- 5) you think your father experienced the situation (*'Father'*)
- 6) a person you know - whose parents do not live together - experienced his or her divorce (*'Friend'*)
- 7) you think it would have been best for your children in this kind of situation (*'Children'*)
- 8) you would have liked it to be for yourself (*'Wish'*)

The statements were sorted into a matrix ranging from - 3 to + 3. Four statements were



placed under each value, as shown in Figure 1. The reason for this flat distribution was that the statements in the Q-sample all seemed quite loaded with emotions. A neutral position seemed almost impossible for many of the statements, and the authors therefore assumed that several extreme categories were needed.

Most unlike						Most like
-3	-2	-1	0	+1	+2	+3
4	4	4	4	4	4	4

Figure 1. Q-sort distribution

Brown (1971) argued that the same results are obtained despite the response distribution, and that ordering preferences are more influential than distribution preferences and no important statistical information is lost by using differing distribution matrixes. Cottle and McKeown (1980) support that the matrix for Q-sorting is arbitrary for the results, and that bell-shaped, flat or matrixes with more statements on the extreme ends may be applied without seeming to affect factor structure. An important methodological issue in Q methodology is that the mean or zero has no weight, but is a “zone of hedonic neutrality”(Brown, 1980: 22) and can be seen as a relative point of meaninglessness compared to the more meaningful positions at each of the extremes.

Magne conducted Q-sorting during five different sessions on different days, thus experiencing only a maximum of two sorting conditions per day. Despite seemingly generous time for the Q-sorting procedure, Magne reported that working with the statements was psychologically challenging for him. However, he reported that he managed to complete sorting under all conditions of instructions, and was able to express his subjective experiences of his family situation.

## IV. Results

The main objective of this study was to explore an adult child’s various stories of the event of his parents’ divorce and of the living-arrangements that were made for the children. The eight different conditions of instruction resulted in eight Q sorts, which were analyzed by the PQMethod 2.11 program (Schmolck, 2002). Three factors emerged based on the principal component factor analysis. Varimax rotation led to three clear-cut factors

(Refer to factor scores in Appendix B and rotated factor matrix in Appendix C.) A centroid factor extraction with hand-rotation was tried out, but results showed that the original principal component extraction with varimax rotation led to a clearer factor solution.

Defining Q-sorts and distinguishing statements for each of the three factors based on this analysis are described below. The short title for the varying conditions of instruction was used instead of the full one.

### **Factor 1: Grief, confusion, and loneliness**

The following conditions of instructions defined Factor 1; “As a child,” “Today,” “Mother,” and “Sister.” Thus the Q-sort that Magne made for himself today, as a child, and the Q-sort that he made based on what he thought were the opinions of his mother and sister define Factor 1.

Distinguishing statements for Factor 1 on the positive end of the scale include “My mother thought the situation was devastating”(3), “I stopped smiling for a whole year”(3), “There are things my parents could have done to make the situation easier for us”(2), and “I had nobody to talk to about the divorce”(2).

On the negative end of the scale the distinguishing statements for this factor include “The divorce gave some positive changes”(2), “My opinions of where to live were taken in to consideration”(2), “We were safe at our dad’s place”(3), and “It was known for a long time that there would be a divorce”(3). All in all the most characteristic features of this factor might include grief and sorrow.

### **Factor 2: Responsible adults, consideration, and cooperation**

The following conditions of instructions define Factor 2; “Friend,” “Children,” and “Wish.” Thus, none of the Q-sorts that define this factor are actual people in Magne’s original family.

Distinguishing statements for Factor 2 on the positive end of the scale include “My mother and father tried to spare us children from conflict”(3), “My opinions of where to live were taken in to consideration”(3), “We had two equal homes”(2), “Cooperation regarding living-arrangements went well”(2), and “It was known for a long time that there would be a divorce”(1).

On the negative end of the scale, the distinguishing statements for this factor include “The parents are responsible for making living arrangements, and children should not have

to choose”(-1), “Traveling back and forth was hard/strenuous”(-2), “My mother thought the situation was devastating”(-2), “I missed my father a lot”(-3), and “There was too little contact with our father for him to call himself a real daddy”(-3). Thus, Factor 2 is characterized by a situation where adults take consideration for the children’s feelings and wishes, and where sad feelings are absent.

### Factor 3: Adult control and lack of consideration for children

“Father” was the only condition of instruction defining Factor 3. Distinguishing statements for Factor 3 on the positive end of the scale include “It was known for a long time that there would be a divorce”(3), “My mother thought the situation was devastating”(1), and “The worst thing was the conflict related to the divorce”(1).

There were distinguishing statements for Factor 3 that were neutral: “My opinions of where to live were taken in to consideration”(0), and “Security is the most important thing for children in this situation”(0).

On the negative end of the scale, the distinguishing statements for this factor include “It is important not to pretend everything is ok when it actually isn’t”(-2), and “Consideration of the children’s welfare is the most important when living-arrangements are made”(-3). Thus, the most characteristic features of Factor 3 might include adult control and a lack of consideration for children’s welfare.

## V. Discussion

### Factor 1: Grief, confusion, and loneliness

The factor is characterized by *grief*. The Q-sorts on this factor indicate that Magne’s mother was devastated by the divorce, and that he stopped smiling for a whole year. Furthermore the Q-sorts indicate that the divorce did not lead to positive changes. Factor 1 also indicates *confusion* among Magne, his mother and his sister. He thinks none of them were aware that there would be a divorce, and he does not believe that any of them felt the children were safe at the father’s house. Finally, Factor 1 indicates *loneliness*. The way Magne sees it, and the way he thinks his mother and sister see it, indicates that Magne had no one to talk to about the divorce, and that his opinions regarding living arrangements

were not taken into consideration. The way Magne sees it, the story of Magne, his mother and his sister is full of surprise and negative feelings. Furthermore, this story does not contain meaning and positive feelings.

Magne's story as a child and the way he understands the situation in retrospect seems very similar. This could either indicate that Magne is not able to distinguish the childhood and adult version of the family divorce, or it might indicate that there actually has not been any reflection that has led to a revision or adaptation of the original story. According to White and Epston (1990) one does not only describe one's past by telling one's story. One also lives out one's story in accordance with what is told. In Magne's case, there are a lot of negative feelings related to the story of his original family that might influence his current life in various ways. However, Magne reported that this very study led to reflection of past happenings and possible alternatives to the original story. This might help Magne reflect upon positive alternatives consisting of responsible adults, consideration, and family cooperation, as is the theme of the next factor.

## **Factor 2: Responsible adults, consideration, and cooperation**

Factor 2 is characterized by a lot of consideration for the children taken by the adults. The adults spared the children from conflict, they had two equal homes, cooperation went well, and the children's opinions were taken into consideration. Also, this factor is characterized by lack of negative emotions. All in all this factor might represent solutions that Magne would have liked to experience in his own childhood since the Q-sorts defining this factor consist of "Friend," "Children," and "Wish." These are not Q-sorts representing actual members of his childhood family, but other, alternative and better solutions to the divorce situation. By being forced to think of alternatives and wishes, Magne was able to suggest better and more child-friendly ways of dealing with a divorce than the one he himself experienced. The alternative way of dealing with the divorce is characterized by responsible and caring adults who — in spite of the divorce — are able to care for the children and continue parental cooperation for the children's best.

## **Factor 3: Adult control and lack of consideration for children**

The most characteristic features of Factor 3 might include a certainty on Magne's father's behalf that there would be a divorce. In Magne's opinion, his father — in contrast to the rest of the family — was very aware that there would be a divorce. Furthermore, Magne

thinks his father did not think much about Magne's opinions of where to live, and he does not think his father was especially occupied with child caring and security in the situation. He thinks his father would be willing to pretend everything was ok even if it was not. This might reflect the way Magne believes his father behaved in the divorce situation: His father may have seemed happy and relaxed when Magne thought everything was sad and confusing.

Also, he believes his father did not think that the children's welfare was the most important when living-arrangements were made. What does this mean? Maybe Magne thinks his father was more occupied with thinking of himself than thinking of the children. Taken together, Magne's picture of his father is characterized by adult control and lack of consideration of child-welfare. Magne's idea of his father's story does not seem well integrated with the story of the other family members.

## **VI. Q methodology, social construction, and family narratives**

This study indicates that Q methodology might be helpful in studying family narratives both in research and clinical settings. A number of social constructionists have used Q methodology and found it well suited to determine the subjectivity involved in social constructs (Smith, 2001). Social construction theory in general and more specifically narrative theory and therapy is founded on the belief that individual worldviews are constructed by various ways of storing and understanding social experiences among different individuals into personal stories or narratives (Atwood, 1997; White & Epston, 1990). Although Q methodology does not give a chronological or continuous narrative of family happenings from each family member (in the way people normally understand the concept of stories or narratives), Q methodology may have other strengths in relation to family narratives. In Q methodology the respondent tells his or her story through the way he or she sorts the statements. This matches very well with narrative theory and therapy and social construction theory. Furthermore, Q methodology allows for the highlighting of congruence and divergence among Magne's various family narratives in a systematic way. An individual expresses his or her view through the Q sorting process and there are no a priori categories. Each view emerges through Q factor analysis in the form of factor arrays. Regarding the continuous or chronological family narratives or stories, Q methodology allows for follow-up interviews where such narratives can be explored. Although the present study only focused on Magne's subjective perspectives of his and significant others'

feelings and experiences in relation to his parents' divorce, other family members could have been asked to participate in the study as well. This could have given a broader and more nuanced picture.

However, in this study the authors were exploring possible incongruence within one person. Since Q analysis results in various family members loading on different factors from Magne's viewpoint, a clearer picture of similarities and differences in family narratives are made possible. Such a picture may give new meaning both to researchers as well as to therapists and clients in clinical settings and shed light on hidden feelings and thoughts as was illustrated by Allgood (1999). In the clinical setting, Q methodology might help suggest alternative and more constructive family narratives that can help the client move forward and find alternative ways of understanding and dealing with his or her surroundings. This study's conclusion is that Q methodology might shed light on important aspects of family narratives in various settings.

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## Appendix A

### Distribution of the statements in the four categories

No.	Statement	Category
1	My opinions of where to live were taken in to consideration,	AD
2	Traveling back and forth was hard/strenuous,	AD
3	It is best to keep the families separated,	AD
4	We were safe at our dad's place,	BD
5	Consideration of the children's welfare is the most important when living-arrangements are made,	BD
6	I stopped smiling for a whole year,	AC
7	I would have been nice to be able to cry out,	AC
8	It was known for a long time that there would be a divorce,	AC
9	My father was a coward,	AC
10	The divorce gave some positive changes,	BC
11	I had nobody to talk to about the divorce,	AC
12	It is much nicer to have to places to be,	AD
13	I had a bad conscious (felt sorry for) for the parent I left when I had to go to the other parent,	AD
14	There are things my parents could have done to make the situation easier for us,	BC
15	We had two equal homes,	AD
16	It was easy to make decision about the living-arrangements after the divorce,	BD
17	My father missed us children,	BC
18	It is important for children to have both their mother and their fathers as active participants in their lives,	BC
19	There was too little contact with our father for him to call himself a real daddy,	BD
20	Cooperation regarding living-arrangements went well,	BD
21	My mother and father tried to spare us children from conflict,	BC
22	My mother thought the situation was devastating,	BC
23	I missed my father a lot,	AC
24	Security is the most important thing for children in this situation,	BC
25	There was an agreement on how the living-arrangements should be after the divorce,	BD
26	It is important not to pretend everything is ok when it actually isn't,	AD
27	The worst thing was the conflict related to the divorce,	AC
28	The parents are responsible for making living arrangements, and children should not have to choose,	BD

## Appendix B

### Q statements and rank scores

No.	Statement	Factor 1	Factor 2	Factor 3
1	My opinions of where to live were taken in to consideration,	-2	3	0
2	Traveling back and forth was hard/strenuous,	2	-2	2
3	It is best to keep the families separated,	0	-1	2
4	We were safe at our dad's place,	-3	3	3
5	Consideration of the children's welfare is the most important when living-arrangements are made,	1	0	-3
6	I stopped smiling for a whole year,	3	-3	-3
7	I would have been nice to be able to cry out,	0	0	0
8	It was known for a long time that there would be a divorce,	-3	1	3
9	My father was a coward,	-1	-2	-3
10	The divorce gave some positive changes,	-2	1	3
11	I had nobody to talk to about the divorce,	2	-3	-1
12	It is much nicer to have to places to be,	-3	0	-2
13	I had a bad conscious (felt sorry for) for the parent I left when I had to go to the other parent,	-1	-2	-2
14	There are things my parents could have done to make the situation easier for us,	2	0	-1
15	We had two equal homes,	-3	2	-3
16	It was easy to make decision about the living-arrangements after the divorce	0	2	-1
17	My father missed us children,	-2	-1	1
18	It is important for children to have both their mother and their fathers as active participants in their lives,	2	3	1
19	There was too little contact with our father for him to call himself a real daddy,	1	-3	2
20	Cooperation regarding living-arrangements went well,	-1	2	-2
21	My mother and father tried to spare us children from conflict,	1	3	0
22	My mother thought the situation was devastating,	3	-2	1
23	I missed my father a lot,	3	-3	3
24	Security is the most important thing for children in this situation,	3	2	0
25	There was an agreement on how the living-arrangements should be after the divorce,	-1	1	-1
26	It is important not to pretend everything is ok when it actually isn't,	0	1	-2
27	The worst thing was the conflict related to the divorce,	-2	-1	1
28	The parents are responsible for making living arrangements, and children should not have to choose,	1	-1	2

## Appendix C

### Rotated factor matrix for three-factor solution

Condition of instruction: Sort the cards according to the way you think seems most like or most unlike the way	Factor loadings		
	Factor 1	Factor 2	Factor 3
1)you looked upon the situation as a child ('As a child').	0,8348 X	-0,2743	-0,1249
2)you understand the situation today ('Today').	0,8674 X	-0,2555	-0,0451
3)you think your mother experienced the situation ('Mother').	0,8191 X	-0,3541	0,0697
4)you think your sister experienced the situation ('Sister').	0,7635 X	0,0967	0,1921
5)you think your father experienced the situation ('Father').	0,0780	0,0181	0,9646 X
6)a person you know – whose parents do not live together – experienced their divorce ('Friend').	-0,3219	0,7158 X	0,2717
7)you think it would have been best for your children in this kind of situation ('Children').	-0,0064	0,8694 X	-0,1887
8)you would have liked it to be ('Wish').	-0,2450	0,7531 X	0,0768

*Note* : The letter X indicates defining sorts.

국문초록

## 이혼에 대한 성인/아이의 눈을 통한 가족 담론

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본 연구는 Q 방법론을 적용하여 부모의 이혼에 대한 시각을 회상하는 한 성인으로부터 출발하는 단일표본연구로서 다양한 지시조건을 이용하였다. 피험자인 “망네(Magne)”와 자신 주변의 유의미한 타인들 사이에서의 일관성과 차이에 대한 다양한 담론을 탐구하였다. 모든 관점들은 망네 자신이 그와 타인이 이혼과정을 이해하는 방식으로 연구되었다. 28개 진술문이 성인과 아이의 관점을 나타내도록 선정되었으며 또한 이혼과정과 아이의 새 생활을 담고 있는 것이다. 7점 척도로 이루어진 분류를 통해 3개의 요인을 찾아냈는데 망네의 삶에 있어 유의미한 타인들의 시각에서 일관성과 차이점을 보여주었다. 어린이로서의 망네의 관점과 성인으로서의 관점은 매우 유사했다. Q 방법론은 가족담론을 연구하는데 있어 유용한 것 같다. 무엇보다 이 방법은 한 개인과 다양한 타인과의 담론 사이에 유사성과 차이점을 이해하는데 확실히 도움이 된다.

**주제어:** 이혼, 생활환경, 가족 담론, 적응, Q 방법론