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Sensitizing Social Interaction with a Mode-Enhanced Transcribing Process

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Abstract

Qualitative researchers often work with texts transcribed from social interactions such as interviews, meetings, and presentations. However, how we make sense of such data to generate promising cues for further analysis is rarely discussed. This article proposes mode-enhanced transcription as a tool for sensitizing social interaction data, defined as a process in which researchers attune their attention to the dynamic interplay of verbal and nonverbal features, expressions, and acts when transcribing and proofreading professional transcripts. Two scenarios for using mode-enhanced transcription are introduced: sensitizing previously collected data and engaging with modes purposefully. Their implications for research focus, data collection, and data analysis are discussed based on a demonstration of the process with a previously collected dataset and an illustrative review of published articles that display mode-enhanced excerpts. The article outlines the benefits and further considerations of using mode-enhanced transcription as a sensitizing tool.

Keywords

transcribing, sensitization, multimodality, qualitative research, interpretivism, qualitative content, semiotic analysis

Sensitizing Social Interaction with a Mode-Enhanced Transcribing Process

Qualitative researchers often work with texts transcribed from social interactions, such as interviews, meetings, and presentations. Although significant progress has been made in advancing data analysis (e.g., Clarke et al., 2021; Locke et al., 2022; Mees-Buss et al., 2022; O’Kane et al., 2021; Pratt et al., 2022), little attention has been given to sensitizing such data, that is, to generate promising cues for further analysis through “deep engagement with the data” (Jarzabkowski et al., 2021, p. 72; Kohler et al., 2022). In rare cases, researchers have discussed their sensitizing tools, such as using tables to “make sense of their data, even if, ultimately, [these tables] are not included in the final version of a

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paper” (Cloutier & Ravasi, 2021, p. 118) or visualization by “constantly scribbling, sketching, drawing” intuitive fragments and tentative interpretations to aid reflection on the transcripts (Ravasi, 2017, p. 243). As Corley observed in a Showcase Symposium held at the Academy of Management Annual Meeting in 2016, “you don’t pick up [these sensitizing tools] in a lot of methodology texts and how-to type of articles” (see Gehman et al., 2018, p. 296). Hence, this article proposes mode-enhanced transcription as another sensitizing tool that assists researchers in making sense of their qualitative data for further analysis.

Mode-enhanced transcription as a sensitizing tool refers to a process in which researchers attune their attention to the dynamic interplay of an uninterrupted stretch of speaking with prosodic features (e.g., speed and volume), paralinguistic expressions (e.g., pausing and laughing), and acts (e.g., gazes and body movement) when transcribing and proofreading professional transcripts. By actively engaging in this process, researchers immerse deeply in their data (Kohler et al., 2022), which enables them to contextualize the interaction and become aware of such nuances as emotions, practices, and power dynamics in their data (Pink, 2011; Poland, 1995; Sandberg, 2005). Thus, transcribing and proofreading professional transcripts is not “a mundane, time-consuming chore” (Tilley, 2003, p. 771) but an invaluable tool that enables researchers to attend to nuances in social interaction (Kohler et al., 2022) and generates cues for further analysis.

The article begins with an introduction to transcribing and transcripts in organizational research. I then explain the complexity of transcription and introduce mode-enhanced transcription as a sensitizing tool. Two scenarios are proposed for using the tool. One is to sensitize previously collected data, demonstrated by a personal experience of using mode-enhanced transcription to generate fresh cues from a previously collected dataset about culture at a technology start-up. The other is to engage with modes purposefully, to exemplify which I draw on eight published articles that suggest such a process in their research design and display more than one mode in their findings. Implications for research focus, data collection, and data analysis are discussed in both scenarios. The article concludes by discussing the benefits and further considerations of using mode-enhanced transcription to sensitize data collected either in physical contexts or via videoconferencing software.

Transcribing and Transcript in Organizational Research

Qualitative researchers often work with texts transcribed from social interactions, such as interviews, meetings, and presentations. Transcribing refers to a process of “turning a strip of ‘naturally’ occurring talk ... into writing ... to develop insights into the moment-by-moment and in situ construction of social reality and to provide evidence in developing an argument for an academic audience” (Bezemer & Mavers, 2011, p. 191). In organizational research, transcribers are expected to write down “the words heard on a recording” (Hammersley, 2010, pp. 559–560) to produce a neat, plain text containing what is said in social interaction, known as a verbatim transcript. These texts are often produced by professional transcribers. Typically, researchers treat verbatim transcripts as “quarries for potentially quotable and codable content” (Myers & Lampropoulou, 2016, p. 1), and these monomodal texts as their data (Pink, 2011). However, this approach underestimates the “unhidden complexity” of transcription (Hammersley, 2010, p. 554) and misses the opportunity of “understanding and appreciating ... fine-grained properties” of social interaction (Pratt et al., 2022, p. 214), which is the data we need to make sense of and analyze.

Unpacking the Unhidden Complexity of Transcription

The “unhidden complexity” of transcription (Hammersley, 2010, p. 554) involves two interrelated issues of textualizing social interaction. The first issue is the nature of real-time social interactions, such as interviews, meetings, and presentations, which are inherently multimodal (cf. LeBaron et al.,

2018). Modes are defined as “the culturally and socially produced resources for representation” and include speech, gesture, and facial expression (cf. Pink, 2011, p. 263). In a real-time social interaction, participants are not concerned with the particular words used, but with the understanding of what is being said, along with “other symbolic expressions, and ‘artifacts,’ of thinking, feeling, believing, valuing, and acting” (Gee, 1996, p. 131). They are also less focally aware of their nonverbal features and expressions (Polanyi, 1958), which are all vital modes from which researchers can make meaning in the cultural and social sphere where social interaction occurs (Jefferson, 1996; Kress, 2009). Hence, it is vital to be aware of the constitutive nature of social interaction as a multimodal performance (Sorsa et al., 2014), but this aspect is underrepresented in verbatim transcripts and needs sensitizing.

The second issue is the nature of transcribing as a social practice of construction (Hammersley, 2010). Kress (2005, p. 15) states that “[b]ecause words rely on convention and conventional acceptance, words are always general, and therefore vague. Words being nearly empty of meaning need filling with the hearer/reader’s meaning.” When producing texts from the recording of multimodal social interaction (Baralou & Tsoukas, 2015; Myers & Lampropoulou, 2016), the person who does this has to “make significant representational choices [about what and how to textualize], whilst acknowledging that they are constrained by the social context” (Bezemer & Mavers, 2011, p. 194). The choices needed in the reconstruction process (Pink, 2011) range from whether to include silences or time pauses to whether and how to incorporate acts, and all of these choices can be rational (Hammersley, 2010), reflexive (Cunliffe, 2002), and assumption-laden (Flyvbjerg, 2001; Stake, 1995). By engaging with transcription, researchers immerse themselves in these social contexts and become aware of the unsaid, the unusual, and the unexpected, which are not always accessible when working solely with verbatim transcripts but contain interesting cues worth further analysis.

A Mode-Enhanced Transcribing Process as a Sensitizing Tool

This article proposes a mode-enhanced transcribing process as a tool for sensitizing social interaction data. Engaging with mode-enhanced transcription attunes a researcher’s attention to the “semiotic resources beyond verbal language” (Jancsary et al., 2016, p. 181), which include (1) prosodic features such as speed, volume, and intonation; (2) paralinguistic expressions including pausing, laughing, and sniffing (Baralou & Tsoukas, 2015; Jefferson, 1996; Myers & Lampropoulou, 2016); and (3) acts such as eye contact, gestures, postures, gazes, body movement, and manipulation of objects in social interaction (Norris, 2004; Wohlwend, 2011). Engaging in the process, either when producing a transcript or proofreading a professionally produced text, enables researchers to attend to such nuances as assumptions and unusual moments and to generate interesting cues for further analysis. The differences between verbatim and mode-enhanced transcription are summarized in Table 1.

First, engaging in a mode-enhanced transcribing process allows researchers to (re)live the moments of interaction they have co-created (e.g., interviews) and observed directly (e.g., meetings and presentations) or indirectly (e.g., social interaction recorded by someone else). This can prompt them to be aware of the contexts and the “ongoing, contextualized interpretation by speakers and listeners that shapes the emerging conversational events” (Lapadat & Lindsay, 1999, p. 70). Through this process, researchers can also surface and reflect on the taken-for-granted perceptions, overlooked perspectives, and unusual moments (Hindmarsh & Llewellyn, 2018), which may be valuable to pursue further in data analysis (Davis, 1971; Jonsen et al., 2018).

Second, engaging in a mode-enhanced transcribing process directs a researcher’s attention to the material means for representation in the interaction, such as acts, gestures, and body language that participants exhibit as well as the physical materials and tools these participants manipulate in their speech (Baralou & Tsoukas, 2015). Through the process, researchers may notice the patterns

Table 1. A Comparison Between Verbatim and Mode-Enhanced Transcription.

Transcription	Verbatim	Mode-Enhanced
Purpose	Producing a neat, plain text containing what is said	Sensitizing data by attending to mode interplay in social interaction and, if desired, producing an abbreviated multimodal text that fits theoretical underpinnings
Process	Writing down the words heard on a recording	Attuning attention to or notating nonverbal features, expressions, and acts and their interplays when listening to a recording for transcribing or proofreading
Outcome	Verbatim transcript	Mode-enhanced transcript
Use	Transcribing as data preparation Transcripts as data to analyze upon	Transcribing or proofreading professionally transcribed texts as a sensitizing tool Transcripts as artifacts to show trustworthiness

of mode interplay between verbal and nonverbal features, expressions, and acts and their relations to the social context as a whole, all of which convey meanings that researchers could make sense of (Sandberg, 2005). These patterns are also invaluable for researchers to sensitize data collected virtually via videoconferencing software, which is challenging to contextualize without a physical context.¹ Finally, presenting some of these nuances could strengthen the trustworthiness of qualitative research (Kohler et al., 2022), which I now discuss.

Mode-Enhanced Transcripts as Artifacts

Engaging in a mode-enhanced transcribing process formally, by adding abbreviated notations of nonverbal features, expressions, and acts to a verbatim transcript, results in a mode-enhanced transcript. This transcript is a text of multimodal ensembles (Kress, 2011) that contains “a socially and culturally shaped set of resources for making meanings, such a speech, gesture or image” (Bezemer & Mavers, 2011, p. 196). Such texts are professional artifacts: the finished products of the transcribing process² (Bezemer & Mavers, 2011). Researchers could choose to present these mode-enhanced excerpts to strengthen the trustworthiness of their research and make their interpretations more accessible and comprehensible (Jancsary et al., 2016; Wertsch, 1991). However, it is vital to note that our primary purpose in engaging with mode-enhanced transcription is to interact with our data extensively, rather than producing a mode-enhanced transcript. The essence is in the process of doing.

Two Scenarios for Sensitizing Social Interaction with the Mode-Enhanced Transcribing Process

Below, I propose two scenarios in which researchers can use mode-enhanced transcription as a sensitizing tool. One is to sensitize previously collected data. In this scenario, researchers attune attention to mode interplay when reviewing data collected previously, either by themselves or someone else, to generate fresh cues for analysis or reanalysis. They may also engage in the process when they feel stuck while analyzing verbatim transcripts. The demonstration below illustrates how I engage in the transcribing process as a tool for making sense of and generating fresh cues from a dataset that I collected previously. The other scenario is to engage with modes purposefully. In this one, researchers consider mode-enhanced transcription at the outset of research design. They are aware of the epistemological assumptions entailed in transcription (Bezemer & Mavers, 2011) and elucidate some of these aspects in their research process (e.g., Jarzabkowski & Lê, 2017;

Table 2. Two Scenarios for Sensitizing Social Interaction Using a Mode-Enhanced Transcribing Process.

Scenario	Sensitizing Previously Collected Data	Engaging with Modes Purposefully
Purpose	Attuning attention to nuances in data collected previously Generating promising cues for further analysis or reanalysis	Highlighting theoretical underpinnings Serving analytic purposes
Implications for research focus	Sharpening research focus and adding nuances to interpretation Shaping research focus and shifting research questions	Focusing on emotion, discourse and communication, and practice theory May be useful for areas such as power dynamics and researcher identity
Implications for data collection	No influence on data collection	Preparing researchers to collect mode-rich empirical materials upfront
Implications for data analysis	Need to assess the quality and availability of mode representation Analyzing strategy may change due to shifting research focus May be useful for engaging with other sensitizing tools	Prompting researchers to record significant modes in their observation Shaped by research design May help generate codes

Pouthier, 2017). I draw on eight articles published in the leading journals³ to identify such practices, and I then discuss implications for research focus, data collection, and data analysis. A summary can be found in Table 2.

Sensitizing Previously Collected Data with the Mode-Enhanced Transcribing Process

Researchers can engage in the mode-enhanced transcribing process to sensitize previously collected interaction data, identifying the nuances that they may have ignored in their monomodal verbatim transcripts (Pink, 2011), and thus generating fresh cues that they may have missed. In these cases, researchers may focus on prosodic features, such as loud emphasis, elongation, quicker utterance, pauses, and their interplay with paralinguistic expressions such as laughter, and distinctive acts such as knocking on a table (Sorsa et al., 2014). The demonstration below shows how this process helps sensitize a previously collected dataset about culture at MAX (a pseudonym for a technology start-up). Implications for research focus, data collection, and data analysis are discussed to guide researchers.

Prolog: Revisiting a Culture Study in a Technology Start-Up

MAX is a technology start-up located in Melbourne, Australia. Back in 2007, it was at the stage of scaling. Concerned with rapid global expansion as an early-stage venture, the founding directors were eager to maintain MAX's culture, which they regarded as crucial for their success. Part of the study was to understand the founders' perceptions of MAX's culture. Hence, I interviewed Bob and James (both pseudonyms), cofounders and managing directors, separately. Interview questions mostly concerned cultural values, such as "What do people value at MAX?" and "How do you feel about the values MAX has?" I also jotted down notes immediately after these interviews. Here, I focus on the interview with Bob.

The original analysis was based on a verbatim transcript, along with a positivist assumption (Burrell & Morgan, 1979; Cilesiz & Greckhamer, 2022) that data are "produced through objects in the world

Table 3. A Comparison Between a Verbatim and a Mode-Enhanced Transcript in MAX's Case.

	Verbatim Transcript	Mode-Enhanced Transcript ^a
Excerpt #1 The genesis of culture	You don't sit down with the first day with a new job and you go, ok, let's create a culture that is XYZ. You just don't [do that]. The culture becomes what the business [is], the culture ends up reflecting the personality of people within it.	You don't sit down with, the first day ((bouncing the ball)) with a new job and you go, ok ((bouncing the ball)), let's create a culture, that is >XYZ<. You just don't, you don't do. The culture becomes what the business. The culture ends up reflecting the personality of people within it.
Excerpt #2 Corporate culture during global expansion	So you can argue that having fun value is [an] Australian one, because if you are in Japan you don't know how to have fun at work, where there's just a straight down line, you are at work to work and that's it you go home. But I think it would improve our business if we can take some of these things to other countries and get the people. We have to bring on that as well.	So you can argue that having FUN ((pause)) umm value is >Australian one< because:::se if you are in ((pause)) Japan you don't know how to have fun >at °work< where there's just a straight down line—you are at ((bouncing the football)) work ((bouncing the football)) to work and that's °it°, you go home. But I think it prove our business if we can take >some of the:se things to other countries and get the people we °have° to >bring on that< as well.
Excerpt #3 Maintaining corporate culture as a global firm	What we're not trying, we are trying not to do is we don't want to set up a different type of culture in every country because you are not going to get any efficiency there, they might be making a mistake. So the best way for us to be successful is to get... It took us 4, 5 years to figure out that bit of the culture right, much as deep as I said, let's grab on that, lock it down, becoming aware of it. And make sure you grow as it alleged. So we don't want to have different culture in different areas of businesses, we want to get the same culture, same core culture. So we have different person, have different personalities on the surface, but the core is going to be the same.	What we've not trying, we are trying NOT to do is we don't want to set up a differ:::ent >type of< culture in every country, because ((pause)) you are not gonna get any efficiency there they might be making a mistake So, THE best way for us to >be successful< is to get... It took us 4, 5 years to figure out >that bit of the< culture right much as deep as I said, let's grab on that, lock it down, beco:ming aware of it. And ((pause)) make sure you grow as it °alleged°. ((pause)) yeah so we don't ((bouncing ball on the table)) want to have differ:ent culture in >different areas of businesses<, we want to get the same culture, SAME CO:RE culture. So we have different person, have different personalities on the sur:face, but the co:re is gonna be the same.

^aTranscription notations: (()) A depiction of paralinguistic features or acts confirmed by field notes; >< A quicker utterance; Colon An extension of the sound or syllable; LOUD Louder; ((pause)) Nothing said; Co:::ons Prolong the stretch; ° A passage of talk quieter than the surrounding talk.

imprinting their characters upon our sense” (Hammersley, 2010, p. 554; Sandberg, 2005). The study finds that the managers’ documentation of values and culture tends to achieve their expectation of assisting in the maintenance of corporate culture and its transfer within the global network. As the verbatim quotations in Table 3 suggest, in Bob’s view, MAX’s culture, such as “having fun value,” emerged at the early stage, “the culture becomes what the business [is],” which was then codified, “grab on that, lock it down,” and enforced in various local offices globally: “the core is going to be the same.”

Several years later, I revisited the MAX dataset, which comprises interview recordings, transcripts, field notes, and some archival documents provided by the venture. First, I proofread my transcript while listening to the interview recording. I soon became intrigued by Bob’s linguistic pattern (Gee, 2009). I found that he spoke at a faster pace, in phrases, in a noticeably stronger Australian accent, when describing his past experience as an engineer before cofounding MAX; he slowed down with many pauses, stresses, and elongations when the topic moved to his current experience as a managing director of MAX. I also noticed the repeated sound of thud in the soundtrack, which was confirmed by my field note that Bob was playing with a miniature Australian football when interviewed. These materials suggest nuances that I did not notice previously when focusing on the verbatim transcript. Hence, I decided to try mode-enhanced transcription to explore whether fresh insights can be generated from this dataset.

Mode-Enhanced Transcribing Process as a Sensitizing Tool

Based on Bob’s linguistic pattern in the original soundtrack and his acts recorded in the field notes, I focused on some of the most distinctive features, particularly speed, volume, and vocal stress, and added these features to the verbatim transcript with Jefferson’s transcription notations (Atkinson & Heritage, 1999). Table 3 illustrates a comparison between a verbatim and a mode-enhanced transcript with notation legends in the footnote. However, it is critical to note that attention should be given to the transcribing process for deep interaction with data rather than producing a mode-enhanced transcript perfectly.

Attuning attention to ignored nuances. When engaging in a mode-enhanced transcribing process, our focal consciousness is naturally drawn to such features in the recording as the elongation, volume, pauses, and other background sounds, such as the ball bouncing in Bob’s case. This is when we begin our sensitizing process. Below, I present three examples to show how mode-enhanced transcription oriented my attention to the potential tensions, blurs, and resonances (Wohlwend, 2011) in Bob’s talk that had been ignored previously.

The first example is from Bob’s response to what corporate culture is. In Excerpt #1 in Table 3, two characteristics immediately attract attention. The first one is the elongation of the “becomes” of culture and the “culture” itself. The elongation tentatively suggests that Bob has a strong view about the emergence of MAX’s culture. The second feature is the ball bouncing during Bob’s monolog. When Bob bounced his miniature Australian football, he was talking about a hypothetical scenario that he disagreed with. Similarly, in a separate episode, Bob banged the desk when he was describing MAX at the early stage as “young and exciting” and praised an employee who was no longer with the venture as someone who was “really dedicated” and “work[ed] hard.” These patterns suggest that when Bob displayed these nonverbal features, expressions, and acts, he seemed to feel strongly about something positive, such as the emergence of a culture, or negative, such as codifying a culture, which was occurring at the time of the interview.

The second example is Bob’s reaction to the question of how to deal with the potential conflict between the Australian culture that MAX intended to promote and the local cultures in the overseas offices. In Excerpt #2, attention is drawn to the loud emphasis on “fun,” the elongation of “because,” and the elongation of “these things,” by which Bob means values. First, Bob emphasized the “having

fun value” at MAX. Then he paused, seeking to embed the value in a broader Australian context and thus highlight MAX’s Australian origin. Then he sought to explain that such a value could be unique by elongating “because” and pausing to search for a counterexample: Japan. He bounced the football when speaking about his perception of workplace culture in Japan. The act of ball bouncing occurred simultaneously with his emphasis on the office workers in Japan either “at work” or “to work.” Finally, he proposed to bring “some of these things” to other countries. By elongating “these things,” Bob reinforced the values, such as having fun at MAX, and the plan to “bring” these values to other countries. The emphases, elongations, and occasional acts attuned my attention to Bob’s dichotomy between the home culture and the host culture, with which he sought to highlight the supremacy of the fun culture at MAX.

The third example is Bob’s response to the question about MAX’s attempt to “standardize culture.”⁴ In Excerpt #3, emphases are given to several dichotomies: different versus same, core versus surface, not to do versus the best way. There are also multiple pauses before elaboration and further explanation. These suggested that Bob was struggling between what to do and what not to do and between what should be different and what should be the same about the work culture across MAX’s overseas offices by loudly emphasizing “not” and “same” and elongating “different” and “core.” He seemed to support the current practice of documenting these value statements (e.g., “lock it down”) but signaled that he was not entirely sure whether these values could be enforced by elongating “becoming aware of it” and murmuring over “as alleged.” Finally, he wrapped up and reinforced the idea of retaining “the same culture, same core culture” by admitting that it could be different “on the surface.” These emphases and elongations of dichotomized words make me become aware of the potential tensions, conflicts, and paradoxes in Bob’s perception of culture.

Generating fresh cues for reanalysis. As I attuned my attention to the interplay between various modes when engaging in the mode-enhanced transcribing process, I noticed several areas of potential interest when reanalyzing the data. First, there are tensions and discrepancies between Bob’s definition of the home culture that MAX is embedded in and the host cultures that MAX is entering or is about to enter due to its global expansion. Bob was convinced that MAX’s culture became what it is because of everybody who lived and worked there at the early stage. He opposed the idea that a company can create a culture by writing down what they would like to become, which was shown in his emphasis on “becomes” and “culture” in the first excerpt. However, when discussing the cultures of other countries, Bob readily objectified these as having or having not. He compared Australian culture with Japanese culture and highlighted having fun as part of Australian culture, and tied this to the success of MAX, as the second excerpt has shown. Hence, one area to consider when reanalyzing the data may be the epistemology of various cultures in the home country versus the host country.

Second, there are tensions and conflicts between building a culture at the early stage and maintaining the culture when the venture grows. Bob’s emergence theory about how “culture becomes” soon gave in to the codification argument to ensure it is enforced in the overseas offices, as the first and third excerpts have shown. This can orient my attention to the founding team’s perceptions of corporate culture over time and prompt me to explore the dynamics through which these perceptions remained contradictory or became reconciled.

Third, there are conflicts and blurs in Bob’s understanding of culture “on the surface” versus core values. On the one hand, Bob stressed that working culture differed in Australia and Japan and characterized the Japanese as either “at work” or “to work” and “that’s it,” as the second excerpt has shown. The remark highlights the superiority of one value in his home culture and indicates his attempt to bring “these things” to the host culture. On the other hand, there is a level of uneasiness when asked whether he was thinking about “standardizing” corporate cultures in his overseas offices by imposing MAX’s Australian culture in an attempt to prevail over various host cultures. Bob

hesitated by pausing a few times, emphasized the coreness of MAX's culture, and admitted the existence of different ways of acting, as the third excerpt has shown. Hence, I can become attentive to the justifications that informants offered when explaining their understanding of culture.

Epilog: A Reflection

The demonstration above illustrates how engaging with mode-enhanced transcription helps sensitize the previously collected data, uncovering neglected nuances, and generating fresh cues for reanalysis. By attuning my attention to these nonverbal features, expressions, and acts, I quickly reimmersed in the data that I collected years ago, which triggered some new ways of seeing (Gioia et al., 2013; Jarzabkowski et al., 2021). However, effective use of the tool requires us to reflect on our paradigmatic preference (Cilesiz & Greckhamer, 2022). Indeed, when trying this tool, I was receiving “methodological socialization” in a PhD program in the United States, where I found myself experiencing the trajectory of “readily accept[ing] postpositivism” (Cilesiz & Greckhamer, 2022, p. 356) and began to identify myself as an interpretivist. The awareness of such a preference is prominent among researchers who engage with modes purposefully, which is the other scenario, discussed later.

Implications for Research Focus

Researchers who engage in a mode-enhanced transcribing process to sensitize their previously collected data may well have their intended research questions to address and literature to contribute to. Hence, sensitizing their data in this way does not automatically alter their research. Instead, it could sharpen their research focus and add nuances to their interpretations. For example, in the demonstration above, as I became aware of the founders' contradictory perceptions of their home and host cultures, I could sharpen my research focus from identifying how ventures maintain their culture during global expansion to understanding how ventures manage contradictory perceptions when intending to maintain their cultures. Alternatively, sensitizing the data with the mode-enhanced transcribing process could reshape the research focus, should researchers choose to do so (see Pratt et al., 2022). For example, this case study about how ventures maintain corporate culture globally could be redesigned as a process study that explores how perceptions of corporate culture shift as ventures grow temporally and spatially.

Implications for Data Collection

Sensitizing the previously collected data with the mode-enhanced transcribing process does not affect data collection. However, researchers need to assess the quality of their data, particularly the availability of mode representations in their data, before using this sensitizing tool. The demonstration above shows that this process may benefit researchers with high-quality recordings of social interactions in which prosodic features and paralinguistic expressions are captured effectively. It is also ideal for ethnographers who regularly take notes or write reflective memos when observing and interviewing in their fieldwork because such notes and memos can help identify and confirm various acts in these audio-recorded social interactions (e.g., Jarzabkowski & Lê, 2017; Pouthier, 2017).

Implications for Data Analysis

Sensitizing the previously collected data with the mode-enhanced transcribing process does not always change how data is analyzed with a particular qualitative method. However, as researchers interact with their data deeply, they may become aware of the unsaid, the unusual, and the unexpected in these mode interplays. As a result, their research focus may shift, and so may their data analyzing strategy (Pratt et al., 2022). Researchers may also use other sensitizing tools, such as tabulation and

visual representation, for generating alternative cues that may also be worth pursuing (e.g., Cloutier & Ravasi, 2021; Ravasi, 2017).

Engaging with Modes Purposefully with the Mode-Enhanced Transcribing Process

Qualitative researchers can choose to engage with modes purposefully by considering mode-enhanced transcription at the outset of their research design (Hindmarsh & Llewellyn, 2018; Jonsen et al., 2018). To illustrate practices that researchers have adopted, I reviewed eight articles published in leading journals that each presented some form of mode-enhanced excerpt. The review shows that purposefully engaged researchers either fully acknowledge the theoretical underpinnings in their research, which often suggests some form of multimodality (Bencherki et al., 2021; Nicolini, 2009), or strive to be transparent about their analytic process, such as showing how emotion is captured in their studies (e.g., Jarzabkowski & Lê, 2017; Liu & Maitlis, 2014). Consequently, these researchers tend to focus on such features as speed, intonation, and volume and their interplay with paralinguistic expressions and physical acts to a great extent. A summary can be found in Table 4.

In addition, I identified the research focus, data, and modes in each of these articles, as given in Table 5. I then discuss their implications for research focus, data collection, and data analysis to guide researchers. Unlike the demonstration above that focuses on the process, this section illustrates the outcomes of researchers' sensitizing, analyzing, and theorizing processes.

Implications for Research Focus

Studies that display mode-enhanced transcripts tend to focus on three research areas: emotion (e.g., Jarzabkowski & Lê, 2017; Liu & Maitlis, 2014; Pouthier, 2017), discourse and communication (Bencherki et al., 2021; Nathues et al., 2022; Wenzel & Koch, 2018), and practice theory (Bencherki et al., 2021; Jarzabkowski & Lê, 2017). For example, Jarzabkowski and Lê (2017, pp. 442–443) employed a practice lens to understand how humor was used to balance paradoxical goals. Similarly, Pouthier (2017) focused on how socioemotional behaviors, such as griping and joking, shaped team communication. Other researchers have focused on strategy-as-practice and communication. For example, Wenzel and Koch (2018) explored how keynote speeches came into being as a staged genre of strategic communication from both a strategy-as-practice and a critical discursive perspective. Nathues et al. (2022, p. 9) examined co-authoring practices in strategy making, in which organizational actors intended to “speak and act in the name of their supervisors, their organizations, rules they must follow, etc.” Their detailed analysis also suggests that this mode-enhanced approach may benefit other areas, such as power dynamics in social interaction⁵ and reflection on researcher identity, because of such dynamics.⁶ Researchers have acknowledged these dynamics when interviewing elite participants (Empson, 2013; Ma et al., 2021) and when reflecting on their researcher identity (e.g., Alcadipani et al., 2015; Cunliffe & Alcadipani, 2016). Hence, researchers interested in power dynamics and researcher identity may also choose to sensitize their data with the mode-enhanced transcribing process.

Implications for Data Collection

In these eight studies, authors either video-recorded social interactions, such as meetings, presentations, and interviews (e.g., Bencherki et al., 2021; Liu & Maitlis, 2014) or audio-recorded them supplemented by extensive field notes and reflective memos (e.g., Jarzabkowski & Lê, 2017; Nicolini, 2009). They often notice various modes or patterns of mode interplay in their data collection and record them, wittingly or unwittingly, in their field notes. These field notes and recordings

Table 4. A Summary of Engaging with Modes Purposefully Based on Eight Published Articles.

Why Engaging with Modes Purposefully	How Mode-Enhanced Transcription is Used	What Benefits from Engaging with Modes Purposefully	Examples
Theoretical underpinning: actions and social actions are comprised of both speech and acts Analytic purpose: instances of emotion are indicated by both nonverbal cues and verbal statements	Notating both speech and transcription, such as depictions of prosodic emphasis, elongation, overlaps, and pauses Notating depiction of emotion, including humor, based on facial, vocal, physical, and verbal cues	Uncovering social practices or processes of meaning-making, strategy making, and (inter)organizational communication Displaying emotion empirically, including humor, in social actions and interactions	Nathues et al. (2022); Bencherki et al. (2021); Jalonen et al. (2018); Wenzel & Koch (2018); Nicolini (2009) Jarzabkowski and Lé (2017); Pouthier (2017); Liu and Maitlis (2014)

Table 5. An Illustrative Review of Eight Published Articles

Article (Order by the Year of Publication)	Research Focus	Data	Displayed Modes	Representative Excerpts	Sensitizing
1. Nathues, Endendijk, & van Vuuren (2022)	<p>Research area: Co-authoring practices in strategy making; communication as strategizing</p> <p>Research question: How do interorganizational team members build a collaborative strategy in their situated interactions?</p>	<p>Data collected: Video-recorded meetings; field notes; documents; interviews with participants</p> <p>Presumption: Organizational actors "speak and act in the name of their supervisors, their organizations, rules they must follow, etc." (p. 9)</p>	<p>Paralinguistic expressions and depictions of acts (e.g., laughing, nodding, and looking at someone)</p> <p>Prosodic features: Emphasis (e.g., confidential); an extension of the sound or syllable (e.g., e::h); overlapping talks (e.g., "=:"); pauses (e.g., (:))</p>	<p>Max: Yes, because -cause I- I eh we since we are in the [X] industry (:) we have a huge firewall. That's also things we need to investigate. You also have your firewall = ((looking at Tom)) Tom: = Yeah, but I work next to the boss of the firewall so ((laughing)) Anna: The main reason to use [hub] as a::: technology and uhm because what we have done now is- is creating another third party to [hub] and that's (I.O) eh like eh the main reason to use [hub] is to <u>remove</u> that third party and eh now you add it and then uhm so (I.O) eh that's why you wouldn't use [hub].</p>	<p>Expressing the concern as irrelevant ("but I work next to the boss of the firewall so ((laughing))")</p> <p>Speaking with team's voice ("what we have done now") Detaching herself from the team's strategic choice ("eh now you add it and then uhm so")</p>
2. Bencherki, Sergi, Cooren, & Vasquez (2021)	<p>Research area: Communication as materiality; strategy-as-practice</p> <p>Research question: How do partners and members of a community-based organization decide strategic issues in a strategy planning exercise?</p>	<p>Data collected: Video-recorded workshop; audio-recorded interviews</p> <p>Presumption: People's saying and doing are social actions as turns of talk or gesture (p. 614)</p>	<p>Depiction of acts (e.g., looking at somebody, shaking head etc.)</p> <p>Prosodic features: Overlapping talks (e.g., "=:"); pauses (e.g., (:))</p>	<p>Janice: But, in the district, do you know what it's like in the district? Is it more small landlords, or do we talk about more...? Damian: ((Pointing at Janice)) Well, you know about that better than I do. Mary: It's many companies ((looks at Tina who shakes her head approvingly; the others look at them)). Janice: Because it's many big buildings, it's many companies in the district. Because the apartments, it's not (:) it's rare</p>	<p>Recognizing an issue needs to be substantiated ("((Pointing at Janice)) Well, you know about that better than I do.") Seeking approval ("((looks at Tina))") Corroborating ("((shakes her head approvingly))")</p>

(continued)

Table 5. (continued)

Article (Order by the Year of Publication)	Research Focus	Data	Displayed Modes	Representative Excerpts	Sensitizing
3. Jalonen, Schildt, & Vaara (2018)	<p>Research area: The role of language in sensemaking; practice-based perspective; strategy discourse</p> <p>Research question: How do actors use concepts in strategic sensemaking? How do these concepts enable or constrain strategy work in contexts such as strategic change?</p>	<p>Data collected: Verbatim transcript of audio recording of meetings and observation notes</p> <p>Presumption: Language as social practice in which meanings are subjected to negotiation and redefinition</p>	<p>Paralinguistic expressions (e.g., laugh)</p> <p>Depiction of acts (e.g., read, draw on a whiteboard, etc.)</p>	<p>that you will have two-unit, three-unit (.) it's often big buildings with twenty-five, thirty.</p> <p>Janice: Especially in buildings with thirty units. Well, we'll try to mobilize everyone. [Well (inaudible) we'll try to mobilize everyone.</p> <p>Kevin: [So, in that building, we target the building, and we try to have the most people.]</p> <p>Edgar: Can't you make a complaint on the apartments? As an organization?</p> <p>Janice: Can we? I remember that- We can we file a complaint directly with the City? ((Turns toward Tina))</p> <p>Kevin: Yeah.</p> <p>Mayor: So should we replace this with "active citizens"? You'll remember that the word responsibility was considered too strong, and it was removed [by politicians]. The new wording [gives a small laugh] was that we don't increase self-responsibility, but instead increase the activity of our inhabitants.</p> <p>D2: I wonder what that means. [D1 laughs.]</p> <p>M1: An interesting issue related to basic services emerged in the press: "granny logistics," or</p>	<p>Jointly establishing an issue being challenging with rapid turns of talk ("[Well (inaudible) we'll try to mobilize everyone. [So, in that building, we target the building, and we try to have the most people.]"</p> <p>Indicating an open question ("Can we? I remember that- We can we file a complaint directly with the City?" ((Turns toward Tina))</p> <p>Suggesting the awareness of multiple meanings associated with one term ("I wonder what that means." [D1 laughs])</p> <p>Drawing attention to the specific aspect of the issue ("Here, for</p>

(continued)

Table 5. (continued)

Article (Order by the Year of Publication)	Research Focus	Data	Displayed Modes	Representative Excerpts	Sensitizing
4. Jarzabkowski & Lé (2017)	<p>Research area: Practice lens on paradox</p> <p>Research question: How does humor construct paradox within everyday work? How do these constructions shape the responses that actors make to paradox?</p>	<p>Data collected: Non-participant observation of meetings, interviews, shadowing, documents</p> <p>Presumptions: "Instances of humour [...] are utterances which are identified by the analyst, on the basis of paralinguistic, prosodic and</p>	<p>"Paralinguistic, prosodies and discursal clues" (e.g., emphasized, laughing, smiling, smirks)</p> <p>Depiction of acts (e.g., directing at somebody, pretending to be somebody else)</p>	<p>[subsidized] transportation for the elderly [based on the Elderly Care Act]. We have an obligation to organize it, but we can increase self-responsibility by giving the opportunity and directing inhabitants to use [shared] services, combining the trips of several people. This increases their self-responsibility when people commit to adjusting their schedules to fit such transportation. Hence, self-responsibility very often happens within the basic services.</p> <p>D1: Should we divide this in two: the responsibility of society and the [inhabitant's] self-responsibility? I mean, there is a lot of self-responsibility there, when we think of the actions you've taken.</p> <p>Mayor: Here, for instance. [Draws on a whiteboard.]</p> <p>Bob (smirking): "There were 740 pages of process diagrams, but I left them off." Wendy and John giggle</p> <p>John (feigning incredulity): "What? I thought they'd enjoy those." John, Sally and Bob laugh loudly</p> <p>Jack (amused): "Wow—That's almost as much as Sally sent!"</p>	<p>instance." [Drawing on a white board]</p> <p>Suggesting futility ("I'm not sure [the auditor] has even read that." Fritz laughs)</p>

(continued)

Table 5. (continued)

Article (Order by the Year of Publication)	Research Focus	Data	Displayed Modes	Representative Excerpts	Sensitizing
		discoural clues, as intended by the speaker(s) to be amusing and perceived to be amusing by at least some participants [other than the speaker]. (p. 441, text in brackets added)		<p>Sally (cynically amused): "And I have gone for quality, not quantity, Bob." Wendy laughs</p> <p>Andy (to Bob): "Oh—right—Got [the diagrams] whittled down to six."</p> <p>Fritz: "Actually, I'm not sure [the auditor] has even read that." Fritz laughs</p> <p>Andy (insisting): "Oh, no, he has."</p> <p>Andy and Fritz laugh: "He has!"</p> <p>Andy and Simon laugh</p> <p>"I've checked (deeply emphasized)." Wendy laughs</p> <p>Fritz: "Oh. Good! I want him to read every single piece that Wholesale sends. Of this huge, huge report." Wendy, Andy, and Graham laugh.</p> <p>Barry (smirking): "Do I mention this bit about 'only divisions' [need to be coordinated]?"</p> <p>Max (chuckling): "Well, 'coordinating divisions'; that's jumping into solutions. ..."</p> <p>Trevor: "You could note that that's for consideration..."</p> <p>Others grin at the "only divisions" terminology in the proposed Matrix structure</p> <p>Trevor: "Okay, Barry, thanks."</p> <p>Max: "In which case you should also note that Barry is going down [to] the job center [to look for a</p>	<p>Suggesting naivety about the problems of coordinating structurally separated divisions (Others grin at the "only divisions" terminology)</p>

(continued)

Table 5. (continued)

Article (Order by the Year of Publication)	Research Focus	Data	Displayed Modes	Representative Excerpts	Sensitizing
5. Pouthier (2017)	<p>Research area: Social-emotional behaviors in team communication</p> <p>Research question: What are the roles of griping and joking in cross-boundary teams?</p>	<p>Observation, interviews, with extensive field notes highlighting verbatim discourse and emotional displays</p> <p>Presumption: Non-verbal cues both as primary indicators of displayed emotion and as confirmatory indicators, alongside individuals' verbal statements</p>	<p>"Paralinguistic, prosodies and discursal clues" (e.g., understanding tone, sympathetic tone, etc.)</p> <p>Depiction of acts (e.g., grimacing and nodding, rolling eyes, patting somebody on the shoulder, etc.)</p>	<p>new job]" Sally, John, Trevor, and Barry laugh loudly</p> <p>Social Worker: We've been really hectic in here lately, my day off last week felt so great.</p> <p>Nurse [rolling his eyes]: Don't tell me! Happy to escape the craziness soon. Wanna hear my plans?</p> <p>[They smile at one another and sigh.]</p> <p>Nurse [looking as if the sky is about to fall on her head] – The family is ... well ...</p> <p>Advanced Practitioner [in a sympathetic tone] – Let's say complicated. I'm very sorry.</p> <p>Social Worker [grimacing and nodding] – I second that. They're challenging.</p> <p>Care Coordinator [patting the nurse on the shoulder] – We'll help you, [Laughter]</p> <p>Excerpt 2: Keynote 29</p> <p>1 (Figure 2a: The keynote speaker keeps his hands in a tense position in front of his body)</p> <p>2 The iPod mini, an incredibly successful product. The iPod nano is</p> <p>3 (Figure 2b: The keynote speaker rhythmically moves his left hand up and down)</p> <p>4 half the thickness. It's 62%</p>	<p>Acknowledging and validating the feeling ([rolling his eyes] Don't tell me!)</p> <p>Signaling the same experience is shared ([smile at one another and sign.])</p> <p>Inviting all to share in through "the speakers' facial expression and/or bodily actions." (p. 759).</p>
6. Wenzel & Koch (2018)	<p>Research area: Strategy-as-practice; critical discourse analysis</p> <p>Research question: How do keynote speeches come into being as a staged genre of strategic communication?</p>	<p>Data collected: Presentation videos and documents</p> <p>Presumption: Keynote speeches are multimodally accomplished through the enactment of discursive practices</p>	<p>Depiction of acts (e.g., lift up the left hand, move the left hand back to the front of the body)</p>	<p>Substantiating a statement and statistics by lifting up his left hand and rhythmically underlining the spoken figures with it</p>	

(continued)

Table 5. (continued)

Article (Order by the Year of Publication)	Research Focus	Data	Displayed Modes	Representative Excerpts	Sensitizing
7. Liu & Maitlis (2014)	<p>Research area: Emotional display; strategy discourse; strategizing processes</p> <p>Research question: How emotional dynamics generated through the displayed emotions in strategic conversations shape a top management team's strategizing?</p>	<p>Data collected: Audio- and video-recorded meetings</p> <p>Presumption: Emotions are displayed by using non-verbal cues and individuals' verbal statements.</p>	<p>Emotion depiction (e.g., anger, annoyed, excited, etc.) based on facial, vocal, physical, and verbal cues (Table II, p. 209)</p>	<p>smaller in volume. That means it's almost one third</p> <p>5 of the size</p> <p>6 (Figure 2c: The keynote speaker moves his left hand back to the front of his body)</p> <p>7 of the iPod mini.</p> <p>Excerpt 5: Keynote 34</p> <p>1 (Figure 5a: The keynote speaker lifts his hands from a hanging position)</p> <p>2 We</p> <p>3 (Figure 5b: The keynote speaker moves his hands upward and outward and holds both</p> <p>4 hands as if he were pushing forward)</p> <p>5 pioneered this concept of the tiny, affordable</p> <p>6 (Figure 5c: The keynote speaker leads hands back to a hanging position)</p> <p>7 shuffle player. And it worked.</p> <p>Tom: We crystallize the projects and people so they can't fire them, is that what you're saying? (Simon: Yeah). Well they could just go in and fire them. (Simon: No). That seems like a pretty underhanded, like you don't. . . . [Neutral]</p> <p>Simon: Yeah, I think what we're saying is \$1.2 million or whatever profits we're making – a lot of that is contingency, right? A lot of that</p>	<p>Underlining the claim of iPod's groundbreaking nature ("pioneered this concept") further by body language (pushing his hands forward) as if he were visibly demarcating the product from other devices</p> <p>Neutral tone suggests disagreement ("like you don't. . ." [neutral]) and further explanation was made with excitement ("That means people. So you know, you figure out how much would we need.") [Excited]</p>

(continued)

Table 5. (continued)

Article (Order by the Year of Publication)	Research Focus	Data	Displayed Modes	Representative Excerpts	Sensitizing
8. Nicolini (2009)	Research area: Practice theory Research question: How do we re-present practice?	Data collected: Audio-recorded interviews; field notes; documents Presumption: Studying practice requires choosing different angles, such as verbal words, vocal expression, and bodily acts, through a toolkit-logic approach	Depiction of acts (e.g., turns slightly on the chair and smile) Prosodic features: Prolonged stretch (e.g., you ::know::); louder words (e.g., Can you tell me); overlapping talks (e.g., [Yes])	is, 'OK well let's figure out that.' What does that mean? That means people. So you know, you figure out how much would we need. [Excited] Kathy: . . . so it's a bit of a gap-filler and there's something else cool coming down the road. So it's a bit of a carrot for people. [Neutral] Victor: We can sell them that we hope there's a carrot. Even now, I can't . . . [Frustrated] . . . Victor: I can't even tell them if we're doing [game name], or whatever it's called. [Frustrated] John: On Monday I had announced that originally we were doing [game name]. [Neutral] Victor: Yesterday you asked them, 'Are we going to do it or not?' [Annoyed] N: Good morning, how are you? The nurse takes a look at the sheet with the tests in front of her/him which he/she had looked at before. Then he/she puts down the sheet and smiles (on the phone) . . . P: Not too bad, thank God . . . however, you know . . . my triglycerides N: I know . . . I've seen your	Lacking empathy ("so it's a bit of a gap-filler and there's something else cool coming down the road. So it's a bit of a carrot for people." [Neutral]) Negative emotions leading to fracture ("Yesterday you asked them, 'Are we going to do it or not?'" [Annoyed])

(continued)

Table 5. (continued)

Article (Order by the Year of Publication)	Research Focus	Data	Displayed Modes	Representative Excerpts	Sensitizing	
				tests.... P: Yeah....my triglycerides! N: They are not exactly where they should be.... P: (Mumble)....well, you know, I cannot resist.... (.) Yeah::my triglycerides = 6 = They are not exactly where they should be (.) 7 mm (.) well you :;know:: I cannot resist = 8 = I know (.) some crisps here some cheese there:: 9 and your triglycerides stay high (.) 10 Can you tell me your pressure, please? 11 90 over 130 12 Seems fine to me ::		Caring, informal, and playful tone ("I know (.) some crisps here some cheese there::") Formality resumed (e.g., emphasis when saying "Can you tell me")

become essential materials for researchers to further sensitize their data and represent it as multi-modal. For example, in a study about griping and joking, Pouthier (2017, p. 754) admitted that it was not her initial research design, but “their significance emerged through observation.” Ultimately, she marked all the incidents based on “paralinguistic, prosodic, and discursal clues” and reconstructed a mode-enhanced transcript using her field notes and recordings. Similarly, Jarzabkowski and Lê’s (2017, p. 433) study “was inspired by an observation [in the field]: people make a lot of jokes about paradoxical conditions.” Hence, researchers can remain reflective in the field. Researchers may also consider their data collection strategies, such as video-recording interviews and meetings (Heath & Luff, 2018; Jarrett & Liu, 2018; Mengis et al., 2018), or using professional recording devices to ensure high-quality soundtracks and specialty software to timestamp field notes while recording. Similar attention to various modes or patterns of mode interplay may be particularly useful when collecting virtual interactions, such as videoconferencing meetings, interviews, and presentations.

Implications for Data Analysis

Engaging purposefully with mode-enhanced transcription does not dictate the direction of data analysis, even though it may help generate codes⁷ (Locke et al., 2022). Instead, it is the research design that shapes how researchers analyze their data. For example, Bencherki et al.’s (2021) research question is how members of a community-based organization decide strategic issues in a strategic planning exercise. Their analysis “followed insights from interaction analysis” (p. 613) and focused on “what people were saying and doing as social action, asking, for each turn of talk or gesture: what are people doing here?” (p. 614). Data analysis can also be shaped by theoretical and epistemological underpinnings (Gehman et al., 2018). For example, Nicolini (2009, p. 1396) argues that practices should be represented from “different angles, such as verbal words, vocal expression, and bodily acts, through a toolkit-logic approach.” These examples also echo the recent call for methodological bricolage (Pratt et al., 2022), which requires deep interaction with the qualitative data and can be facilitated by mode-enhanced transcription. Nevertheless, the usual challenges of qualitative work remain (e.g., Jonsen et al., 2018; Sandberg, 2005).

Benefits and Further Considerations of Using Mode-Enhanced Transcription as a Sensitizing Tool

As shown above, sensitizing data with mode-enhanced transcription enables researchers to interact with their data extensively, attune their attention to the often-neglected nuances, and generate promising cues, which may be valuable for “creatively combining codes, abstracting from the data, dialoguing with existing theory, and so on.” (Locke et al., 2022; Pratt et al., 2022, p. 214). Researchers with rich experience in, familiarity with, and deep knowledge of the context may uncover these insights, nevertheless. However, such insights may be neglected when researchers only focus on verbatim words. Hence, engaging in the mode-enhanced transcribing process is useful for researchers working with social interaction data in several ways.

First, mode-enhanced transcription is useful for researchers who plan to (re)visit data collected previously, whether by themselves or by someone else. Engaging in the process offers researchers a vital opportunity to relive the social interaction and (re)immerse themselves in the data, enabling them to attune their attention to a few features and expressions, such as elongation, loud emphasis, pause, quick utterance, and distinctive acts. By attending to these nuances, researchers become aware of taken-for-granted perceptions, overlooked perspectives, and unusual moments (Hindmarsh & Llewellyn, 2018), which may lead to potential cues for creative analysis (Klag & Langley, 2013). Mode-enhanced transcription can also be valuable for researchers to sensitize data collected with

videoconferencing software. Such data are often challenging to contextualize due to a lack of physical contexts.

Second, considering mode-enhanced transcription at the outset of research design is beneficial for researchers to uncover social practices, display emotion empirically, and unpack processes of meaning-making, strategy making, and (inter)organizational communication, as the illustrative review above has shown. Engaging in the process purposefully allows researchers to stay true to the theoretical underpinnings of social theory and be transparent about their analytic process, such as showing how emotion is captured by examining both verbal statements and nonverbal cues (e.g., Liu & Maitlis, 2014; Pouthier, 2017). Considering modes proactively also prepares researchers for collecting mode-rich empirical materials to ensure the availability of modes relevant to detailed analysis (e.g., Nicolini, 2009; Wenzel & Koch, 2018). Finally, researchers who engage with modes purposefully can be well served by noting various modes and mode interplays in their transcripts.

Third, researchers may augment the trustworthiness of their work by presenting a mode-enhanced transcript. It may help researchers defend the analyzing process, which is often built upon heuristics, sign-reading, and sense-making (Poland, 1995). As Tilley (2003, p. 771) commented,

researchers can strengthen claims of trustworthiness of data by making visible the complexity of transcription work, acknowledging the interpretive reality of data constructed, and providing insight into the ways in which they specifically address issues of trustworthiness in their research practices.

However, it is vital to note that a mode-enhanced transcript as an artifact does not offer “a full or objective record of ‘what happened’” (Hammersley, 2010, p. 555). Instead, it is always mediated by our perceptions of transcription (Myers & Lampropoulou, 2016) and of social interaction and by our research interests (Lapadat & Lindsay, 1999; Sandberg, 2005). Likewise, such a transcript does not unveil the sensitizing process completely because an article in print is the outcome of an iterative process of sensitizing, interrogating, and navigating between theory and data (Locke et al., 2022; Mees-Buss et al., 2022).

There are some further considerations when using mode-enhanced transcription as a sensitizing tool. First, because transcribing is often considered “a mundane, time-consuming chore” (Tilley, 2003, p. 771), engaging in the mode-enhanced transcribing process can be seen as an overwhelming effort. Researchers can choose to attend to various modes while listening to their recordings as an integrated part of their meaning-making process without producing a mode-enhanced transcript (Hindmarsh & Llewellyn, 2018; Jonsen et al., 2018). Hence, engaging in this process is to “supply heuristic” (Hammersley, 2010, p. 27). Researchers can also make abbreviated notations of such features and expressions as speed, volume, pausing, and laughing when proofreading the professionally transcribed texts to facilitate deep interaction with the data.

Second, mode-enhanced transcription does not “provide recipes for doing research or even specific guidance” (Hammersley, 2010, p. 27). It does not render meanings automatically. Rather, as Hindmarsh and Llewellyn (2018, p. 430) rightly noted, “[the] measure of evidence is not that a particular ‘cue’ occurred, but that the cue is ‘oriented to’ by those in the setting as having a particular quality or implication.” Thus, as a sensitizing tool, mode-enhanced transcription is generative. It is also worth noting the interpretivist assumption underlying such a process (Locke et al., 2022; Mees-Buss et al., 2022). Researchers may need to be mindful of their paradigmatic preferences (Cilesiz & Greckhamer, 2022).

Third, sensitizing the previously transcribed verbatim texts with a mode-enhanced process may lead researchers to believe that a meticulously constructed transcript is important and even essential. Engaging in this process is not about producing an object or artifact, although presenting mode-enhanced excerpts may augment the trustworthiness of research. If researchers choose to

construct and present mode-enhanced transcripts, such representations need to fit their research design and focus (see Gehman et al., 2018 for a theory–methods fit discussion) rather than overwhelming readers with unnecessary notations and signs. After all, mode-enhanced transcription is intended to be a sensitizing tool that helps researchers attune attention to nuances and generate potential cues, which may lead to interesting findings and trustworthy presentation of qualitative research.

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Notes

1. I would like to thank one reviewer for this timely suggestion.
2. This article differentiates the process of transcribing for sensitizing social interaction that can be presented as multimodal texts from transcribing for textualizing social interaction whose outcome researchers can analyze. This article aims to show the potential of the former, while the latter has been extensively discussed in video-based data collection (e.g., Heath & Luff, 2018; Mengis et al., 2018) and multimodal data analysis (e.g., Hindmarsh & Llewellyn, 2018; LeBaron et al., 2018; Toraldo et al., 2018). Hence, this article is not about transcribing per se but how to use transcribing techniques to sensitize qualitative data.
3. I searched 11 journals on the Web of Science using “qualitative” as the keyword (*Journal of Business Ethics*, *Organization Studies*, *Organization Science*, *Academy of Management Journal*, *Journal of Management Inquiry*, *Organizational Research Methods*, *Strategic Organization*, *Administrative Science Quarterly*, *Journal of Business Venturing*, *Organization*, and *Strategic Management Journal*) in the past 5 years (2017–2022). I then sorted the results manually and identified two articles that display more than one mode in their findings (Pouthier, 2017; Nathues et al., 2022). Because multimodality is often discussed in organizational communication research, I repeated the process using “communication” as a search keyword, resulting in three articles (Wenzel & Koch, 2018; Bencherki et al., 2021; Jalonen et al., 2018). With the additional three articles that I consulted extensively (Jarzabkowski & Lê, 2017; Liu & Maitlis, 2014; Nicolini, 2009), I reviewed eight articles in total. The review was not exhaustive but illustrative (e.g., Langley & Klag, 2019). It is also important to note that these examples, unlike the demonstration of the MAX case, illustrate mode-enhanced transcription as an outcome.
4. The question follows Bob’s analogy between MAX’s culture and McDonald’s formula: “it looks the sa:me tastes the sa:me people wear the sa:me clothes—they say the sa:me things, it’s it’s all the sa:me, and they get

that formula right and >put it through< across ((bouncing the ball)). Umm every every good company DOES the formula and gets it ri:ght.”

5. I would like to thank one reviewer for pointing out this vital area.
6. I would like to thank associated editor for reminding me of this crucial area.
7. Sensitizing and coding may not always be separated or follow a linear sequence (Locke et al., 2022). Researchers may choose to immerse themselves in their data first and analyze later. They can immerse themselves in and code their data simultaneously. This article focuses on sensitizing; readers interested in coding can consult Locke et al. (2022).

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