

Coding Manual

Beginnings and endings of life narratives and initial social contextualization

Version 3.1.1

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Version 1: with Silvia Ehlert-Lerche & Claudius Stauffenberg 2005

Version 2 and expanded by contextual variables: Andrea Rodriguez & Christin Köber 2009, 2012

The coding system was first presented in

Habermas, T. (2006). „Kann ich auch ganz, ganz am Anfang anfangen?“ Wie Jugendliche lernen, Lebenserzählungen zu eröffnen und beenden. In H. Welzer & H. J. Markowitsch (Eds.), *Warum Menschen sich erinnern: Fortschritte der interdisziplinären Gedächtnisforschung* (pp. 256-275). Stuttgart: Klett-Cotta.

To date it was used in the following two publications:

Habermas, T., Ehlert-Lerche, S., & de Silveira, C. (2009). The development of the temporal macrostructure of life narratives across adolescence: Beginnings, linear narrative form, and endings. *Journal of Personality, 77*, 527-560.

Bohn, A., & Berntsen, D. (2008). Life story development in childhood: The development of life story abilities and the acquisition of cultural life scripts from late middle childhood to adolescence. *Developmental Psychology, 44*, 2008, 1135-1147.

Overview

Table: combination of the codes to make numerical variables

Summary values	Code	
Variable 1 Beginning of the life narrative	0 = beginning unclear	BEGUN
	1 = beginning after birth	BEGTIL3
		BEGTIL6
		BEGTIL18
	2 = beginning at birth	BEGAT0
	3 = as 2, plus object. details	BEGAT1
	4 = as 3, plus birth story	BEGAT2
Variable 2 End of the life narrative	0 = arbitrary end	ENDARB
	1 = end in present	ENDCUR
	2 = end with retrospect	ENDRET
	3 = end with prospect	ENDPRO ¹
	4 = end with retrospect AND prospect	ENDALL
Additional variables socio-historical contextualization of beginning Variable 3 Historical context Variable 4 Socio-economic context Variable 5 Family constellation Variable 6 Family history	HICO	1
	SOCEC	1
	FAMCO	1
	FAMHIS	1

¹ ENDRET and ENDPRO are coded separately to be able to differentiate the temporal direction of the final views. However, we think that prospect and retrospect are of equal complexity and therefore should obtain the same value in the final ordinal variable. Thus for the final ordinal variable “maturity of ending” or “contribution of ending to global coherence” these values (2 and 3) need to be transformed into identical values (3 to 2 and 4 to 3).

Variable 1: **START** Beginning of the life narrative²

- 1.1** **BEGAT – Beginning at the birth**
- 1.1.1** **BEGAT0** mentions only the birth in the first sentence
- 1.1.2** **BEGAT1** gives additional objective statistical details such as name, birthplace, native country, name of the clinic, location of the clinic, date of birth, etc. (at least one detail)
- 1.1.3** **BEGAT2** describes in addition further, more precise circumstances of the birth (e.g. premature birth, particular kind of maternity clinic)
- 1.2** **BEGTIL - Beginning after the birth**
- 1.2.1** **BEGTIL3 - Beginning between birth and 3rd year of life**
mentions events in the age range 0-3 years before attending kindergarten or events which are only conclusive in this age range (unless the age is given)
- 1.2.2** **BEGTIL6 – Beginning after the 3rd year of life (from kindergarten up to before starting school)**
mentions e.g. a kindergarten, name, location of the kindergarten or year or the age up to 3 years
particular events in connection with the kindergarten/concerning age range, certain persons in connection with the kindergarten/concerning age range (e.g. friends, teachers) before starting school.
- 1.2.3** **BEGTIL18 – Beginning after the 6th year of life (up to the end of school days at ca. 18 years)**
mentions one or several school(s), the first day at school, the ceremony on that day
gives name, locality of the school or year or the age up to 6 years
mentions particular events in connection with the time at (primary) school
mentions certain persons in connection with the time at (primary) school (e.g. friends, teachers)
- 1.3** **BEGUN - Beginning unclear**
From the text it cannot be inferred at what point of time in the course of his/her life the narration begins.

Variable 2: **END** of the life narrative

- 2.1** **ENDCUR – Narration ends with the current life situation** (without looking back, without looking forward, but the life narrative told is brought to a logical close)
- 2.2** **ENDRET – Narration ends in the present and with a retrospective view** (reflections on the course of one's own life, observations on one's own development, judgments on one's own behaviour, etc.)
- 2.3** **ENDPRO – Narration ends in the present and looking forward into the future** (prospects, plans, assessments of one's own future development, etc.)
- 2.4** **ENDALL – Narration ends in the present and with retrospect and with prospect**
- 2.5** **ENDARB – Narration ends arbitrarily at some point of time in the course of his/her life**
(end is abrupt, e.g. because the narrator can't think of anything else or because he/she has run out of time and the narration of the life narrative does not conclude with the current situation)

² The code „Beginning before birth“ has been deleted due to its relative rarity in our material. The mentioning of the time before ones birth is captured by the additional variables 3 to 6.

1.) Variable „Beginning of the life narrative “

The variable refers to those statements or events with which the narrator begins the life narrative. This opening sequence can vary in length. Sometimes it may be just one sentence, sometimes several sentences, until he/she turns to a different topic, a different phase of life, etc.

It is assumed that the shaping of the beginning and end of a life narrative will allow conclusions to be drawn about how far narrators orientate themselves by a conventional scheme for the course of their lives. The more completely the life narrative is started off and finished off in a culturally accepted way, the greater the global coherence of the life narrative.

The variable „Beginning“ with its codes registers at what point of time in someone’s life a life narrative starts as well as – when beginning with the birth – the extent to which the account goes beyond the mere mention of the birth and beyond objective data about the birth.

There is NO CODING:

If the life narrative begins before birth, this is NOT coded, but is reflected in the additional context codes. Here we only code beginnings no earlier than birth. If the life narrative starts before birth,, then leaves out birth and continues after birth, the beginning after birth is coded here..

Often narrators are uncertain about where to begin and therefore start by remarking on this fact.

These remarks are not considered here as a beginning.

Likewise an introductory „self-presentation“ („My name is... and I’m an only child“) **does NOT count as a sequence** that is coded with BEGTIL18.

Category 1.1 Beginning of the life narrative at birth

With the following three codes BEGAT all statements or events are coded which introduce the life narrative with the person’s own birth, subdivided according to the amount of detail given about the birth:

Code BEGAT0

Definition Here only the mention of the birth without further details is coded.

Examples:

- Well::: since my birth (-) was actually (--) I went, was the first big event, that I went to kindergarten
- Ah, of the birth I’ve only seen a photo, therefore I can only...
- Well, first of course I was born (-) and er after I was born, then I can’t actually remember very well any more, but as a small child then again
- Well, first important experience was my birth,

- although I don't remember it,
but still, um well
- Okay, I can still remember
that I er that a close acquaintance of my mother's was there at my birth
 - I came into the world
and then, well that's just when my sister died
 - Well, I was born,
of course I can't remember it any more,
after all who can
 - OK um::: yes I came into the world
and at first still know relatively little,
 - Maybe we should begin with the story of my (h)genesis...
Er I have two elder sisters,
today they're thirty-nine and thirty-seven,
so they're quite a bit older than me (-), um
the two of them also have a different father,
but my father raised them from the very beginning,
well my mother left her ex-husband relatively early
and my father actually no longer wanted a child of his own
because the two of them were actually enough for him
and because he actually looked on them as his own
and so that's how I then came into being so was more or less an accident.
["came into being" is taken as a mentioning of birth. Also FAMHIS and FAMCO are coded with "1"]

These examples are **NOT** coded:

- Well um, shall I say
when I was um born?
[Interviewer: If you think it is part of your life narrative.]
Hmm ((laughs lightly)), well at the age of two I got neurodermitis against...
- When I came out of her belly,
then my fa my brother was always allowed to go with my father to work,
I too always wanted to um go with them (--)
and and there there we, then we then I simply stayed sitting on the sog sofa
and cried
because I wasn't allowed to go with them

Code **BEGAT1**

Definition If the life narrative begins at birth and contains additional **objective** details e.g. of temporal or spatial determination, e.g. socio-demographic data like name, date of birth, birthplace or native country, name of the clinic, etc., whereby at least one additional detail suffices for the allocation of this code.

Examples:

- Ok well um::: I'm my name is Besa Omar,
that is er an Arabic name,
Besa means ((meaning))
and um I was born on May 3rd, so under the sign of the Taurus, in Stuttgart.
Um well at the Elisabethen, well I believe even at the Elisabethen no at the Citizens' Hospital.

- Well I was born in Frankfurt,
I have one brother,
I have a sister,
 - Well, I was born on June 18 1987, and um I'm , at first I only had, well I had none,
I didn't know
that I had brothers and sisters
 - Okay, I was born in Frankfurt
 - Well I was born on October 3 1981 at 12.10 noon in maternity building number 3 in Poland in a sort of little
dump outside Warsaw, fifty kilometer,
called Lodz',
 - Yes well as I said
my name is Daniel Christoph Müller,
still my second name
I was born on March 13 1987
 - Well I come from <<Arabian country>>
1982 I was born
 - Well I was born in Brasil
 - Well with me it all started um
1982 I was born in Frankfurt,
to be more precise at the children's clinic in Höchst
 - It er began of course with my birth.
I was born in Frankfurt
um er Schiffer H-Hospital [+ hm, h'm]
 - Um well I was born in Poland in the capital Warsaw,
I have an elder sister (-)
- Well well that's quite clear
that first of all I came into the world, (-)
and um then (-) well then well four years before my brother was already born
and and I and my brother have our birthdays on almost um on almost the same day,
because his is on January 28
and my my birthday is on January 26 and um (-)

There is **NO** coding of any additional details which are not objective, e.g. when the birth is mentioned in connection with a special event and otherwise no further objective details are given.

- I came into the world
that's just when my sister died
-
- Okay, I can still remember
that I um that a close acquaintance of my mother's was there at my birth
[this is coded BEGAT0]

Code **BEGAT2**

Definition The conditions for BEGAT1 must be fulfilled and additional statements about the birth are made or special events during the birth are narrated, such as the course the birth took, premature birth, special kind of clinic, twin birth, etc. Here is shown that the narrator already goes beyond the conventional way of narrating with purely objective data.

Examples:

- Okay well on March 27 1991 I was born in Frankfurt at North West Hospital, um and then I first of all well I believe
yes then we I believe went back home the same day too and then we first of all because my mother then stopped working
- Yes then let's begin first with my birth,
that I hope one can still hear,
I don't know
[Yes, yes] Okay. Um::: that was on May 17 1982,
that was here in Frankfurt, at Bonifatius Hospital,
that's back there um the border with Westend, down by the Nidda more or less,
and er (-), I've no idea,
I believe I came a week too early (--), yes about a week too early
but that's not the end of the world either
I believe,
there's still nothing to worry about, (-)
and I was the er second child of altogether three children later then.
Then I also have a younger brother and an elder sister.
- Well I was born in Stuttgart on June 6 1986 at the St. Mary's Hospital,
the exact time of day I don't really know,
in any case it was early morning.
My mother told me,
that I almost came in the car,
well simply because::: I was pretty (-) I was pretty much in a hurry apparently
and yes then there I don't know I believe I'm not sure my mother told me quite often
that once there were also problems at the hospital
- OK, well um I have a twin sister
and um I came um into the world on December 6 1990
in fact in Croatia, er yes by Caesarian (h)section,
okay um at any rate my sis' well we um came into the world at seven months
and we er we were, so my sister and I were too light and um too small well
and that um so rather smaller chances of,
I'd now just say ha ha chances of survival,
- um in any case so we got through it quite well after all

Um on November 12 1986 I was born in Hanau
and um that was not a normal, that was not a hospital,
that was not at the doctor's either,
that was a special kind,
that's always difficult to explain,
that was simply with a midwife,
well that was a sort of maternity clinic, or such,
and that was also, my mother also went home straight after the birth
and I came, really should've already come two weeks before,
but I took my time a bit
but shortly before we then went to hospital
I then made myself felt after all and came.

Well I was born on February 21 1982, here in Frankfurt ((clears throat)) on on a Sunday,
was born a month too soon
 actually already far too big well I was actually relatively, I should
 actually have come on March 18th, um as I said on the 18th
 yes but four weeks too early
 already almost four kilos and over 50 centimetres,
 at the time my mother might have was already Caesarian section
 and might almost have died of it
 well had I stayed inside another four weeks
it probably wouldn't have gone off so well any more

- Well um I was fathered in 1989,
 then my father left my mother
 and then gave birth to me alone in 1990
 [This contains more than just the year of birth (BEGAT1), namely the circumstance that her mother had been
 left by the father and that she was born already as a child to a single mother – therefore code BEGAT2]

There is **NO coding** of statements which do not contain both objective and subjective details, i.e. the mentioning of the birth plus one event does not suffice.

- I came into the world
 that's just when my sister died
- Okay, I can still remember
- that I um that a close acquaintance of my mother's was there at my birth
 [*this is coded* BEGAT0]

Category 1.2 **Beginning of the life narrative after birth**

With the codes BEGTIL all those life stories are coded which begin with events or statements that refer to the time after the birth up to the age of about 18 years or the conclusion of the school days. Subcategories are the age ranges 0-3 years, 3-6 years and 6-18 years. Sometimes the age cannot be deduced from the first sequence. Then clues must be sought in the following text which allow conclusions to be drawn about the age. Do not make any vague estimates which are not supported by concrete details (e.g. "then I was still 4"). If the point of time of the beginning is unclear then coding is done with **Category 1.3.5 BEGUN = Beginning is unclear and cannot be deduced (s.b.)**.

Code **BEGTIL3** (up to the age of 3 years)

Definition Narrator begins the life narrative with statements or events which occurred between birth and the age of 3 years, that is before attending kindergarten. These include e.g. experiences as a small child, either at home or in a play group, details of the physical development (learning to walk or speak) or details from which the age up to 3 years can be deduced.

Examples:

- Um well I'm Matthias Maier,
 and I'm an only child,
 and um I don't actually know so much at the beginning

what happened to me
for then I was still small
 and now that has all gone again from my memory,
 um er at four I went to kindergarten
 um with lots of friends
[first real memory is the kindergarten, so the first statement must date back to the time before]

- Well when I was quite small
 then I got up to a whole lot of mischief,
 e.g. I always opened the drawers
 and took e.g. a fork out
 and lifted up (-) the carpet with the fork and that sort of thing
 and sometimes I also tore up a few letters
 and then we had, had to write them once again (-) and then.
But then I now got so much bigger
and then I went to kindergarten
[so here one can conclude that he/she was talking about his/her infancy]
- Um (pause) from zero on till um (pause) when I was one year we moved house, (-) um yes <<laughs>> (pause)
- Well um::: (-) er actually I only remember the bi the first big event or so, was was,
 well well that I remember,
 was that um I once went shopping with my mother,
then I was two years old or so
- Well, (--) um I liked my second New Year's Eve
 because then I was then we celebrated it earlier
 and the last time, my first New Year's Eve
- (Pause) er (---), when I was two (-)
 I was also even already once in hospital
- Well the first thing
 that I remember
 that I went to the play room,
 there I got to know my first friends
 and what
 I remember
 was really wonderful
- I can still only um well when I was small
 I can actually, I can remember
 when I was small
 that we were in Bhutan
 an::d there was also something quite funny
 in fact there was a red chili or a green one
 and then I took a bite of it
 and because I was still small
one or something um that didn't bother me at all
- (Pause) well the first thing
 that I can still remember, (-)
then I could still cra', that is not walk
- Okay, well um, well my, when I was um a baby
 well that was, now I just can't remember very well any more,
 but um well at any rate I was actually looking forward to kindergarten
 and didn't cry,
 well I was looking forward to it, well actually

- Ah, (-- me and my father, my brother and my mother went to the swimming pool,
I swam a bit with my father
and then my father had to go briefly to my mother
because they met the relatives
and chatted a bit and so on.
Then my brother came,
dipped me,
I couldn't get any air,
my father came
and fetched me up out of the water
and said:
"Why did you dip your little brother,
after all he's still so small.
....(later in the text:) ... And um few years later, one year later my mother said
"Now you'll learn to walk."
Then I gawled and gawled and gawled

Do NOT code:

- Yes how shall I tell it then?
[Interviewer: As you would like, can begin with the first card.] (-) hm, h'm. (-)
The most important thing for me was
that I learned to speak
because
if I couldn't speak
I couldn't find any friends,
couldn't play with others
[here the statement is too general, no conclusions possible, BEGUN]

Code 1.2.2 **BEGTIL6** up to the age of 6 (up to before the first day at school)

Definition Life narratives which begin with events or statements about the time between entering kindergarten and the first day at school. These include e.g. all details about the kindergarten attended such as location, name; kindergarten experiences as well as persons in connection with the kindergarten (friends, teachers) or events and persons that are conclusive in this age range if the age is not given or details from which the age can be deduced.

Examples:

- And then I um also played with my two cousins, (-)
then I also went er sometimes with my father um er with my father, with with the whole family well,
how shall I put it, to a sort of holiday home like, stayed there overnight, four or three days,
no idea any more
what that was,
there was billiards and yes [When you were three years old?] + Hm, h'm
- Well um (-) at the kindergarten um there were only small things,
well for example what, what I can still remember now,
that for example we were supposed to tidy up,
- Um (-) yes the first thing
that I can remember in my life
is just my time in kindergarten,
that there I had four best girlfriends er friends
well two girlfriends and one two boyfriends
that we also just um lived nearby,
nearby there was also the kindergarten
after kindergarten we always went to somebody's home
we just played and no idea,

- that's just the first thing
that I can remember in my life
- Okay, well I went to kindergarten at the age of three with lots of friends
that I already, that my mother got to know
and um those I also went to kindergarten together with,
 - My childhood as I experienced it and what I can remember
didn't actually really start before my time at kindergarten
 - U:::m the first time I played football
I was at kindergarten,
three or so and (-) played football with the others
 - (Pause) must I tell it in order?
[As you would tell me a coherent story of your life] (--)
well um (-) yes what shall I tell then?
Of course (-) at midnight at twelve the emergency doctor came (-)
and (-) my granny was not dead
no luckily not,
but just something similar (-) yes. (---)
Yes and (-) some time shortly after that,
when I was then four or so or five or
however old I then just became,
we went off on holiday
 - we:::ll when I was just still very very small
I went to kindergarten at the age of one or so (-)
and um yes and then don't know
then I was well were just my I was pretty popular
and a few boys even told me
they love me
and always wanted to sit next to me and so on,
but at kindergarten it wasn't yet all that interesting like
and then I always just thought
they're stupid like.
[here it is concluded that it must indeed concern an age from 3 years on]
 - Hmm yes (----) (at?) three years (-) I was also already once in hospital after all, (---)
and then I had some trouble with my bowels, (-)
and (-) with the kindergarten we always just went out into a wood,
and also I believe changed buildings three times, (---)
 - Well, can I also begin there *|points to card|* ? [Where you like.] + Hm, h'm.
 - As first thing I've taken the fifth birthday.
As my fifth birthday was the first time I got my new bicycle
and then I first learned to ride without stabilizers

Negative:

- Well::: since my birth (-) was actually (--) I was, was the first big event
- That I went to kindergarten
[This would be coded Category 1.2.1 Beginning at birth]

Category 1.2.3 Beginning of the life narrative AFTER the 6th year of life**Code BEGTIL18**

Definition The life narrative begins with events dating back to the time after entering school. These include in particular all details about the (primary) school attended such as location, name; experiences at the (primary) school as well as persons in connection with the school (friends, teachers) or events and persons that are conclusive in this age range if the age is not given.

Examples:

- OK::: well (-) the first thing about me is just that I went to primary school (-) [hmm] well from kindergarten (-) yes and there I just had a nice teacher (-) and with the er with my with my friends from primary school I actually got on quite well [hmm] (-) <<loudly>> well in the fourth year then not so any longer somehow
- Well, first, um:::, was (-) first (-) Shall I begin here, or...? [As you like.] Okay. Well first I went to school, but then we were still in Bad Godesberg Well, I um now that's what I actually never really liked, in fact I was um I was already at three different schools, well at, first at a primary school in Sachsenhausen, that was called ((name of school))
- Just a moment, how shall I begin? [As you would like.] Well when I went to school then I was very pleased like and well at first I was afraid of school, but then when I'd seen Mrs Fischer then I wasn't afraid any longer
- Yes good um on the first card I've written er introduction to school, that means er I first started school and ha had first done the preschool class
- Well I'm Hassan, I've been at Bettina School since, well since the fifth year, um before that I was at primary school, at at Schweizer School and um yes there that teacher who then in the fourth year said everyone was allowed to choose where he wanted to go, then she said I should first go er to a secondary modern school and then er if I want to a grammar school
- Well um, I wanted to tell you about my first day in the 6th year because well I once went to the school in the afternoon like and took a look round it together with my brother, he's younger than me, and um yes just in order to get to that school

Code 1.3 **BEGUN**

Definition With this all narrations of life stories are coded which begin somewhere in the course of the person's life **without the point of time being given**. Nor can the point of time be inferred from the following text.

Example:

- Well it all started
 with me and my mother (-) flying to er and my father to Oslo.
 To my cousin and her um brother (-), yes
 and there um my father was first bitten by by a sort of um snake,
 I believed, (-)
 and then he um, then somehow we got to hospital.
 [also from the following text it cannot be deduced which age it concerns and no conclusion can be drawn].

Variable 2 „End of life narrative “

This variable refers to the final sequences of the life narrative, i.e. events or statements with which the narration closes. Here a distinction is made between whether the end of the life narrative is shaped by the narrator himself/herself in that a so far more or less chronological autobiography is concluded in the current phase of life or whether the story ends because the narrator simply can't think of anything else after even the preceding description was rather characterized by an arbitrary stringing together of experiences. For the coding it is necessary to read the entire life narrative.

Should the young person already orientate himself/herself by a cultural concept of biography, then he/she ought automatically arrive in the present at the end of the life narrative. This would mean that he/she already knows how to determine his/her momentary position and that he/she is capable of combining his/her current identity with his/her own history.

With development life narrative takes on more and more the character of an explanation of the person's own development and his/her own life topics. Therefore additional subcategories register in how far a kind of retrospective evaluative view of his/her life so far and/or thoughts about future developments occur at the end of the narration.

Procedure if the spontaneous life narrative is prematurely interrupted by the interviewer:

The **end** of the life narrative told is first to **be set where the chronological narration of the life narrative stops**. This occurs in our material sometimes through the intervention of the interviewer, who through comments or requests for amplification interrupts or urges him/her to tell more. In these cases this point is to be treated as the end of the spontaneous life narrative. These premature endings need to be coded in a separate step for all life narratives *before* starting to code them.

Coding then proceeds in two steps in case there was a premature ending/interruption of the life narrative through the interviewer:

1) The proposition number marking the end is determined and there is a verification of whether the life narrative at this point has already arrived in the present and whether it has been narrated chronologically so far or not. (ENDCUR or ENDARB).

2) After this the details subsequently added by the narrator are read. **These supplementations are only then to be evaluated as well when they bring a gain**, i.e. when a coding can go beyond ENDARB or ENDCUR.

Examples:

- The end was marked at a point where the narrator has not yet arrived in the present. Now he/she also expands on experiences from his/her present life **situation, whereby present is defined here as events from the current year of life** of the narrator. Provided the narration was chronological so far, then the code ENDCUR can be used instead of ENDARB.
- The end is marked by a point in the narration which already refers to the present (ENDCUR). The narrator enlarges on reflections or future prospects (see definitions of ENDRET and ENDPRO). Provided that there is a chronology then the gain can be coded as ENDRET, ENDPRO or ENDALL.

3) The narrative following the interruption do not contain any gain and are therefore irrelevant for the coding:

- a) amplifications consisting only of repetitions or flashbacks into the past,
- b) reflections and future prospects if neither at the end of the spontaneous life narrative nor in the amplifications there are statements about the current life situation,

3) amplifications following an erratic, non-chronological life narrative, even if a connection to the present is contained in the additional narrative section. In this case we assume that this mentioning happened by mere chance.

Category 2.1 **End of the life narrative in the current life situation**

Code **ENDCUR**

Definition The life narrative closes with events from the immediate current life phase of the narrator. The end constitutes a formed ending, but contains no retrospective view and no future prospect. A formed ending means that the chronologically told story ends with events from the present (current year of life of the narrator). Possible Key words for the reference to the present are „now“, „recently“, „that’s not so long ago“, „the last thing I can remember“, etc.

There is NO coding of general statements in the present („I’m a positive person“) which refer to the current situation of the narrator, but cannot be regarded as a formed ending.

Examples:

- and after that I went to a different stables and since then I now ride there and also have a horse that I take care of round the corner from my place in my village ((laughs lightly)), yes (----) that was actually all, well at the moment, all that occurs to me, probably there are a thousand other things that are not in my head now.
[Yes, do you want to think again for a moment?] (-) Hmm (-----) that was all.
- and today we want to bake biscuits again and go to the Christmas fair. (--) Um yes, and then yesterday I also practiced the whole time for the dictation, we’re writing a dictation next week, and last week I practiced for the maths test, I got a good mark, and (-) um (----) now I can’t think of anything else.
[I’ve just noticed you’ve still got something on the cards that you haven’t mentioned yet at all: "the first day at school" or have you already mentioned that?] Nay, I think I’ve already said that.
- perhaps it’s also worth mentioning that I have a very good and close relationship with my brother, well he’s now moved out of our house and but we still see each other and at weekends we mostly go to the cinema or simply just do something together, well with him I get on quite well, and yes I have only one brother so no other brothers or sisters, (-) um yes (-)
I think that was it, well I don’t know, was short anyway ((laughs)).
[Feel free to take a bit more time, maybe something occurs to you?] + Um um um (-) ermerm. [I’m sure lots of things have happened in your life which have influenced you in some way.]
Yes of course ha ha. [Or what you like to remember or perhaps not so much.] + Um um (--)
(Subsequently E. also tells of two class trips to Spain and Corsica which happened quite some time ago).
- but (--) now I’ve got earlier in my old home I actually had a pretty small room and now it’s really big and, almost (-) seven metres long or so, well it’s really long (), (-) you can hang up lots of posters. ((laughs)) (--) ()
That’s better, you can put more things there, you don’t have such problems with space and you have a place for everything. (--) Yes, I never had that much before in my life. ((laughs lightly)) (---)
[Yes, okay, shall we come to a full stop there?] I don’t know how long it you actually do it, but we can stop if you want. [Okay, so nothing more now that you’d still spontaneously now like to add?] hm, h’m.

Category 2.2 **End of the life narrative in the current life situation**

with retrospective view

Code **ENDRET**

Definition The life narrative concludes with events from the immediate present of the narrator and contains in addition a retrospective assessment of things past or present. There must

be the impression that the narrator carries out a sort of recapitulation and assesses his/her life so far in retrospect, e.g. with reference to individual actions, experiences, personality traits, biographical influences, contexts or moral attitudes. A retrospective view of the entire life so far as a whole is not a condition as with young people this hardly ever occurs.

These reflections are only coded a retrospective view if they come at the end (i.e. reflections before the conclusion in a preceding sequence and in connection with a different topic are ignored because they do not form part of a formed ending) or if they are added after the end of the chronological narration (see Definition p.11).

There is NO coding either of general statements such as „*but up to then it was now actually nothing special*“, in which the narrator does not really look into and deal with a subject and names no concrete thoughts, or if there is obviously just mention made of them and no genuine analysis of a topic.

Here there is coding only of the conclusions which contain retrospective views, but no prospects for the future.

Examples:

- and am actually quite content, ... I've also become much more optimistic, with time, well I used to be totally self-critical and strict with myself ... yes and now I'm simply, (-) yes much more full of the joy more friendly more cheerful, (-) I find it real cool now, I used to be totally depressed always: Wäh wäh, at school everything was shit, then the people there were like that somehow, I didn't get on well at all with them with most of them ... yes and luckily I no longer go to Bettina School, that's very good, yes, that was it actually. That was rather not so connected, but ha ha.
- Um, yes after all you're influenced by your parents and that's the same with me. Hmm for the most part simply through my mother, but my father kept, I can't say that he didn't take care of my upbringing, but he mostly kept out of it. It was more, it was usually just like this: „Dad, may I do that?“ “Go and ask your mother.” Yes ss well, and yes as I said well that's why after all for the most part influenced by my mother and of course by friends (--), where I already quite often, um, hmm well learnt what is wrong and what is right (-), although I'm only twenty, if you can put it like that, you know. (---) Hmm. Are ten minutes now up? [Yes.] ((laughs)).[Can you think of anything else?] But I'm such a lazy talker. ((laughs))
- but erm I think I've picked out something that doesn't fit in at all with my with my personality because um the people that I'm studying together with, those classic scientists, they're not in line with me at all and um (--) that's why I completely stand out and um , (-) yet not in a negative sense, but yes, I don't know, I'm, well at any rate I enjoy doing that, (-) yes. Do we still have time? ((laughs)) [You have been talking now for twenty minutes and... You finish this off as you would like to finish it off] I finish this off as I would like to finish it off (----) I can't complain, I'm very content.(---) Yes. [Was that the important thing that you wanted to tell about the story of your life?] Yes. [Okay, thank you very much, then I'll switch off now]
- Hmm, or I've already had a few car accidents in my life, too, about five or so, and I um came through them all without any damage a(h)and that's [Five?] Yes, thereabouts ha ha, and I don't know that this perhaps gives you erm vitality like ha ha, yes um, what else is there, I don't know, I have lots of friends who for a long time have already simply, who I've already known for a long time and that then just gives me more confidence, well that I can talk to people, hmm yes (-), I think, otherwise there's nowt else

Do NOT code:

- and right now I'm um in the middle of my second term and er and must also say that I like it very much and that it was the right decision. (-) Yes, more or less.
- I don't know, I somehow simply didn't have such a ha ha, a perfectly normal childhood, there are simply not so many things to tell like really important res' er events or such. (--)
- inasmuch (-) er all that has gone off well so far. Yes.

Category 2.3 **End of the life narrative in the current life situation
with prospect for the future**

Code **ENDPRO**

Definition The life narrative concludes with events from the immediate present of the narrator and contains in addition a prospect for future plans, ideas, expectations, etc. It may be a question of individual projects, e.g. the next holidays, the impending A-level examinations or the like, but it may also extend to the entire planning for his/her future life. Again, code only what is clearly looks into a subject and not what is simply mentioned (e.g. negative: „*we're writing a dictation next week, and last week...*“). There must be several sentences in which either descriptions of projects planned are given or for that matter reflections in connection with these projects.

Here, too, **general statements do not** count as PRO (see negative examples).

Code only those conclusions which do contain a prospect for the future but not a retrospective view as in ENDRET.

Examples:

- and I'd like to play for::: Barcelona FC and in the Italian national team, ha ha, that's my dream, ha ha, yes, but to go on being good at school as well, yes, <<softly>> What else is there? And if I don't become that, then I'd love to:::, then I'd like to, well study medicine and sport, study. Yes.
- well as early as primary school I had um I actually wanted the profession some day or other, well just an idea, um to become a primary school teacher, um because I like so much being with small children like or teaching something, I felt that, I thought that'd be lovely, actually I think it's great um, and yes well, summat like that with people anyway, not summat like um well only sitting in an office like, I think I wouldn't like that so much, well rather summat with people like
- well as for job prospects I haven't actually given them much thought yet, the important thing for me was that I'd find it fun in some way or other and that in the long run I'd also stick at it, but now I'm only in my first term and then you must first see whether it also stays that way or whether some day I then feel it's too much after all because it's really an enormous amount of material you must learn

Do NOT code:

- but when I'm 18 I'll probably also move there ((laughs)), it's lovely there, a sort of, a sort of square farm with four sides and ea', each brother or sister owns one side, that's cool, and then behind there's a lake for swimming and that's in the middle of the woods on a kind of large meadow and that's where I actually like being most well somehow
- I don't know now it'll become, I think now it'll become different anyway because now I'm entering the sixth form, that's why I do think that quite a lot will change and also must change like
- And now it's actually beginning again, after the holidays is school and that in the twelfth ,n' then I really must fight for it because next year I want to go on on on holiday with my girlfriend and after all my father has, I have a compromise with my father, if I get through this year well then I can also go
- I've decided that in the 10th, well after the 10th I want to go to Canada for a year, and yes, that's what lies in store for me this year, yes (-) that'll be all then

Category 2.4 **End of the life narrative in the current life situation
with retrospective view and future prospect**

Code **ENDALL**

Definition Here there is only coding of those narrations which both end in the current life situation and provide a retrospective view of his/her life so far and report a future prospect (see ENDRET or ENDPRO)

Examples:

- but I'm slowly realizing, only five years ago I would have said <<theatrical>> oh my God my I'm afraid and would start to bawl and, but now I'm not afraid any more of changes I think my God, the whole world actually lies there open to us, if I now go there okay simply summat new, besides I'm still young and um thought yes it could happen that we now move as early as October, that she is then well transferred there and she's already got offers of a home and, yes and let's see what happens then in the future, <<quickly>> well in any case I must still do my A-levels and (-) yes let's see
- I've taken leave. I will go to <<Arabian country>> for skiing have a lovely time for a whole month, then come back then term starts again and yes otherwise life here is still always monotonous as it was at the beginning you have friends of course but nevertheless I was used to something quite different I'm a summer person I need lots of lovely weather, sun, beach, laughter simply lots of life and for me here this is no life ha ((laughs)). I've made up my mind to do my diploma as quickly as possible and then to buzz off from here. My parents will stay here.
- but I still can't really perceive or digest it or (how), which probably now also had something to do with the last two years when I now had A-level stress, which then stretched over the two years after all, and I couldn't really deal with it, I also still have both grannies and both granpas, my great granny only died at the end of the 90s, well it, I (also) wasn't really able to come to terms with the death like, and now I must see that I somehow ha ha get round to tackling it.
- I had normal friends, I was not an outsider, I was simply a normal schoolgirl, I didn't have any prob' problems, either, okay, now and then I had depressions yet again and so on and self-pit', I pit', pitied myself, like, but, real problems, compared with the past I didn't have, and, now I'm about to, well tomorrow is my oral exam (h), and soon I'll have my A-levels over with and everything will get better, so, I've pulled myself together, somewhat, shaken off the past somewhat more or less, the burden of the past, yes, okay, that still rests, thi' this burden, after all you can never get rid of it because it's become a part of you, well you can't forget it, this humiliation before the past and (-), but it's got better, yes, I've pulled myself together, (-) okay, that's it, I think, ha ha.

Category 2.5 **End of the life narrative at an arbitrary point**

Code **ENDARB**

Definition This category includes all narratives which do not end in the current life situation but "break off" somewhere at an arbitrary point of time in the course of the life. This is e.g. the case when the interview time has been exceeded and the narration must come to an end, or when it stops by itself because the narrator can't think of anything else and even the intervention of the interviewer is of no avail or when nothing is added that represents a formed ending or brings a gain (s.a.). So here it is not a case, as in the previous categories, of a formed ending that concludes a chronologically told life narrative in a logical way..

Also use this code if the narrative ends by chance in the present, yet the life narrative only consists of a unstructured jumble of experiences, there are many jumps in time or there is the impression that the narrator describes the experiences in the order of their importance and not in a

biographically chronological order. Also use this code if the narration first begins chronologically but then loses itself in forward and backward flashes.

In order to determine the chronology the entire life narrative must be read and the order of the time sequences be checked.

Examples:

- and now my father also has like hardly any more relatives apart from like a female cousin who has like two children and (-) and a husband like and then another, perhaps another few distant relatives, but there was actually also, that he hardly knows, but on my mother's side the relatives are actually quite numerous, (-) even if most of them live pretty far away, well (-) not pretty far, but like not so near Frankfurt (---). [What else is there to tell?] (pause) Actually I can't think of anything else now.
- After that we always had to go to the doctor, me and my father must no idea any more go to the doctor's, well in a week or so no idea, (---) hmm yes and (--)hmm, and that's how long I must go easy on my leg now. (--) That was it (--)hmm (---)hmm otherwise I can't think of anything.
- and then a sort of camera was pinched which didn't belong to us at all, it belonged to the other family some pal or other brought it along and it was also pinched and it didn't belong to them at all, but it belonged (-) to the brother of the mother, and I don't know either how he the explained that, that it is gone, yes and then the father got all upset like and for the rest was always in a bad mood. That was stupid, and then we made Sala' S' lasagne, (-) yes, and then we flew back again. (--) Finished.
- yes other family with the others we haven't actually had since um since the death of my granny any more contact, well in the past we always met sometimes on a Sunday, we still saw them like, but now not any more, although most of them also live in Frankfurt, well there are only two that live outside like one in Darmstadt and then in Berlin but otherwise yes, more family (---), actually not any more ha ha ha.

Additional variables for sociohistorical contextualization of the beginning

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Overview

It is exclusively the first segment of the life narrative that is examined for these additional variables. Should one of the variables be found there, then this is coded I the respective variable with 1.

Four variables:

- historical context – HICO
- socio-economic context – SOCEC
- family constellation – FAMCO
- family history – FAMHIS

3. HICO – Historical context

Mentions historical events of the time around or before the person's own birth and/or historical circumstances in the life of the parents.

4. SOCEC – Socio-economic context of the birth

Mentions at least one statement made about the profession, the financial situation or the education of the parents/family.

5. FAMCO – Family constellation

Mentions the number of family members and possibly their relations with one another. Refers to the situation at the time of the birth or at least to the first years of life.

6. FAMHIS – Family history

Mentions the history of the family or of the father or of the mother at the time before the person's own birth or at the time around his/her own birth.

„Historical context“

Variable: HICO

Code: 1

Definition Historical contextualization refers to the time around or before the birth. The person thus inserts his/her own birth in a historical context, e.g. with statements such as “one year after the war”, “in the postwar period” or “I was born during a bombing night”. It may also be a case of historical circumstances in the life of the parents. In addition to the mere mentioning of the historical context, it may also be specified, which is, however, not a condition.

If this argument is found in the first segment, then the variable is coded with “1”, otherwise leave the variable empty.

Examples:

Yes well I grew up in a place er near Gießen, on account of the expulsion from the Sudeten, my parents came from Russ' the Sudeten er

*there as I said at the age of half a year I was evacuated to er Upper Hesse with my mother, my sister,
my father was still a prisoner
there I lived also including my first day at school right up to the year 1953 (-)*

*Well my name is er Renate Bauer (-)
I was born on the 3rd of October 1940 er in the provinces (--)
1940 was a war year, the second year of the war
well that already er characterizes a lot er in my life,
if there hadn't been the war
then I wouldn't have come er into the world either
as I er later came to know*

*My name? [As you wish] Caroline Müller,
I was born in 1940,
er grew up of course in the postwar period er
that wasn't always that easy,
that was partly er marked of course by hunger and privations,
on the other hand it's true I had a wonderful childhood
in fact I er um owe that er to my parents,
I er then went to primary school at the age of six,
was actually very often ill
but my mother took loving care of me (-)*

*I was born in 1946, so one year after the war in a big city,
my parents were relatively simple people
and both of them worked,
the first 2 years I was also brought up by a, by a female cousin
and then at the age of two years went to kindergarten
where I then stayed till I entered school.*

*I was born on the 16th of March 1942
so still during the war (-)
as fourth child of my parents (-) in Frankfurt. (-)*

„Socio-economic context“

Variable: SOCEC

Code: 1

Definition There must be at least one statement made about the profession, the living conditions, the financial position or the education of the parents/family so that the social status of the family of origin can be inferred.

Code socio-economic context with “1”.

Examples:

*Well I'll tell you my life narrative (-)
I was er born in 1942 on a farm of my grandmother's
so a home birth
I've always been very proud of it um*

my father was in Kiel
worked there for a ship firm as a technician
 and for the birth of his first child he sent his wife to his mother-in-law's.

Yes well I was born er 41 years ago in Bavaria (-) er as a child of really rich parents
in fact er this also then continued that way for the next er twelve years
since my sixth month er sixth month of my life I have er gone on holiday as often
as ten other people haven't in their whole lives really
and um well I've travelled all over the world
when I still couldn't at all register
that I'm already seeing the whole world really,
because my father was managing director for BMW

I was born in 1946, so one year after the war in a big city,
my parents were relatively simple people
and both of them worked,
the first 2 years I was also brought up by a, by a female cousin
and then at the age of 2 years went to kindergarten,
where I then stayed till I entered school.

I was born in London in England er
that's because
my father er worked there at the university
and my mother went with him to study,
in 1965 er in December I was then born there,
after half a year my parents moved back to Germany
that means I did' ... [allows the level of education of the parents to be deduced]

„Family constellation“

Variable: FAMCO

Code: 1

Definition Code indications of the number of family members and possibly their relations with one another; e.g. „single parent“, „as fourth child“, „I've got another three brothers and sisters“. To be coded, a statement must refer to the situation at the time of birth or at least to the first years of life, as for instance “till I was 5 my grandparents lived together with us in our house”.

Code family constellation with “1”.

Example:

I was born on the 16th of March 1942
so still during the war (-) as my parents' fourth child (-) in Frankfurt. (-)
There is an early family photo from summer '42
on it I see my father
as he is together with my mother
and us four children well I'm still a baby on his lap (-)
this father as far as I know I never saw again,

„Family history“

Variable: **FAMHIS**Code: **1**

Definition This variable is coded if the history of the family or of the father or of the mother during the time before the person's own birth or during the time around his/her own birth is mentioned. Such a fact may e.g. be the story of how the parents got to know each other, how they separated, or how they moved before the birth, which is why the person was then born there and not in another place, the family's medical history, or the family background of one of the parents and the like.

If this kind of argument is found in the first segment of the life narrative, then this is coded with 1. The family history can, but need not refer to historical circumstances. In this case the variables HICO and FAMHIS should each be coded with 1, as both are coded independently from each other.

Examples:

*I was born in London in England er
that's because
my father er worked there at the university
and my mother went with him to study,
in 1965 er in December I was then born there,
after half a year my parents moved back to Germany
that means
I didn't get to know England at all myself (-)*

*Yes, the beginning is the birth (-) that's clear,
for without the birth I wouldn't be here,
that's the most important event (-) um
I then grew up in Dresden
then still in the Eastern Zone um
whereby surely the most interesting thing about it was
that I grew up only among women (-)
um my father was not directly persecuted by
but through exploitation of the of the possibilities
which er the Third Reich offered
driven to suicide by personal enemies (-)
and er I grew up at one of my grandmothers' (-) grandmother
who you must imagine as a grande dame
as she had earlier been in films
with a large fortune (-)
a weekend cottage with ten guest bedrooms
in which a maid servant and a gardener couple always lived,
that only then,
then but that had long since come to an end,
grew up in the GDR.
[Positive, for the death of the father seems to have been around the time of the birth and
explains the growing up „only among women“]*