Navigating the Paradox: An Examination of Compliance-gaining and Relational Development in Hostage Incidents

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NAVIGATING THE PARADOX: AN EXAMINATION OF COMPLIANCE-
GAINING AND RELATIONAL DEVELOPMENT IN HOSTAGE INCIDENTS

A Dissertation
Presented to
the Faculty of Social Sciences
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In Partial Fulfillment
of the Requirements for the Degree
Doctor of Philosophy

By
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August 2013
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Abstract

This study sought to examine potential relationships between compliance-gaining strategy use and the outcome of hostage negotiation events. Persuasion has been identified as being a critical yet understudied part of the negotiation process. Utilizing the theory of Speech Acts, this study argued that compliance-gaining strategies play an essential role in the hostage recovery process. Specifically, compliance-gaining strategies allow the negotiator to exercise persuasion during the negotiation process while also building an interaction context that allows the hostage taker to feel as if the negotiator is working with, rather than against, the perpetrator. This type of relationship allows the negotiator to exert a greater degree of influence in the incident. Through analyzing nine hostage incidents, this study was able to identify compliance-gaining tactics that related to the outcome of hostage events. Compliance-gaining tactics that reduce relational distance were related to peaceful outcomes and compliance-gaining tactics that increased relational distance were related to unsuccessful outcomes. This study also found that the use of compliance-gaining tactics was particularly important in the final Resolution stage of hostage incidents. In examining the ways that the parties respond to the use of compliance-gaining techniques, the hostage takers’ use of Agreement or Disagreement were discovered to be related to incident outcome. Practical applications for negotiation professionals, disciplinary contributions, and study limitations were also discussed.
Acknowledgments

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Chapter One: Rationale

The following dialogue details the exchanges between a hostage taker and a negotiator. In this case, an emotionally unstable man has smuggled explosives onto a commercial airliner. He has released the passengers, but is holding the crew hostage. His demands include speaking to family members and a former romantic partner as well as assistance with his substance abuse problems. One numerous occasions he threatens to harm the hostages and taunts the police to come within the blast radius of the improvised explosive device.

Hostage taker: And get the help that I need. It’s a shame that someone who has the drug problem has to go to such extremes. I apologize for... I apologize to the American public, but maybe even if I die here

Negotiator: Nobody's gonna die anyplace

Hostage taker: I did 10-4

Negotiator: Okay nobody is going to die anyplace okay. We are gonna be able to work this thing out to everybody’s’ satisfaction. All I want you to do is to trust me okay?

Hostage taker: How can I trust you when I can’t see you? I can’t trust anything I don’t see 10-4

Negotiator: I trust you. I haven’t seen you but I know you’re an intelligent guy. You’re
smart and I’m sure that we can work together on the thing. All I ask you to do is to trust me and to give me a little bit of time to get (your ex-partner) here. That is all I ask.

Hostage taker: I’ve gave you all the time that you need. I’ve given you over an hour and a half you all tried to tell me she was out on her lunch hour I sat back and I laughed about it I’m tired of laughing

Negotiator: Okay I understand you. Thanks for talking with us. That is all I ask you to do because she’s coming and I’m gonna have her there. She knows you right?

Hostage taker: That’s a 10-4

Immediately apparent in the exchange is that the hostage taker may be showing trends towards violent actions. He speaks of his own death and expresses his frustration with the situation. These emotionally charged comments may indicate that the situation is unstable and that violence may erupt at any minute. The negotiator’s responses to these utterances are critical in keeping the incident under control.

In responding to these comments the negotiator utilizes specific strategies that serve to deescalate the situation, persuade the hostage taker, and lay the groundwork for a collaborative relationship all in the same utterance. This is done through the use of two very specific compliance-gaining strategies: Liking and Promise. By reaffirming that the hostage taker is intelligent, the negotiator is able to utilize Liking and put the hostage taker better more positive frame of mind while making a request for more time in order to continue to negotiate. Several exchanges later the negotiator Promises the hostage taker that he is responding to his demands in order to keep him participating in the negotiation. Utilizing these strategies allows the negotiator to exert influence in the negotiation
process and work towards developing a relationship that will be a critical aspect of resolving the incident.

The study that follows examined the crucial functions that compliance-gaining strategies play in hostage negotiation events. Specifically, this study investigated the role of compliance-gaining strategies in accomplishing the seemingly incongruent goals of exerting influence and fostering a trusting relationship. In the case described above, the negotiator was able to build such a relationship with the hostage taker and secure both the safe release of the hostages and the surrender of the perpetrator.

**History**

The idea that a relationship exists between the communicative exchanges that occur during a hostage negotiation event and the outcome of the incident is a relatively new development for the law enforcement community. Prior to the mid-1970s, police officers relied on a strategy called the Contending Model as the primary tool for resolving hostage incidents (Rogan & Hammer, 2002). This approach involved the authorities’ use of intimidation and displays of superior firepower in order to pressure the hostage taker into surrendering. Common contending techniques were designed to be unnerving for the hostage taker and included tactics such as helicopter flyovers and the visible presence of SWAT and K-9 teams. The approach was based on the idea that if the hostage taker saw that escape was impossible and that the police had superior resources, than they would have no choice but to surrender to the officers. The Contending Model was met with mixed success, as the implementation of these strategies could also cause hostage takers to become panicked or to reciprocate with their own display of force (Borowsky, 2011;
Rogan & Hammer, 2002). More recently, the law enforcement community has adopted a more interactional approach that involves engaging with the perpetrator in a strategic manner rather than attempting to overwhelm the hostage taker with a display of firepower. This chapter will review the development of the communication-based approach to analyzing hostage incidents, locate this study within the paradigm, and articulate the pragmatic and scholarly contributions of this specific study.

The Psychological Paradigm

The use of hostage negotiation as a non-violent negotiation tool began largely due to the work of New York City police psychologist Harvey Schlossberg (McClain, Callaghan, Madrigal, Unwin, & Castoreno, 2006). In the 1970s, Schlossberg developed the first hostage recovery program in the United States. Schlossberg’s psychological approach to resolving hostage incidents was revolutionary, and his program would go on to become the model for programs across the country. Towards the end of the 1970s, Schlossberg articulated the important principle that hostage takers could be described as being motivated by either expressive or instrumental goals, a conceptualization that would open many avenues of research. Schlossberg’s work represented a critical change in the thinking about how hostage negotiation incidents could be managed. His work would also stand as the beginning of the psychological approach to understanding these incidents.

Before practitioners and academics began to focus on the communicative aspects of hostage negotiations, hostage incidents were understood primarily through the psychological paradigm (Donohue, 2003; Rogan, 1997; Rogan & Hammer, 2002). The
psychological perspective holds that the “relationship” between negotiator and hostage taker is “located within various cognitive and affective domains” (Donohue, 2003, p.168). Accordingly, psychologically-based studies would focus on the internal state of the hostage taker and attempt to evaluate the mental health and motivations of this particular individual or individuals (Donohue, 2003; Feldmann, 2001; McClain et al., 2006; Rogan & Hammer, 2002). While this approach to investigating hostage negotiations would produce a number of valuable insights, there were also a number of serious oversights inherent in the paradigm.

The first issue with the psychological approach was that employing findings from the studies conducted in this paradigm required nuanced understandings of psychological functions. Early research in the field found that the majority of hostage takers suffer from some form of psychopathology (Miron & Goldstein, 1979). Common diagnoses included paranoid schizophrenia, bipolar disorder, antisocial personality, and inadequate personality (Borum & Strentz, 1992). The lessons learned during this time were incredibly valuable when psychology experts were available to assist during the incident, but the wide range of disorders and variables associated with each disorder created a very challenging situation for officers who were not directly supported by psychologists. The difficulty in what to actually say to these individuals was illustrated in Rogan and Van Zandt’s (1997) nationwide survey of hostage negotiators. The results of this study explicitly asked for more research that addresses the dialogue between the negotiator and the perpetrator as opposed to creating a more thorough understanding of the perpetrator’s possible disorder. In short, the psychological approach lead to important findings, but the
findings did not prove to be pragmatic for many officers who were in need of communication strategies rather than insight into the psychology of the hostage taker.

The critique of the psychological approach presented by communication scholars largely echoes that of police officers: the psychological approach fails to articulate a “conceptual understanding of the actual interactional dynamics involved in such incidents” (Rogan & Hammer, 2002, p. 230). Many scholars have pointed out that failing to attend to the communication dynamics present in the incidents has resulted in a lapse in understanding of how hostage incidents can be managed. Rogan and Hammer (1994) state that “the need to understand the communicative dynamics of such situations more completely is of paramount concern to authorities and others involved in these crisis” (p. 217). Several scholars, including Rogan and Hammer (1995) and Wolmack and Walsh (1997), have stated that the critical factor in hostage negotiation events is the officers’ ability to build a relationship with the hostage taker, something that is only possible through communication. Some scholars have even posited that the interactional dynamics are the defining characteristics of the hostage negation event (Greenstone, 2004; Rogan & Hammer, 1994).

Both scholars and police officers agree that there is a significant need to better understand the interactional dynamics that constitute hostage negotiation events. Examining the exchanges that occur between the officer and the hostage taker has the potential to provide insight into some of the most critical elements in the interaction, such as when the officer requests the release of hostages or when the hostage taker threatens to
harm the hostages. Only recently have communication scholars begun to adopt an approach that attempts to address the shortcomings found in the psychological approach.

A Communication-based Approach

As the characteristics inherent in the psychological approach de-emphasized the importance of communication, a number of scholars would call for a communication-based approach to understanding hostage negotiations (Donohue, 2003; Rogan & Hammer, 2002; Wolmack & Walsh, 1997). Rogan and Hammer (2002) write that a communication-based approach “means that we engage in an interactive assessment of the communicative behavior of both the perpetrator and the negotiator rather than solely on the contextual parameters, psychological descriptions, or specific behaviors of the suspect” (p. 239). Donohue’s (2003) definition of the interaction-based approach complements Rogan and Hammers definition saying that “interaction-focused studies seek to describe message patterns that form the structural features of human communication” (p. 168). Within this approach, communication becomes the defining feature of the interaction as opposed to a side effect of the hostage taker’s personality.

Examining hostage negotiation events from a communication-based approach should yield great benefits. Donohue (2003) states that “the value of this approach lies in linking interaction structure to conflict outcomes. Theoretically, the concept is that communication structure provides the framework for a conflict event” (p. 169). Donohue (2003), Rogan and Hammer (1995), and Wolmack and Walsh (1997) all posit that the relationship between the negotiator and hostage taker exists in the verbal exchanges that occur between the parties, rather than in the internal processes of the various individuals.
By examining the talk that constitutes the parties’ relationship, scholars will be better able to explicate the linkages between communication activity and incident outcome.

While the negotiator’s objective of developing a relationship with the hostage taker may seem like a relatively straightforward process, the development of relationships in hostage negotiation events involves a high degree of complexity and interactional challenges. Taylor and Donohue (2006) assert that both the “competitive and collaborative orientations present paradoxical relational challenges” (p. 671). Taylor and Donohue write that a potentially collaborative relationship is paradoxical “because parties like and trust one another, but resist the kind of engagement that would expose them extensively. They are pushing the other away while also pulling them closer” (p. 671). A competitive orientation to the negotiation process is also paradoxical as “parties do not like and trust one another, but they are highly engaged. They are pulling the other closer in order to defeat or in other ways harm them” (p. 671). The negotiator is charged with the difficult task of navigating these paradoxes in order to develop “we-are-in-it-together” relationship with the hostage taker (Borowsky, 2011; Donohue & Taylor, 2006). This challenge is magnified by the extremely volatile and potentially violent nature of the situation. The communication dynamics that occur in hostage events involve a high degree of complexity and numerous factors that make this a unique communication context. As such, it is critical to understand the communication actions that occur during these events in order to provide officers with best negotiation strategies possible.
A Critique of the Communication-based Studies

Although the communication-based approach has served to develop important insights into hostage negotiation incidents (as will be discussed in greater detail in the following chapter), some researchers have been critical of the progress made thus far. McClain et al. (2006) assert that, in general, hostage negotiation research has neglected to address the critical verbal-interactional components of the hostage negotiation event. McClain et al. point out that there has been insufficient attention paid to the “verbal dialogue between a crisis negotiator and hostage taker and how the hostage negotiator and taker interact with one another verbally during the negotiation” (p. 31). These researchers assert that the process by which pragmatic negotiation research can be conducted begins with a recording of the verbal behaviors that occur during the hostage negotiation process. Once these behaviors are observed, researchers may be able to predict outcomes based on changes in these behaviors. At this point, strategies can be developed for more effective resolution of these incidents.

Contributions of this Study

This study investigates the verbal exchanges that occur during hostage negotiation incidents through the communication-based approach. Specifically, this study provides insight into the understudied, but important, ways that parties in a hostage incident persuade one another. This goal is accomplished through an examination of the parties’ use of compliance-gaining techniques.

A number of scholars have articulated the need for negotiators to influence hostage takers, but few have empirically tested how this occurs. Mullens (2002) writes
that it is critical for “negotiators to understand the principles of getting agreement and compliance from a hostage taker. The negotiator must be able to convince a person to change attitudes and behavior” (p. 64). Mullens’ argument extends one step further and makes the claim that one way to change attitudes and behavior is to begin by gaining compliance on less-important matters. Mullen’s argues that a negotiator who begins the negotiation by asking for the release of the hostages is doomed to fail. Negotiators must instead gain compliance on smaller issues (sitting down, not swearing, talking to hostages) in order to set the stage for the hostage taker to later agree on the larger negotiation issues. In this light, compliance-gaining is not simply a limited means of securing the release of the hostages, but rather, gaining compliance is central part of the negotiation process.

The importance of gaining compliance and utilizing influence has been echoed by a number of researchers. Central to Fowler and Devivo’s (2001) study of the usefulness of the Verbal Interaction Analysis Technique was the idea that “negotiators continuously influence hostage takers during hostage recovery operations” (p. 85). In an examination of hostage incidents across cultures, Giebels and Taylor (2009) stated that “all hostage negotiations involve periods of persuasion that move the interaction toward and away from success” (p. 10). According to these researchers, hostage negotiation events are largely characterized by the parties’ attempts to gain compliance. Not only is persuasion a defining characteristic of the negotiation, but, according to these researchers, persuasive actions have the potential to influence the outcome of the incident. By examining the
ways that the parties attempt to gain compliance from one another, this study provides insight into some of the most central and important aspects of hostage negotiations.

Utilizing the communication-based approach to examine how the parties persuade each other also has tremendous pragmatic value for officers. By examining the compliance-gaining strategies employed by both parties this study uncovered valuable insights into the persuasive tactics that constitute a critical component of hostage negotiation events. Linking the communicative exchanges of the hostage taker and the negotiator with the outcome of hostage incidents resulted in findings that identified the sets of strategies that can be utilized by the negotiator in order to secure the safety of the hostages and the surrender of the hostage taker. The ultimate goal in this line of inquiry is to develop comprehensive communication strategies that provide the negotiator the best possible tools for resolving the incident peacefully. Indeed, this study was designed to assist negotiators so that they “can modify their verbal behavior to influence hostage takers in positive ways” (Fowler & Devivo, 2001, p. 85).

By identifying the relationships between compliance-gaining and outcomes, this study fits Donohue’s (2003) recommendation that communication-based research attempt to link communication actions with outcomes while also responding to Rogan and Van Zandt’s (1997) call for more research into the dialogue that occurs between the parties. Simply put, the findings reported in this study directly support the negotiator’s goal of saving lives.

In addition to developing practical tools for police officers, this study also contributes to the communication discipline. Specifically, this study helps advance the
communication-based approach to hostage negotiations. As mentioned earlier in this chapter, many communication-based articles focused on the broad aspects of the interaction and not in the exchanges that occur during the negotiation. By examining the compliance-gaining strategies and responses of both parties, this study uncovered some of the communication patterns which can affect the outcome of the incident. By focusing on the communicative actions of the parties rather than the general features of the interaction, this study is one of the first that responds to the criticisms leveled towards the current body of research.

In sum, this study makes important contributions in a number of ways. First, this study provides valuable linguistic tools for police officers. By linking communication actions with outcomes this study responds to the hostage negotiation community’s request for studies to engage with the dialogue present in hostage events. In accomplishing this goal, this study also contributes to the hostage negotiation literature by examining persuasion, an important, yet understudied, aspect of these incidents. Additionally, this study also makes contributions to the scholarly community as it is one of the first studies that responds to the critiques McClain et al. (2006) level towards many of the previous studies conducted under the communication-based paradigm.
Chapter Two: Review of the Literature

Despite historical and conceptual similarities, the fields of hostage negotiation and compliance gaining have developed in isolation from one another. This has been an unfortunate occurrence, as the two fields share the central goal of developing an understanding of how various forms of persuasion can be used to induce a target into acting in a desired manner. Similarly, both fields have also been stifled by a lack of pragmatic and naturalistic research. By bringing these two fields into conversation with one another under a single theoretical framework, this study advances our understanding of each field and results in pragmatic findings that are useful in the recovery of hostages. As will be articulated in the second half of this chapter, the theory of Speech Acts serves as an ideal theoretical foundation for examining compliance-gaining in hostage negotiation events. This theory provides the theoretical grounding for this study, a rationale for the methodologies employed, as well as an interpretative tool to unpack the findings from this study. In order to more fully explicate this argument, this chapter will begin with a review of the bodies of literature pertaining to hostage negotiation and compliance gaining. After establishing the commonalities shared between these fields, this chapter will then describe the utility of Speech Acts Theory for examining the compliance-gaining tactics employed in hostage negotiation events. This chapter
concludes with the presentation of a set of research questions that will guide this investigation.

**Studies in Hostage Negotiation**

As described in Chapter 1 of this study, the communication-based paradigm has become increasingly prevalent the study of hostage negotiation. This paradigm operates under the theoretical perspective that the relationship between the parties is a critical component of the negotiation process. This stands as an alternative view to early psychology-based studies of hostage negotiations that theorized that the internal state of the hostage taker was of central importance.

While the communication-based approach has proved useful in examining a number of communication phenomena, scholars have noted that “it is difficult to observe any linear progression of research in hostage negotiations” (McClain et al., 2006, p. 28). McClain et al. stated that there are well-defined “pockets” of research into various hostage negotiation topics, but that “none of these follow a clear and consistent path of investigation” (p. 28). As the variety of approaches to understanding hostage incidents has resulted in a body of research that is topically linked, but not theoretically organized, this chapter will present the hostage negotiation literature as belonging to a spectrum determined by the scale of the topic under investigation. To elaborate, some hostage negotiation studies seek to examine a specific communication feature of the relationship such as facework or in the case of this study, compliance-gaining. In this type of study, the focus on a single element of communication sets boundaries as to the scope of the investigation. Other studies on the opposite end of the spectrum do not attempt to
investigate a single feature of communication, but rather to describe structural or conceptual aspects of the negotiation process. This chapter will now review the empirical research studies which have been conducted utilizing the communication-based approach.

As mentioned in chapter 1, the idea that hostage takers can be described as either expressively or instrumentally motivated has been one of the founding ideas on which hostage negotiation research is based. McClain et al. (2006) described the instrumental hostage taker as one who engages in negotiation in order to accomplish some institutional goal such as obtaining money or achieving escape. An example of a typical instrumental scenario would be an incident where the hostage taker became trapped while committing another crime and takes a hostage in order to leverage his negotiation power with the police. This perpetrator has taken the hostage in order to secure his tangible goal of escape. Alternatively, an expressive hostage taker attempts to express their emotions or frustrations through the act of taking hostages. An example of an expressive hostage taker would be the ex-significant other who barricades himself in his home with his former partner. These types of perpetrators are motivated by emotion rather than a physical goal. Some of the early studies into the hostage negotiation process attempted to explicate the dynamics present in incidents with an expressively motivated hostage taker.

Some of the early studies that focus on the emotional nature of the hostage negotiation event include Rogan and Hammer’s (1994) study, which examined facework, as well as Rogan and Hammer’s (1995) study, which examined message affect in crisis negotiations. In these studies the researchers examined phenomena linked to the emotional nature of the interaction. Rogan and Hammer’s (1994) study posited that
managing the hostage taker’s sense of face was a critical part of controlling the emotional aspects of the negotiation. An analysis of the facework that occurred during several incidents led the researchers to conclude that the negotiators’ primary role in the negotiations was to manage the expressive needs of the hostage taker. Rogan and Hammer’s (1995) study examined the level of emotional arousal that occurred throughout the hostage negotiation process. This study determined that certain stages of the negotiation were more likely to incite emotional excitation in the hostage taker. While exploratory in nature, these studies further developed the idea that the management of emotions was crucial to the negotiation process. These studies also represent the end of the research spectrum that investigates specific elements of hostage negotiations.

In addition to these early communication-based studies, a number of other empirical research studies have attempted to provide insight into specific dynamics of the negotiation process. For example, in a fascinating study, Charles (2007) identifies the ways that techniques from the tradition of marital and family therapy were utilized to resolve a hostage incident. One strategy that was identified by Charles is “conversational flexibility.” Conversational flexibility is the idea an individual can fulfill multiple roles in a single interaction. In this study, the negotiator was able to adapt to and fill the various conversational needs of the hostage taker. Rogan’s (2009) study also tested specific utterances as a predictor of hostage negotiation outcomes. In this study, Rogan examined whether or not clinical indicators of suicide could be utilized in predicting suicide in hostage negotiation events. The results of the study indicated that clinical predictors of suicide were not reliable predictors of suicide in hostage negotiations. These
studies examined specific communication behaviors which were thought to be important in a hostage negotiation event.

In addition to the empirical studies reviewed above, there are also several non-empirical works which detail specific elements of hostage negotiation events. These works include Greenstone’s (2004) discussion of the elements of effective communication in hostage negotiations, Mullens’ (2002) discussion of communication techniques that can be utilized by hostage negotiation professionals, and Folwer and Devivo’s (2001) study that presents a technique that can be employed to assess hostage negotiations for training purposes. These papers are aimed at the goals of developing pragmatic recommendations for hostage negotiation professionals. For example, Mullen’s article describes some of the general processes that one can utilize to gain compliance, but not articulate any of the specific techniques that have been identified in the compliance-gaining literature. These studies border on what Rogan and Hammer (2002) describe as guidelines developed from “practioner experience rather than rigorous social scientific methodology” (p. 230).

Studies that explore the general characteristics of hostage negotiations are more plentiful in number. These studies are normally aimed at describing the process or stages that occur throughout the event. The first category of studies presented in this paper examined the impact of specific communication activities while these studies attempt to capture the dynamics on a more abstract level. These studies range from those that attempt to model the relational closeness of the parties to those that describe the
communicative actions that are associated with the adoption of specific roles in the interaction.

One of the earliest studies to attempt to describe the processes present in hostage negotiation events was Holmes and Sykes’ (1993) investigation into the fit between hostage negotiation events and Gulliver’s Phase Model for negotiation development. In this study, Holmes and Sykes analyzed both authentic and simulated hostage negotiation events and compared the various processes to Gulliver’s model. The researchers found that simulated negotiations were more likely to fit the model and that authentic negotiations were less organized and more unpredictable. This line of inquiry was continued in Holmes’ (1997) study, in which the researcher compared the fit of Gulliver’s Model with other models that describe the negotiation process. The study reported that Gulliver’s Model was the best overall fit for describing the process of hostage negotiations, but that the model still fit the simulated negotiations better than the more disorganized authentic negotiations. Wolmack and Walsh (1997) moved away from utilizing pre-existing models of negotiation and developed a three-dimensional model for hostage negotiations. This model built upon Donohue’s earlier relationship matrix in order to incorporate the effects of deception on the negotiation process. To date, this model has not been tested empirically, but it does assist in explaining the paradoxes that characterize the negotiation. In general, there has been little success in attempting to apply traditional models of negotiation to hostage negotiation events, although scholars have argued that specific findings from these studies can be valuable to the professional negotiator (Mullens, 2002).
Other studies that have attempted to articulate the more universal elements of hostage negotiations have moved away from the development of procedural models. One such study is Donohue and Taylor’s (2003) investigation which tests for the presence and potential impact of the role effect. In this study, the researchers employed behavioral scales in order to see if terrorists were adopting the less powerful one-down position that stems from the role effect. This study allowed the researchers to examine behaviors as they occurred throughout the various negotiations and to correlate these behaviors with other important variables, including the outcome of the events. This study found that terrorists who adopted the one-down position and acted in an aggressive manner were less likely to be successful in gaining capitulation from the authorities. Taylor and Thomas’ (2005) study of linguistic style matching also provided insight into the communication elements that are important to the outcome of the hostage negotiation event. In this study, Taylor and Thomas examined the ways that negotiators and perpetrators coordinated their words use. The researchers examined the transcripts from nine different hostage incidents and categorized the incidents as either successful or unsuccessful. The successful incidents were the ones in which the hostages were released and the perpetrator surrendered whereas the unsuccessful cases involved either violence enacted by one or both parties or a successful tactical assault where the hostages were rescued, but the negotiation process failed. The criteria for identifying outcomes and Taylor and Thomas’ data set are both utilized in this study and discussed in more depth in the following chapters. In Taylor and Thomas’ study, the researchers discovered that
successfully-resolved incidents had a higher aggregate level of coordination when compared to unsuccessful incidents.

The final pair of studies that sought to understand the structural elements of hostage negotiations includes Taylor’s (2002) study that modeled hostage negotiation events and Taylor and Donald’s (2004) study that sought to model hostage negotiation events by describing their regularities along multiple dimensions. Taylor’s (2002) partial order scalogram revealed that hostage negotiation events could be ordered along a scale of competiveness and that the various levels of competiveness were correlated with whether or not the negotiation was resolved successfully. Taylor’s study also found that hostage negotiation events had a competitive “tipping point” and that once it was surpassed, the negotiations could not be successfully resolved. Continuing with efforts to model these events, Taylor and Donald (2004) described the relationships between three facets of communication: Overall Orientation (Avoidance, Distributive, Integrative), Motivational Concern (Identity, Instrumental, Relational), and Intensity (High to Low). These facets were utilized to examine the differences between actual and simulated crisis negotiations. The findings from this study indicated that avoidance-relational and distributive-instrumental behaviors were more prevalent in simulated negotiations than in actual negotiations. These models provided insight into the structural elements and communication patterns present in hostage negotiation events. In general, attempts to model hostage negotiation events reveal that simulated negotiations are more predictable than the authentic events experienced by hostage negotiation professionals.
In sum, research into the communication dynamics present in hostage negotiation events span from examining specific linguistic utterances to attempting to model the overall behavior of the parties. These studies provide insight into the negotiation process as well as articulate some valuable guidelines for negotiation professionals. However, the pocketed, non-linear approach to examining the communication actions that occur during these events has resulted in a disjointed body of literature that fails to achieve the goal of developing practical negotiation strategies.

A Critique of the Communication-based Literature on Hostage Negotiation

Though the communication-based approach may have served to as a means to develop a number of important insights into the features of hostage negotiation, some researchers have been critical of the process made so far. McClain et al. (2006) criticized previous negotiation studies on the basis that hostage negotiation research has neglected to address the critical verbal-interactional components of the hostage negotiation event. The authors wrote that “few research studies have examined the verbal process of crisis negotiation. Those studies that have were focused more on the general features of communication, not individual behaviors themselves” (p. 31). McClain et al.’s claim would echo that revealed in Rogan and Van Zandt’s (1997) nationwide survey of negotiators, in which officers requested more research be conducted into the linguistic strategies that can be employed during a hostage negotiation event.

McClain et al.’s. (2006) article also offered a methodological solution to prevent future oversight of the critical interactional components. McClain et al. (2006) asserted that the process for developing negotiation strategies begins with recording of the verbal
behaviors that occur during the hostage negotiation process. These behaviors then need to be organized in such a fashion where researchers can attempt to correlate certain behaviors with the outcomes of these events. By making the parties’ behaviors the focal point of the study, future studies should be able to avoid the pitfalls of unintentionally adopting the psychological paradigm or producing results that neglect the communication behaviors present in the negotiation. Future studies should adopt the communication-based approach as a means for developing linguistic strategies for professional negotiators. This study takes steps in such a direction.

**Compliance-Gaining in Hostage Negotiation Events**

As evidenced by the studies reviewed in this paper, the communication-based approach has been used to investigate the communication dynamics that are present in hostage negotiation events. These empirical studies have illuminated some of the interactional dynamics which are important for hostage negotiation professionals. However, as articulated by McClain et al. (2006), hostage negotiation research is still lacking in the area of verbal interaction. That is, researchers have not explicated the mechanics and patterns of the verbal exchanges that occur throughout the hostage negotiation event. Specifically troubling in this regard is that researchers have not yet focused on the interactional dynamics present when negotiators are attempting to gain compliance from the hostage taker.

The exchanges during which the negotiator is attempting to gain compliance from the hostage taker are of the utmost importance. Researchers including Rogan and Hammer (1995) have characterized the negotiation as one in which the parties are
struggling for control. Mullens (2002) wrote that it is critically important for “negotiators
to understand the principles of getting agreement and compliance from a hostage taker.
The negotiator must be able to convince a person to change attitudes and behavior” (p. 64). The parties’ struggle to exert influence over one another during the most important
times in the negotiation is manifested in the parties’ respective use of language, an area
that McClain et al. (2006) identified as being underdeveloped.

In order to investigate the interactional components of persuasion in hostage
negotiation events this study utilizes concepts from the field of compliance
gaining. Specifically, this study examines the parties’ attempts to influence each other by
looking at the negotiators’ and hostage takers’ use of compliance-gaining strategies and
responses to compliance-gaining strategies. In describing compliance-gaining strategies,
Miller, Boster, Roloff, & Seibold (1977) wrote:

When people seek to exert communicative control over certain areas of their
social environments (or to purposively affect the behaviors of others, or however
one wishes to put it) they must select from a set of symbolic alternatives at their
disposal. (p. 37)

The symbolic alternatives that Miller et al. described include a wide range of potential
strategies: everything from gentle influential techniques such as making a promise, to
more aggressive strategies such as punishing the other person until they comply. The
symbolic alternatives that negotiators have employed in order to gain compliance from
hostage takers has been conceptualized in a body of literature that, until this point, has
never intersected with hostage negotiation research. This chapter will now turn to a
discussion of the compliance-gaining literature in order to more fully articulate
compliance-gaining concepts and demonstrate the value of studying these strategies within hostage negotiation events.

**Compliance-Gaining**

Empirical research into the topic of compliance-gaining has largely stemmed from the work of two sociologists, Gerald Marwell and David Schmitt. In 1967, Marwell and Schmitt completed the first empirical study of compliance-gaining techniques in an attempt to better understand the mechanics of persuasion. A taxonomy of compliance-gaining strategies that was developed in this study continues to influence inquiry into the topic 50 years following the study’s publication. This dissertation presents a review of the compliance-gaining literature and then articulates how the taxonomy created by Marwell and Schmitt can be utilized to unpack the most important exchanges in hostage negotiation events.

According to Marwell and Schmitt (1967), many social psychologists assume that all behavior is goal-directed and that the entirety of human interaction is motivated by a desire to restructure our environment. According to this perspective, humans are constantly attempting to exert influence over other people through our communicative practices. Though these attempts to persuade can be represented in non-verbal communication, this study will focus on ways that parties attempt to exert influence through their use of spoken language. The symbolic and communicative utterances that negotiators and hostage takers employ to achieve influence will be operationalized as compliance-gaining strategies.
The first empirical research study into compliance-gaining is Marwell and Schmitt’s (1967) identification of compliance-gaining strategies. Prior to this study, persuasion techniques were being developed in several different fields, including sociology and organizational behavior (Cody, McLaughlin, & Jordan, 1980). Marwell and Schmitt reported that scholars had undertaken research into specific techniques such as Machaivellian manipulations, ingratiation, and moral obligations, but that “none of this research, however, has systematically explored the range of compliance-gaining behaviors or elaborated the factors involved in their enactment” (p. 351). In order to gain insight into these behaviors and the factors that were involved in their use, Marwell and Schmitt would synthesize findings from the traditions of organizational behavior and sociology and create a typology of compliance-gaining techniques.

Marwell and Schmitt’s (1967) study was designed to develop meaningful groupings of compliance-gaining tactics. The researchers were interested in the mechanics involved when people attempt to gain compliance through the use of words. Utilizing a deductive approach, Marwell and Schmitt identified sixteen compliance-gaining strategies: promise, threat, expertise (positive), expertise (negative), liking, pre-giving, aversive stimulation, debt, moral appeal, self-feeling (positive), self-feeling (negative), altercasting (positive), altercasting (negative), altruism, esteem (positive), and esteem (negative). Through various quantitative procedures, Marwell and Schmitt found support for their taxonomy of compliance-gaining strategies and developed clusters of strategies based on their frequency of usage and mechanisms of persuasion.
The 20 years which followed the publication of Marwell and Schmitt’s (1967) study saw a number of important investigations into compliance-gaining. Included in this list is Miller et al.’s (1977) groundbreaking study credited with bringing compliance-gaining into the field of human communication (Boster, Levine, & Kazoleas, 1993; Javidi, Jordan, & Carlone, 1994). According to Grant, King, and Behnke (1994), the research conducted during this time frame falls into three general categories. These categories include studies that focus on the compliance-gaining taxonomies utilized by speakers, situational factors that influence the selection of compliance-gaining strategies, and personal factors that influence one’s selection of compliance-gaining strategies. Other scholars have also identified similar categories (Boster et al., 1993; Javidi et al., 1994; Reardon, Sussman, & Flay, 1989). The diversity of compliance-gaining topics that have been examined has resulted in a field that is largely disjointed, as there appears to be little topical or theoretical continuity. As a result, this review will be organized around the general categories identified by Grant et al. (1994). The following sections of the study will begin with a description of the methods employed across the entire compliance-gaining field and will then individually review each of the three main categories of inquiry. Additionally, this dissertation will review the studies that examine resistance to compliance-gaining strategies.

**Methods Employed in Compliance-Gaining Studies**

Boster et al. (1993) have described the methodologies employed in compliance-gaining studies as fitting into three groups. The first category of methods involves presenting participants with a list of compliance-gaining strategies and having
participants rate how likely they would be to use the strategies in various situations. This is the method employed in Marwell and Schmitt’s (1967) study and has been the most common method employed in compliance-gaining research (Boster & Stiff, 1984). This method is often paired with a questionnaire that measures the participants on a component of their personality in order to provide insight into the ways that individual traits influence the selection of compliance-gaining strategies. This approach is inherently susceptible to participant bias.

In the second type of study, participants are given hypothetical scenarios and then asked to write down descriptions of how they would gain compliance. These responses are then either categorized into an a priori set of compliance-gaining strategies or the descriptions are developed into an inductive taxonomy. While a fruitful approach, examining compliance-gaining in this way relies on the self-report of the participants, which creates a number of validity issues.

The third approach that that is has been applied in studying compliance-gaining is that of observing behavior. In this method, researchers observe compliance-gaining behavior as it occurs in a lab setting. Boster et al. (1993) argue that behavioral observation is a more ecologically valid approach than selection or generation approaches as the observational approach does not involve the use of hypothetical situations. Despite having the highest degree of validity, the observational approach has been utilized the least often when compared to the other approaches. A review of the compliance gaining literature did not identify any studies that employ a naturalistic methodology. The methodology employed in this study most closely resembles the behavioral observation
approach, although this study shall claim greater ecological validity than past studies as the data analyzed occurred in actual hostage negotiations where participants naturally utilized compliance-gaining tactics.

**Categories of Compliance-Gaining Investigations**

**Taxonomies of compliance-gaining strategies.** In the past 50 years, several studies have sought to either further develop or challenge Marwell and Schmitt’s (1967) typology of compliance-gaining strategies. In general, these studies have attempted to either refine Marwell and Schmitt’s typology or to expand the typology to include new compliance-gaining techniques. The majority of these studies were conducted after 1977 when compliance-gaining began to receive attention from communication scholars.

One of the first studies attempting to develop its own conceptualization of compliance-gaining techniques was Miller et al.’s (1977) study that brought compliance-gaining to the attention of communication scholars. The goals of this study included collapsing Marwell and Schmitt’s (1967) categories into a “more abstract” and “less cumbersome” classification system (p. 49). The researchers were unable to accomplish their goal as they found that the Marwell and Schmitt’s classification system was highly situationally dependent. Subsequent studies that developed their own typologies also challenged Marwell and Schmitt’s typology by claiming the superiority of an inductive or generative approach towards strategy development. This argument was articulated by Wiseman and Schneck-Hamlin (1981), who argued that the inductive approach produced better representational validity.
A number of studies that utilized the inductive or generative approach were conducted around the same time as Wiseman and Schneck-Hamlin’s (1981) article. Cody et al.’s (1980) study developed a smaller and more-parsimonious set of compliance-gaining strategies. Another more extensive typology that also identified the elements of the compliance-gaining strategies was developed by Schneck-Hamlin, Georgacarakos, and Wiseman (1982). In general, the studies that utilized the inductive or generative approach found support for most of the strategies developed by Marwell and Schmitt (1967), although these studies would also advocate for the inclusion of new tactics. For example, Cody et al. said that researchers should include “representative examples from the direct-rational, exchange, manipulative, threat, and/or expertise claims categories” (p. 45). The researchers provided support for their claim by saying that similar categories were found by Clarke (1979) and Fitzpatrick and Winke (1979). In a later study, Boster et al. (1985) found that participant responses were similar whether the researcher employed a deductively or inductively derived set of strategies. Even with the numerous studies that have attempted to develop their own inductive or deductive taxonomies, Marwell and Schmitt’s taxonomy of strategies remains relatively stable (Grant, et al., 1994). Accordingly, Marwell and Schmitt’s taxonomy represents an ideal tool for examining compliance-gaining in hostage negotiation events.

**Personal traits and compliance-gaining message selection.** The second category of studies reviewed in this chapter focuses on the individual or personal factors that influence the use of compliance-gaining strategies. According to Javidi et al. (1994), individual factors are the “internal characteristics of the individual which influence
Boster et al. (1993) state that inquiry into this line of compliance-gaining has been plentiful and there have been over 60 articles and conference papers on this topic. A great deal of these papers are either authored or co-authored by Boster himself. Research that has been conducted on the relationship between personal traits and the use of compliance-gaining tactics includes published studies of verbal aggressiveness and argumentativeness (Boster & Levine, 1988), negativism (Boster & Levine, 1988; Boster & Stiff, 1984), dogmatism (Boster & Levine, 1988, Boster & Stiff, 1984; Dillard & Burgoon, 1985), and communication apprehension (Lustig & King, 1980). Boster et al. (1993) report that these topics also have been examined in numerous conference papers that were not available for this study. Though important for the development of the field, studies identifying the personological variables that influence compliance-gaining hold only conceptual value for hostage negotiation professionals.

The studies that have been conducted into compliance-gaining and personal traits have produced a number of findings. For instance Boster and Levine’s (1988) study revealed that argumentativeness and verbal aggressiveness impact compliance-gaining message use, although this result was dependent on the situation/context in which the interaction occurred. Boster and Stiff (1984) found a relationship between negativism and strategy selection, and Dillard and Burgoon (1985) reported that dominance was found to correlate with compliance-gaining message selection. These studies have begun to describe the personal orientations that affect strategy selection. In general, this line of inquiry has demonstrated that personal traits and context do have an impact on the
generation and selection of compliance-gaining strategies (Boster et al. 1993). However, these studies focus on the personological variables that impact communication during a hostage event. As such, these studies have more in common with the dated psychological approach than with a communication-based approach to hostage negotiation.

**Studies of contextual elements that influence compliance-gaining strategy selection.** The bulk of the research conducted on compliance-gaining falls under the category that examines the ways that situational and contextual variables influence compliance-gaining message selection. Javidi, et al. (1994) explain that “situational factors refer to the relational or contextual variables which impact an individual's strategy selection” (p. 127). This group of studies includes investigations that sought to gain insight into contextual variables such as level of intimacy (Miller, et al., 1977; O’Hair, Cody, & O’Hair, 1991), degree of motivation (Javidi et al., 1994), type of behaviors being addressed (Kearney, Plax, Sorenson, & Smith, 1988), type of professional relationship (Kipnis, Schmidt, & Wilksonson, 1980), and cultural differences (Hirokawa & Miyahara, 1986; Neuliep & Hazleton, 1985).

Inquiry into this aspect of compliance-gaining strategy selection has also resulted in a number of important findings. For example Kipnis et al. (1980) found that one’s selection of compliance-gaining tactics was related to the relative power of the parties. Participants in this study indicated that they do not use the same strategies to gain compliance from both superiors and subordinates. Burrows, Kearney, and Plax (1989) found that teacher’s selections of various strategies were related to the type of classroom behavior they were attempting to control, whereas Hirokawa and Miyahara (1986) found
that businessmen from Japan and America preferred to employ different strategies. This approach to studying compliance-gaining behavior emphasizes the importance of the contextual factors in defining the interaction. By examining the relationship between these contexts and compliance-gaining, researchers can better understand how compliance-gaining is manifested in certain situations. To date, there have not been any studies of compliance-gaining in hostage negotiations.

**Resistance to Compliance-Gaining Strategies**

As the field of compliance-gaining continued to develop, a number of researchers began looking into how individuals offered resistance to other’s attempts to gain their compliance. Similarly to research into compliance-gaining, this category of studies included investigations that looked at the interpersonal factors that influence resistance as well as strategies of resistance employed by specific populations. For example, Reardon et al. (1989) investigated the resistance strategies adolescents utilized when peers attempted to convince them to try cigarette smoking. College students’ resistance strategies to teachers’ use of control techniques has been investigated in several studies (Burrows et al., 1989; Plax, Kearney, Downs, & Stewart, 1986). The interpersonal contexts that influence resistance strategies have also been investigated by O’Hair, Cody, & O’Hair (1991). O’Hair et al.’s investigation focused on the interpersonal and relational aspects of resistance and described the interplay between intimacy, rights, and resistance to compliance-gaining strategies. These studies provided insights into both the way that compliance-gaining attempts have been resisted and the factors that influence the parties’ resistance strategies. In contrast to Marwell and Schmitt’s (1967) taxonomy of
compliance-gaining, researchers studying resistance to compliance-gaining have not yet developed a stable set of strategies. As such, it is necessary for this study to adopt an inductive approach when identifying resistance to compliance-gaining strategies.

**Criticisms of Compliance Gaining Research**

Inquiry into the strategies used to gain compliance seemed to be on a steady path of development through the 1980s. Researchers were attempting to develop new typologies and tactics, uncovering the individual and relational factors that influence strategy selection, and beginning inquiry into resistance strategies. Despite this progress, empirical investigation into the topic began to stagnate in the 1990s. Levine and Boster (2001) observed that there has been a sheer decline in the number of compliance-gaining studies and that “virtually every review of this literature has lamented at the lack of substantial conclusions that can be drawn from extant research” (p. 28). This sentiment had been earlier expressed by Grant, et al. (1994), who stated that we know very little about a target’s willingness to comply despite the identification of many stable compliance-gaining strategies. Levine and Boster attribute the stagnation of inquiry and lack of substantial conclusions to researchers’ preoccupation with methodological issues as well as the absence of a foundational conceptual base.

Levine and Boster (2001) also offered an additional critique of the field, saying “one of the greatest ironies in the compliance-gaining literature is that the issue of compliance-gaining (i.e. message effectiveness) has so often been ignored” (p. 28). Indeed, message effectiveness is a topic that has received scant attention in the compliance-gaining literature, and only a handful of studies have looked at the
willingness of compliance-gaining targets to comply (Grant et al. 1994). Included in this short list is Grant et al.’s (1994) study that examined the interrelationships between intimacy, communication satisfaction, and willingness to comply and Burgoon, et al.’s (1987) study that examined patients’ communication satisfaction and willingness to comply with doctors’ orders. Both of these studies reported that communication satisfaction was an important factor in the target’s decision to comply. Burgoon, Dillard, and Doran (1983) studied the effect of expectation violations on compliance and found that men were less persuasive when they deviated from the traditional gendered norms of communication. These studies, along with Hecht’s (1984) study of communication satisfaction and Smith’s (1984) study on Contingency Rules Theory, represent the majority of studies into message effectiveness. Levine and Boster propose that one way to revitalize the field would be to examine compliance-gaining strategy effectiveness.

Although the research on message effectiveness is limited, the research that has been conducted has resulted in an important general conclusion. The ubiquitous finding throughout the literature is that the use of pro-social messages is correlated with communication satisfaction and willingness to comply (Birk et al., 1987; Boster et al., 1985; Burgoon et al., 1986; Grant et al., 1994; Hecht, 1984; Johnson, 1992; Levine & Boster, 2001). Pro-social messages, according to Johnson, are those messages which are “based on the persuader's desire to elicit positive feelings or evaluation in the target whenever possible” (p. 164). Strategies identified by Marwell and Schmitt (1967) that can be described as being pro-social include altruism, positive esteem, positive self-feeling, and liking, as well as others depending on context. In general, it has been found
that these strategies are preferred by message recipients and are more effective than anti-social strategies that punish or threaten to punish the target.

**Summary**

In sum, the field of compliance-gaining has provided some valuable insights into the symbolic strategies people employ in order to influence one another. Researchers conducting inquiry in this field have identified a number of typologies of compliance-gaining strategies and have articulated some of the individual, relational, and contextual factors that influence selection of compliance-gaining techniques. Researchers have also identified some of the ways that compliance-gaining attempts have been resisted as well as the compliance-gaining strategies that are preferred by persuaders and targets. Despite these important advancements, the field of compliance-gaining has been criticized for a lack substantial conclusions. That is, the field of compliance-gaining has not yet articulated how effective various strategies are in actually producing compliance in an intended target. A focus on message effectiveness is one way in which the field could be revitalized. By investigating the use of compliance-gaining techniques in hostage negotiation events, this study will serve to further develop the communication-based approach to hostage negotiation while also redressing the knowledge gaps in the compliance-gaining field that have resulted from a deficit of studies that examine naturalistic discourse.
Compliance Gaining’s Potential Contribution to the Communication-Based Approach to Inquiry in Hostage Negotiation

As described earlier in this chapter, a number of scholars have articulated the value of a communication-based approach to examining hostage negotiations (Donohue, 2003; Rogan & Hammer, 2002; Wolmack & Walsh, 1997). The communication-based approach seeks to explicate the interactional nature of the event by employing any number of methodologies. According to Donohue (2003), these studies could include an analysis of the frequency of message types, patterns of interaction, or a description of the collective ways that various communication elements are related to outcome. This paper posits that insights from the field of compliance-gaining have the potential to make important contributions to the communication-based approach to hostage negotiation when the two fields are brought into conversation with one another.

The Verbal-Interactional Component of Hostage Negotiation

The first area in which the compliance-gaining literature is valuable in developing the communication-based approach is in the area of verbal interaction. According to McClain et al. (2006) verbal interaction is one area that has largely been ignored by hostage negotiation researchers. McClain et al.’s specific critique is that the communication-based research into hostage negotiation has so far failed to capture the linguistic exchanges that are employed by the parties and constitute the communicative dynamics of the interaction. McClain et al. stated that capturing interactional dynamics and observing changes in the communication patterns of the parties is the key component in understanding the interactions present in hostage situations.
The ability to describe verbal interactions is one area where the field of compliance-gaining is particularly strong. As described earlier in this study, compliance-gaining techniques have been developed by both inductive/generative and deductive methods. The compliance-gaining strategies that have been identified have been well-articulated and the original typology from which the field was developed has remained stable since its development (Grant, et al., 1994). Accordingly, the field of compliance-gaining has a number of ready-made and well-established typologies that can be used to describe the compliance-gaining elements present in hostage negotiation events.

**Internal Factors and the Prediction of Outcomes**

The field of compliance-gaining has established that internal and personal factors are a motivator in one’s selection of compliance-gaining strategies (Boster et al., 1993; Boster & Levine, 1988; Boster & Stiff, 1984; Dillard & Burgoon, 1985; Lustig & King, 1980). Internal traits such as dogmatism and negativism have been shown to be correlated with the selection of various compliance-gaining strategies. Building on this observation, it would seem reasonable that future studies of compliance-gaining strategies in hostage negotiations would allow researchers to develop models capable of predicting the outcome of the hostage event based on the perpetrator’s selection of certain compliance-gaining strategies. In short, the stable nature of strategy selection may provide a basis for future studies that compliment law enforcement’s ability to conduct threat assessments. These predictions, which are based on the communicative actions of parties, may prove to be more accurate than predictions generated from the psychological framework. In
sum, the field of compliance-gaining has the potential to inform a number of future inquiries into dynamics present in hostage incidents.

**A Complimentary Relationship**

Lastly, bringing the two fields of compliance-gaining and hostage negotiation into conversation with one another does not advance just the field of hostage negotiation, but also the field of compliance-gaining. As described earlier in the paper, compliance-gaining research suffers from a lack of studies which describe the effectiveness of compliance-gaining strategies (Grant et al., 1994; Levine & Boster, 2001). The field of hostage negotiation contains a corpus of naturalistic data that is largely characterized by the parties’ attempts to exert influence over one another (Rogan & Hammer, 1995). By expanding inquiry into the topic of hostage negotiations, the field of compliance-gaining would be able to mitigate some of the critiques which have become salient in recent years, particularly in the areas of message effectiveness. Additionally, studies such as these would advance the behavioral approach to compliance gaining that Boster et al. (1993) have described as having the best ecological validity. It appears that the field of compliance-gaining would not just advance the communication-based approach to hostage negotiation, but rather that the two fields would be complimentary and be able to form a symbiotic relationship.

**Summary**

In summation, the field of compliance gaining has the potential to make contributions useful in investigating the communication dynamics that are being observed in the field of hostage negotiation. Furthermore, understandings from the field of
compliance gaining would serve to advance the communication-based approach to hostage negotiation as the field has already established taxonomies and conceptual understandings that could be useful to the communication-based approach in overcoming the issues associated with neglecting the verbal exchanges present in the interaction. Studies conducted as a result of integration would fit perfectly into the communication-based field as described by Donohue (2003) and Rogan and Hammer (2002). The extension of compliance-gaining into the area of hostage negotiation will assist the compliance-gaining field in overcoming the lack of studies that examine message effectiveness. The theory of Speech Acts will provide the theoretical foundation necessary in order to more fully articulate the relationship between compliance-gaining strategies and the outcomes of hostage negotiation events

**Speech Acts**

According to Donohue and Taylor (2006), one of the primary goals of the negotiator is to create a “we-are-in-it-together” type of relationship with the hostage taker. This type of relationship has been identified as a crucial element of the negotiation process. Borowsky (2011) explains that creating this environment allows the negotiator to be perceived as working with, rather than against, the hostage taker. This perception of working together allows the officer to convince the hostage taker to release the hostages and ultimately surrender.

However, the development of this relationship is not a straightforward process as the parties are engaged in an adversarial context by virtue of their respective positions. The hostage taker is endangering innocent people and not abiding by the laws that the
police have a duty to enforce, whereas the police officer is attempting to enforce laws that will result in the hostage taker either being incarcerated, injured, or possibly killed. Accordingly, the shifting of the conversation and hostage taker’s view from “working against” to “working with” the negotiator is a momentous challenge. This chapter will examine the mechanisms that exist in speech acts that allow for the negotiator to create a working Relational Identity with the hostage taker.

Speech Act Theory is based on the principles that language is rule guided and that in saying something the speaker is also doing something. According to Searle (1969), one’s ability to interact with others stems from an implicit agreement on the rules of language as well as a tendency to follow the rules. When people are interacting with others, they are often exchanging speech acts in accordance with the social rules. Tracy (2002) builds on Searle’s thinking and presents the compelling argument that speech acts are not only actions in accordance with the rules, but that speech acts are intertwined with identities. Tracy presents the argument that speech acts are the building blocks of both Personal and Relational Identities. According to her explanation, speech acts are the linguistic mechanisms that allow us to negotiate and claim specific identities in our interactions with others. These identities, in turn, are subject to the rules associated with each identity. While adopting Tracy’s complete conceptualization of Speech Acts leads to a study that involves methodologies and goals which are more common in the Ethnography of Communication tradition (see Hymes, 1964), Tracy’s idea that Relational Identities are formed through speech acts provides insight into how the negotiator can create the “we-are-in-it-together” type of relationship with a hostage taker. Before
engaging further with this idea, it is first necessary to more fully articulate Speech Acts Theory and explore the utility of the theory.

In 1969, language philosopher John Searle published what would become one of the most influential texts in the fields of Linguistics and Philosophy. *Speech Acts* (Searle, 1969), was the first in a series of texts in which the author would lay the groundwork for a theory that would describe the inner workings of language by identifying the rules and functions of speech. Searle’s *Speech Acts*, and subsequent *Expression and Meaning* (1979), were not texts that were designed to answer specific philosophical questions, but rather, these works were meant to describe a general theory of how language works. Searle (1969) wrote that his goal was to “give philosophically illuminating descriptions of certain general features of language” (p. 4). This chapter will explicate Searle’s Theory of Speech Acts, review how the theory has been employed in empirical research, and demonstrate how the theory’s central concepts offer insight into the relational-development aspects of hostage negotiation events.

While this study will employ Speech Act Theory conceptualized by Searle (1969, 1979) and Tracy (2002), the conceptual overlap between Seale and another scholar make it necessary to provide a brief discussion of the historical context from which this theory arose. The theory of Speech Acts was being developed amidst a very fruitful time in contemporary philosophical history. In 1962, John Austin published the important work *How to Do Things with Words* (1962), which introduced the foundational concept of the illocutionary act. Searle’s work was clearly influenced by and related to Austin, the
difference being that Searle was able to articulate a more complete theory that better explained the role of the illocutionary act.

In an illocutionary act, according to Austin (1962), when one says something that person is also doing something. That is, speech is both a set of spoken words and an action. For example, when one person ensures another that they will perform a future action for their favor, they have performed the illocutionary act of promising. If they were to fail to accomplish the action stated, they may be accused of not fulfilling the specific action identified in our verbal utterance, e.g. “you didn’t walk the dog” or they may be accused of not fulfilling the speech act, e.g. “you broke your promise.” In Speech Act Theory speech is not viewed simply as a verbal utterance, but rather the act of speaking also constitutes the performance of some other action.

The concept of the illocutionary act was central to Austin’s (1962) work. In the process of describing illocutionary acts Austin developed a typology of the acts and of the various functions they served. For example, Austin describes an illocutionary act he named “Commisive.” Commissives commit the speaker to a course of action and include verbs such as “promise,” “vow,” and “pledge.” The commisive category was developed alongside four other categories that Austin tentatively advanced as basis for discussion rather than as a refined theory.

Due to his work in developing the concept of the illocutionary act, many philosophers credited Austin as being the father of Speech Act Theory. However, Searle’s subsequent papers re-conceptualized illocutionary acts within a larger theory of language. Searle came to argue against Austin’s (1962) typology of illocutionary acts,
claiming that Austin’s categories were not based on any clearly articulated principle and that the categories developed were not mutually exclusive (Searle, 1979). Searle went on to develop and present his own typology that was widely accepted and employed for decades after its publication. Austin’s concept of illocutionary acts lives on, but the term has become synonymous with what Searle called a Speech Act. As Searle’s theory proves to be more conceptually complete, this study utilizes insights from Speech Act Theory as presented and described by Searle and Tracy (2002).

**Searle’s Theory of Speech Acts**

The concept that Austin described as an illocutionary act would become central in Searle’s work, but its location in a larger theory of language would be re-theorized. In Searle’s theory, the illocutionary act, while remaining distinct and important, was swept up in the larger concept of Speech Acts. Speech acts “a function of the meaning of the sentence” (Searle, 1969, p. 18). Speech Acts are performed as one speaks sentences and include utterance acts (speaking or uttering words), propositional acts (referring and predicating within an utterance), illocutionary acts (the utterances of words in certain contexts with certain intentions) and, through a correlation relationship with illocutionary acts, perlocutionary acts (the effects of illocutionary acts). Searle’s conceptualization of these acts provided a powerful way to understand the various functions of speech or, as Austin might put it, what we are *doing* when we are speaking. Though these categories provide distinct ways to identify and classify speech acts, Searle emphasized that it is important to realize that all of these acts occur together simultaneously. Searle stated that in “performing an illocutionary act one characteristically performs propositional acts and
utterance acts” (p. 24). In this way, Searle conceptualized speech as having dimensions that extend beyond illocutionary acts and illocutionary force.

In further developing the Theory of Speech Acts, Searle (1969) posited that our utterances have a social meaning as well as a literal meaning (a conceptual overlap with Austin’s [1962] concept of illocutionary acts). The connection between the social world and our ability to understand speech is one of the key elements of Searle’s theory. Searle advanced the hypotheses that:

Speaking a language is performing speech acts, acts such as making statements, giving commands, asking questions, making promises and so on; and more abstractly, acts such as referring and predicating; and secondly, that these acts are in general made possible by and performed in accordance with certain rules for the use of linguistic elements. (p. 16)

Searle’s assertion is that the social meanings of our speech acts are influenced by and interpreted in the social world and that participation in the social world is guided by a set of rules. The idea that the use of speech is rule-guided was not a new idea in philosophy, but Searle argued that scholars had not fully accepted the implications of this perspective.

The Importance of Rules

For Searle (1969), if one is to understand language, then one must understand the rules that impact the ways in which we use language. This was a central theme in Searle’s works. According to Searle, “speaking a language is engaging in a (highly complex) rule-governed form of behavior. To learn and master a language is (inter alia) to learn and have mastered these rules” (p. 12). Searle said that the rules of language “account for the regularities in exactly the same way that the rules of football account for the regularities in a game of football, and without the rules there seems no accounting for the
regularities” (p. 53). Searle argued that language must be understood in terms of the activity of speaking and the rules that are guiding that activity. As such, the theory of Speech Acts is one that characterizes the regularities of language while formulating the underlying rules. As Speech Acts was widely adopted in both linguistics and philosophy, this chapter will engage with the regularities and rules that provide the theoretical underpinnings useful in the examination of hostage incidents, an approach more commensurate with linguistics, rather than explicate the impact of Searle’s contributions to the field of philosophy.

For Searle, the rules of language were evidenced in the way that people are able to communicate unproblematically with each other on a daily basis. When arguing the centrality of rules Searle (1969) stated:

The “justification” I have for my linguistic intuitions as expressed in my linguistic characterizations is simply that I am a native speaker of a certain dialect of English and consequentially have mastered the rules of that dialect, which mastery is partially described by and manifested in my linguistic characterizations of elements of that dialect. (p. 13)

Searle further developed his argument for the existence of speaking rules in saying that we are only able to interact with one another by employing a mutually agreed upon set of rules and that an ignorance of these rules produces a problematic interaction. For example, in the U.S. there is a rule that we normally offer a greeting to another person when we begin an interaction. If one were to forsake a greeting and begin immediately talking about some topic, this recipient of this action might read the individual’s action as strange or expect that the speaker was trying to relay a critical piece of information that must be acted upon immediately. By ignoring a speaking rule, the speaker has caused a
problematic interaction as the recipient is continuing to rely on the group’s known interactional rules. In this way, the rules of our language are not just utilized, but they are reinforced and recreated due to the speakers’ and listeners’ reliance on them. That is not to say that the rules of language are impervious to change, but that the rules are reinforced through constant use.

Searle’s Typology

Searle saw language as guided by a set of rules. In order to articulate those rules, it was first necessary to have a comprehensive means of describing the functions of speech. In his 1979 *Expression and Meaning*, Searle developed the typology of Speech Acts that modified Austin’s 1962 typology and came be the widely accepted articulation of the theory. Searle’s critiques of Austin’s work included that Austin’s typology was not founded on any articulated principles and that the categories contained a great deal of overlap. In some cases, Searle would adopt Austin’s definition of a function of speech, whereas in other cases Searle would describe how Austin’s definition was problematic.

Searle’s (1979) typology of Speech Acts was developed to answer the question of “How many kinds of illocutionary acts are there?” (p. 1). Searle set out to identify the number of functions that can be performed in our language. Searle reported that other language philosophers have answered this question by stating that there are a countless number of functions. However, Searle did not find this answer to be acceptable and instead developed a typology which describes six kinds of speech acts. These acts are: assertives, directives, commissives, expressives, declarations, and indirect speech acts.
**Assertives.** According to Searle (1979), the purpose of the Assertive Speech Act is to commit the speaker to “something’s being the case, to the truth of the expressed proposition” (p. 12). An assertive can embody various levels of commitment. For example, an assertive could range from suggesting that something might be the case, to solemnly swearing that something is the truth. The assertive has a truth value, and Searle claims that a simple way to identify assertives is that they are describable as either true or false. For example, the utterance “Denver is a great city” is an assertive, as it commits the speaker to particular claim. The truth value can be ascertained once the term “great” is agreed upon. The utterance also commits the speaker to a specific degree of certainty about the city. In this case, the speaker seems to have no hesitation about the truth of his or her comment.

**Directives.** Directives represent a class of speech acts in which the speaker is attempting to persuade the recipient into acting in a certain manner. These attempts may also vary in the degree with which they are presented. A directive could include both a very subtle and polite request, such as the case with an invitation, and also an aggressive demand that one comply. Searle (1979) identifies verbs such as “‘ask’, ‘order’, ‘command’, ‘request’, ‘beg’, ‘plead’, ‘pray’, ‘entreat’, and also less assertive verbs such as ‘invite’, ‘permit’, and ‘advise’” (p. 14) as belonging to this class of speech acts. Directives are a class of illocutionary acts characterized by the force with which the utterance attempts to exert over the hearer. Many of the utterances that Austin (1962) characterized as “behabitives” are subsumed by this class. This type of speech act is particularly valuable to this study as the category calls attention to the compliance-
gaining exchanges where the parties are attempting to exert influence. Conceptually, directives and compliance-gaining behaviors are one and the same.

Commisives. Commisives are a set of speech acts which are similar to directives, except that the commisive commits the speaker to a future course of action, rather than attempting to get the hearer to engage in a future action. Like directives, commisives may range from low to high intensity depending on how they are employed by the speaker. For example, the speaker might say “I think I’ll stop by the pharmacy on my way home,” which would indicate a low level of commitment, or the speaker might say “My medication has run out so I have to stop by the pharmacy,” which would indicate a higher level of commitment to the potential course of action identified in the utterance. Promises are a type of commisive that are commonly found in American speech. This class of speech acts is valuable to this study as agreement on a future course of action is one of the potential responses to compliance-gaining attempts.

Expressives. According to Searle (1979), the goal of the expressive is to “express the psychological state specified in the sincerity condition about a state of affairs specified in the propositional content” (p. 15). In other words, this expressive is a speech act in which the uttering of the statement of the speech act accomplishes the act described. So to say “I apologize” to someone is not just the uttering of the words “I apologize,” but the utterance itself is also the act of apologizing. Searle identified some common speech activities as being expressives, such as “thank”, “congratulate”, “apologize”, “condole”, and “welcome” (p. 15). This group of speech acts stands apart from others in that an “expressed proposition is presupposed” (p. 15). In this group of
speech acts, there is no attempt to claim a truth such as in an assertive or to articulate a further course of action as in commisives, but rather, the action of the expressive is presupposed and accomplished in the utterance. This group of speech acts is one that was developed by Austin (1962) and adopted by Searle (1979) with minimal revisions.

**Declaratives.** The final category of the typology proposed by Searle is that of declaratives. Searle (1979) stated that declaratives “bring about the correspondence between the propositional content and reality” (p. 16). These declarations “bring about some alteration in the status or condition of the referred to object or objects solely in virtue of the fact that the declaration has been successfully performed” (p. 17). In other words, declaratives are those utterances whose completion brings about a corresponding change in reality. For example, a minister may utter “I now pronounce you husband and wife.” In making this utterance, the minister has now legally and religiously joined these two people together. The utterance has brought with it a corresponding change in the world. Other popular declaratives include examples such as “you are fired” and “this court finds you guilty,” as well as “meeting adjourned.”

**Indirect speech acts.** The five main type of speech acts identified above constitute a basic description of the functions of speech. However, another type of speech act has a different type of illocutionary force that can transcend the categories described above. This act, which Searle (1979) calls the Indirect Speech Act, is a unique type of speech act in which “the speaker utters a sentence, means what he says, but also means something more” (p. 30). One of the examples Searle presents in explaining this act is the utterance “you are standing on my foot.” In this example, the speaker is both informing
the recipient that he or she is on the speaker’s foot, but also the speaker is requesting the hearer to move. If upon hearing the utterance the hearer responded with “thanks for letting me know,” and continued to stand on the speaker’s foot, the interaction would indeed be unusual or comical. Searle said that in this class of speech act, the speaker communicates by “relying on their mutually shared background information, both linguistic and non-linguistic, together with the general powers of rationality and inference on part of the hearer” (p. 32). This particular type of speech act emphasizes the social nature of the interaction.

Summary

The speech act categories that Searle identified have stood out as being the most widely accepted typology of the functions of speech. This typology was presented by Searle as a means to describe all of the functions of illocutionary acts and was developed in order to help to articulate the rules of language. The central idea behind Searle’s typology is that whenever we are doing something with our language, our language will be functioning as described in at least one of these categories and that the use of our language is guided by a set of social-defined rules. Although Austin (1962) was able to identify some of these functions, such as the functions of commisives, Searle’s work solidified the typology and facilitated the use of speech acts in empirical research.

Review of the Literature

A review of the communication-based literature reveals that that Searle’s theory of Speech Acts has been adopted for use in a wide variety of ways. Empirical studies can be organized into several categories according to how various elements of Speech Act
Theory are employed. The categories include: Typology (studies with employ Searle’s entire typology), Partial Typology (studies that employ one or more parts of Searle’s typology, but not the whole classification system), and Theory (those studies that utilize the theory in order to develop their own typology of speech functions). Theory studies are the most common type of investigation and this approach has been utilized by a number of traditions. This study falls into the category of Theory as concepts from Speech Act Theory are brought forward in order to observe the process of relational development. Searle’s typology is not employed in this study.

**Typology.** The first category of empirical studies included in this review are studies that employ Searle’s typology in its entirety. The general approach utilized by these studies involves analyzing the interaction by employing Searle’s typology as a coding scheme. This approach allows the researchers to utilize Searle’s entire typology as a means of describing and gaining insight into a phenomenon. In conducting these studies, researchers generally omit the category of indirect speech acts, as this category is often difficult to describe without a great deal of contextual information.

One study which utilized Searle’s typology is Nastri, Pena, & Hancock’s (2006) study of away messages. In describing their rationale for employing Searle’s typology Nastri et al. state that “Searle’s basic classification scheme’s widely accepted nomenclature and structuralist approach provides a useful framework for the present attempt to analyze the basic linguistic construction of away messages” (p. 1030). The ability of Speech Act Theory to access the basic elements of speech is further evidenced in the diversity of studies which employ Searle’s typology. For example, Duffy and
Frederking (2009) employed Searle’s typology to study political communications in order to describe how the cold war came to an end. Duffy and Frederking propose that the superpowers were able to use speech acts to change the socially constructed rules of aggression and allow for a de-escalation of hostility. What is particularly important about this study is that the study adopts some of the foundational principles on which this theory is based. In Duffy and Frederking’s work, the researchers articulate how the use of various speech acts brought about a change in the relationship between the two parties. Even though this change took place on an international level, the concept that identity and relationships are created through speech acts is the same. This wide range of application makes the theory valuable to scholars, even though this specific approach is only employed very seldom in empirical communication-based research.

One of the other studies that utilized the theory of Speech Acts is not an empirical study, but rather is a theoretical discussion of organizations. Ford and Ford’s (1995) study examined the ways that shifts in speech acts represent various types of changes in organizations. The researchers emphasize the importance of speech acts in organizational change in saying that “producing intentional change, then, is a matter of deliberately bringing into existence, through communication, a new reality or set of social structures” (p. 542). The researchers develop a model for institutional change and then identify the speech acts that would correspond with each stage of change.

In sum, the application of Searle’s entire typology in empirical research is limited, but the approach does demonstrate theoretical value. By identifying the way that speech acts are utilized these studies are able to better understand various phenomena ranging
from the personal to the prolific. These studies demonstrate the applicability and appropriateness of the position that speech acts are the creators of both identity and social context. The value of utilizing Searle’s entire typology is that the typology presents a ready-made schema that can identify all types of illocutionary acts. Accordingly, the application of Searle’s typology casts a wide net and gives researchers the vocabulary necessary to examine the patterns of speech acts throughout an interaction. This is especially useful in examining a corpus of data in which the researcher is not able to determine which speech acts may be critical in the interaction. Extending this approach to longitudinal data reveals the way that speech acts manifest over time and bring about a corresponding change in reality. This approach allows for a more thorough understanding of the relationships between speech acts and changes within a communication event.

**Partial typology.** The second approach that has been utilized by researchers is one that studies a single category of speech act. In these studies, researchers have chosen a single speech act as being an important aspect of the interaction and are attempting to further understand the role of this speech act in the interaction. This approach is a more focused than applying Searle’s entire typology and can be useful in examining specific critical exchanges.

One such example of the single speech act approach is Blum-kulka’s (1990) study on parental interactions with children. In this study Blum-kulka examined the ways that politeness and social control is enacted in families from various cultures. Blum-kulka identified the speech act of directives as being a manifestation of social control and the researcher compared the directives parents issue towards their children in different
cultures. Similarly, Biblow (2002) identifies the use of commisives as being an integral part of a business meeting and identified the contextual features present in a meeting that allowed for their use. Other studies, such as Wolfe and Powell’s (2009) study of speech acts and engineering students, employed this same approach, but identified a speech act that is more specific than the categories identified by Searle (1979). In this case, the researchers studied the effects of complaining. In their study, the researchers examined engineering students’ view of certain types of speech acts associated with complaining and find a bias against “female typical” speech. This particular study does not employ Searle’s entire typology, but rather this study focused on a specific speech act that exists within one of Searle’s categories. In this way, these studies are able to gain insight into the social rules of interaction that are accompanying the use of a specific speech act.

Similar to the studies described above, this study focused on a limited number of speech acts. Specifically, this study focused on the role of compliance-gaining tactics in hostage negotiation events (a directive). By focusing on an area that is critical to the negotiation process (Mullens, 2002; Rogan & Hammer, 1995) this study was able to develop insights into how this speech act influenced the development of the relationship necessary for resolving the incident peacefully.

Theory. The last category of studies that employ Searle’s Theory of Speech Acts is that of Theory. In this category the studies do not make use of Searle’s typology, but rather the researchers borrow the theoretical perspective and develop their own coding schemes similar to Searle’s. These studies essentially tailor a coding scheme useful in
examining the speech acts that occur in specific interactions. This is by far the most popular way in which Searle’s work is employed in empirical research.

One article that utilizes this approach is Holzinger’s (2004) study of bargaining and arguing. Holzinger reported that these two activities have been conceptualized as being opposite one another in the field of political science. Holzinger utilized Speech Act Theory in order to describe the functions accomplished by these seemingly opposite terms. In this study, the researcher examined a mediation session utilizing a quantitative approach and identified the various speech acts that occur during the interaction. Through a discussion of their functions, Holzinger demonstrated that these terms are not opposites, but rather are both aimed at the same goal of generating an agreement.

Speech Act Theory has been employed in this way to study a range of phenomena. For example, Svensson & Anderson (2006) employed this approach in order to examine fighter pilot team performance. Smith, Atkin, Skubisz, and Stohl (2009) utilized this approach to identify memorable messages about breast cancer and Dennis and Barnes (2000) utilized parts of Speech Act Theory in their study of children with mild or severe brain injuries.

The value in adopting this approach is that the researcher is able to examine the various speech acts that have been identified as being important to the study. For example, Svensson and Anderson’s (2006) study identified and examined speech act categories pertinent to fighter pilots. These categories of speech acts included information, tactics, and communication. By inductively creating a typology for speech acts that are examined in the study the researchers were able to gain a more in-depth understanding of the interactions.
perspective of the particular phenomena and of the rules that impact the interaction. This approach’s popularity stems from the theory’s ability to be applied to a wide range of communicative events by researchers from various traditions.

**Summary**

As demonstrated in the preceding paragraphs, Speech Act Theory is a highly adaptable theory which focuses attention on the speech acts that constitute interaction. Researchers have utilized the theory and accompanying typology as a whole, examined specific types of speech acts, and utilized the theory in order to develop typologies specific to the study of different phenomena. The studies that employ Speech Act Theory often have the same goal of describing phenomena by articulating the speech acts that comprise the interaction and identifying rules for effectiveness in that particular interaction. The diversity of topics to which the theory has been applied demonstrates the degree to which Searle was successful in developing a general theory of how language works.

**Speech Acts, Hostage Negotiation, and Identity**

As discussed in greater detail earlier in this chapter, the goal of the negotiator during a hostage event is to create a “we-are-in-it-together” context for the interaction between the two parties. However, this is a complex and difficult task as the fundamental structure of hostage incidents inherently pit the parties against one another. It is only through a strategic and careful use of various speech acts can the negotiator create a collaborative relationship with the hostage taker.
In order to achieve this goal the negotiator needs to establish a relationship with the hostage taker in which the parties can work together to resolve the incident despite their incongruent outcome preferences. The possibility for creating a working relationship can best be explained through Tracy’s (2006) discussion of a concept titled Relational Identity. According to Tracy, every individual has different aspects or layers of identities. Some aspects of identity are stable and defined by our culture, race, gender, and so on. These are factors that people usually cannot influence and this part of identity is socially determined and fixed. Other aspects of identity are negotiated discursively in interactions with others. The most fluid identity described by Tracy is the Relational Identities. Tracy states that:

Relational identities reference the interactional qualities of the parties. Are the people equal? Near equal? Is one party superior? Which one? Are the parties friendly or hostile, distant or close, trusting or wary with each other? Relational identities are negotiated moment to moment and are highly variable. (p. 19)

Negotiation professionals can work to manage this fluid in-the-moment aspect of identity in order to create a collaborative environment with the hostage taker.

According to Tracy (2006), speech acts are the mechanisms on which relational identities are built. She states that “People’s relationships are not fixed but change over time… In large measure, relational change is accomplished though beginning to do, or refraining from doing, particular speech acts” (p. 67). Tracy’s argument is that the actions performed by speaking are the defining elements of the relationship. As the relationship becomes established, people work to locate themselves within that relationship and claim a temporary relational identity. As discussed in detail by Searle (1967), people are usually aware of social rules for performing speech acts. Once we negotiate a temporary
relational identity we utilize the speech acts that are appropriate for that identity. The subsequent use of speech acts reinforces the relational identity. In this way, speech acts serve to both create and manage our Relational Identities.

The fact that speech acts serve to create and reinforce our relational identities is of critical importance for understanding the relationship-building aspects central to hostage negotiations. For the police officer to overcome the often antagonistic relationship that exists at the beginning of the interaction, the negotiator will have to utilize speech acts that draw the parties together. This must be accomplished while the officer attempts to gain compliance from the hostage taker and secure the release of the hostages.

The speech acts uttered by the officer in attempts to secure the hostages are an extremely important factor in resolving the incident. For example, a police officer might use Negative Expertise (Marwell & Schmitt, 1967) as a compliance-gaining technique. In this case, the office might say “I’ve seen how these situations work out and the longer you stay in there the worse it is going to be for you.” In this case this utterance is a speech act that reinforces Relational Identities that are distant from each other. The relational layer of meaning that exists in this comment undermines any attempts to build a close relationship with the hostage taker. The officer is essentially saying that not complying now will result in an escalation of the situation and that the officer himself cannot or will do not anything about it. This act is counterproductive to building a “we-are-in-it-together” context.

The importance of this speech act becomes more apparent in comparison with its counterpart; Positive Expertise (Marwell & Schmitt, 1967). In using this compliance-
gaining technique, the officer could say “I’ve seen how these situations work and ending this situation now is really going to work in your favor.” By employing the positively-valanced compliance-gaining strategy, the officer is able to manipulate the relational meaning of the speech act. In this case, the officer is making an argument as to the benefits of surrendering now, rather than the problems of surrendering in the future. The speech act brings the parties closer together and serves to reinforce that they are both working in order to solve their common problem. Importantly, the officer is also demonstrating concern for the hostage taker. When these speech acts occur regularly throughout the negotiation they are both creating and reinforcing the parties’ relationship and Relational Identities. This mechanism allows speech acts to create the “we-are-in-it-together” relationship that is crucial to resolving the incident (Borowsky, 2011; Donohue and Taylor, 2006).

**Research Questions**

In order to investigate how compliance-gaining speech acts foster the Relational Identity requisite for successfully resolving hostage incidents, this study poses several research questions. The first research questions are designed in order to develop a general description of the prevalence of compliance-gaining strategies in hostage negotiation events. To date, there have not been any studies published that have examined the prevalence of compliance-gaining strategies within these interactions. Inquiry into this topic must therefore begin with an assessment of how frequently compliance-gaining strategies occur in hostage negotiation events. In order to determine the degree to which these strategies are utilized, this study will begin by answering the following questions:
RQ1: How frequently do negotiators utilize various compliance-gaining strategies in hostage negotiation events?

RQ2: How frequently do hostage takers utilize various compliance-gaining strategies in hostage negotiation events?

As established earlier in this chapter, no previous studies were identified that have examined the types of responses to compliance-gaining actions in hostage negotiation events. The responses that follow an attempt to gain compliance are important as they may indicate a willingness to comply or resistance. The speech act of responding to the attempt may also provide insight into aspects of the parties’ relational development. In order to better understand the ways that parties respond to attempts to gain compliance, this study proposes the following question:

RQ3: How frequently do negotiators and hostage takers utilize various responses to compliance-gaining attempts in hostage negotiation events?

One of the most important findings from Taylor and Thomas’s (2005) study of linguistic style matching in hostage negotiation pertained to who was leading the conversation. Taylor and Thomas were interested in not just the total amount of linguistic style matching that was occurring in the interactions, but also which party was setting the linguistic norms and which party was attempting to duplicate those norms. This is a critical piece of information in observing the specific linguistic norms that are influencing the outcome of the incident. In a similar manner, this study seeks to determine if either of the parties’ compliance-gaining actions have an impact on the outcome of the event. In order to better understand the potential relationships between the parties’ compliance-
gaining strategy use and the outcome of hostage negotiation events this study poses the following questions:

RQ4: Does the frequency of the negotiators’ use of compliance-gaining strategies differ in successful versus unsuccessful hostage negotiation events?

RQ5: Does the frequency of the hostage takers’ use of compliance-gaining strategies differ in successful versus unsuccessful hostage negotiation events?

Giebels and Taylor (2009) stated that “all hostage negotiations involve periods of persuasion that move the interaction toward and away from success” (p.10). Further consideration of this idea reveals the importance of exploring possible factors that are indicative of movement towards one of these outcomes. It may be possible that certain responses to compliance-gaining attempts are predictive of direction the relationship is moving and, as such, may provide negotiators with a tool to evaluate their chances of success. In order to further explore these possible relationships, this study poses the following questions:

RQ 6: Does the frequency of the negotiators’ responses to compliance-gaining strategies differ in successful versus unsuccessful hostage negotiation events?

RQ7: Does the frequency of the hostage takers’ responses to compliance-gaining strategies differ in successful versus unsuccessful hostage negotiation events?

Hostage negotiations have been characterized as having distinct stages characterized by different goals (Holmes & Sykes, 1993; Rogan & Hammer, 1995). Briefly, these stages consist of the Initiating Phase that includes introductions, the Problem Solving Phase during which demands are made, and the Resolution Phase that
includes final bargaining towards the end of the negotiation (Holmes & Sykes, 1993). Examining the potential differences between compliance-gaining and responses to compliance-resisting between these stages may provide insights into the communicative features that allow for the progression of the negotiation and the development of the relational identities. This study will explore the potential relationships between compliance-gaining strategies, stages of the negotiation, and outcome of the hostage negotiation event through the following questions:

RQ8: How do the frequencies of negotiator compliance-gaining strategy use differ across the three stages of successful and unsuccessful hostage negotiation events?

RQ9: How do the frequencies of hostage taker compliance-gaining strategy use differ across the three stages of successful and unsuccessful hostage negotiation events?

This set of questions should provide insight into the potential relationships between compliance-gaining strategies, responses to compliance-gaining strategies, and the outcomes of hostage negotiation events.
Chapter Three: Methodology

Data

The data for this study consisted of nine hostage negotiation transcripts. Given the logistical and legal challenges of obtaining recordings of hostage negotiation events, this study utilized transcripts that have been examined in previous studies of hostage negotiation (see Donohue & Roberto, 1993; Taylor, 2002; Taylor & Thomas, 2005). These incidents occurred throughout the United States and were provided by the FBI for research purposes. A review of the video recordings from which the transcripts were produced consisted of the researcher watching two randomly selected five minute-long blocks of video from two different incidents and verifying the transcribed data word-by-word. This verification procedure did not identify any transcription errors. The entire corpus of data is consistent in terms of transcription style leading the researcher to the conclusion that the transcribed data is highly accurate. Any information that would identify the perpetrators’ or negotiators’ identities was removed prior to this study and contextual information regarding the events is limited to the information detailed in Table 1. The incidents are both expressive and instrumental in nature and according to Taylor (2002), these incidents represent a wide range of the various goals that motivate hostage takers. A description of these incidents based on Taylor and Thomas’ (2005) description is located in Table 1.
### Table 1

**Case Descriptions**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Letter</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Outcome</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>Bus Hijacking</td>
<td>Unsuccessful</td>
<td>In this case a male/female couple have hijacked a bus in an effort to publicize their cult. The male negotiator is able to secure the release of the hostages after which the hostage takers commit suicide in accordance with their cult’s prophecy.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>Daughter</td>
<td>Unsuccessful</td>
<td>In this case, an emotionally unstable man has shot his daughter and is refusing to allow police or paramedics to treat his child. The male negotiators are unable to secure his surrender.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>Elderly Couple</td>
<td>Unsuccessful</td>
<td>In this incident, an armed man is attempting to escape arrest for another crime and has taken an elderly couple hostage in their home. The man becomes aggressive and the police are forced to use a tactical intervention. The primary negotiator is male.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D</td>
<td>Bank Robbery Couple</td>
<td>Unsuccessful</td>
<td>In this case, police officers respond to a report and find a male/female couple in the midst of robbing a bank. The primary negotiator is male with a female negotiator engaging in several short exchanges with the male suspect. The negotiators are able to secure the release of the hostage, but are unable to prevent the hostage takers from committing suicide. The hostage takers commit suicide in order to avoid a prison sentence.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E</td>
<td>Kidnapping</td>
<td>Unsuccessful</td>
<td>The male perpetrator has kidnapped the negotiator’s son and demanded a large amount of money. The negotiator is unable to secure his son’s release.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
In this case, an emotionally unstable man has boarded a plan with an explosive device. He demands to speak with family members and receive treatment for his drug addiction. The male negotiator is able to convince him to surrender.

An armed male takes a female bank manager hostage. The male negotiator convinces the hostage taker to release the hostage and surrender.

In this case, a man holds his six month old daughter hostage in order to persuade his former partner to re-try life as a family. The male negotiator convinces him to release his daughter and surrender.

In this incident, male inmates at a prison overpower several guards and take them as hostages. They negotiate for a number of items including better living conditions. The male negotiator convinces the inmates to return to a secure holding area.

The transcripts utilized in this study have been categorized as having outcomes that are either successful or unsuccessful. These characterizations match Taylor’s (2002) distinctions that determine success or failure of the incident based on the need for the police to use force in order to bring about an end to the incident. Even though some solutions where force is applied may be considered successful, as is the case when the hostages are recovered and the hostage taker surrenders at gunpoint, this study will take the position that the need for the officers to use force equates to a failure of the
negotiation process. Organizing the cases according to this criterion results in five cases categorized as unsuccessful and four cases categorized as successful.

**Institutional Review Board Concerns**

The data set utilized in this study has been categorized as being exempt from university Institutional Review Board (IRB) review. According to the University of Denver’s IRB’s webpage (Institutional Review Board, 2010), data which is collected in such a manner that the subjects cannot be identified is exempt from IRB review. Any information that could be utilized to determine the identity of the parties in these transcripts has been redacted by law enforcement agencies that provided researchers access to recordings of these incidents. As a result of the perpetrators’ anonymity, this data set has been identified by the University of Denver’s IRB as exempt from IRB review. There is also a well-established precedent for utilizing these data in empirical research (see Donohue & Roberto, 1993; Taylor 2002; Taylor & Thomas, 2005).

**Coding Procedures**

This study began with a quantitative examination of the data that employed both deductive and inductive approaches. This multifaceted approach is considered necessary given the lack of a discipline-accepted typology of responses to compliance-gaining attempts as well as this study’s potential to observe unique communication messages and patterns that may exist due to the extremely volatile nature of the hostage negotiation context. Both deductive and inductive approaches were employed in this study and were utilized in coordination to answer the research questions posed in Chapter 2.
**Deductive approach.** The study began by identifying the compliance-gaining strategies that are employed by both the negotiator and the hostage taker. In order to accomplish this goal, this study employed a deductive approach that utilizes Marwell and Schmitt’s (1967) typology of compliance-gaining strategies as a coding scheme. As discussed earlier in Chapter 2, this typology has been utilized in a number of studies and has been described as being relatively stable (Grant et al., 1994). The well-established precedent for utilizing Marwell and Schmitt’s typology as a coding scheme and the general acceptance of the categories made this an ideal scheme for use in this study.

In order to examine the compliance-gaining strategies identified in Marwell and Schmitt’s (1967) typology, this study utilized uninterrupted speaking turns as the level of analysis. An uninterrupted speaking turn is a turn that is not constrained to single words or sentences, but rather, an uninterrupted speaking turn includes the speaker’s entire utterance until another speaker begins talking. This level of analysis is ideal as Marwell and Schmitt’s typology includes compliance-gaining strategies that may be spread out over multiple sentences. For example, the utterance “You seem like a nice guy. Why don’t you just come on out and we’ll talk in person?” is constructed of two sentences. Evaluating these utterances on the level of word choice produces no meaningful codes, while a sentence-based evaluation reveals that “You seem like a nice guy” is a compliment and “Why don’t you just come on out so we can talk in person?” is a request or suggestion. The sentence level of analysis proves insufficient in identifying the compliance-gaining strategy and the influential nature of the utterance is lost. However, by examining the uninterrupted talking turn which encompasses both sentences we are
able to observe the compliance-gaining strategy of Liking; a strategy in which the speaker attempts to get the target in a “good frame of mind” so that they will comply with the request (Marwell & Schmitt, 1969, p. 357). This level of analysis has also been successfully utilized in previous hostage negotiation research by Rogan and Hammer (1994), who examined facework in hostage negotiations. The uninterrupted talking turn provided the opportunity to observe the variety of compliance-gaining strategies identified in Marwell and Schmitt’s typology.

One of the implications of utilizing an uninterrupted speaking turn is that the data contained instances where the speaker presented multiple compliance-gaining attempts or responses to compliance-gaining attempts in a single turn of talk. For instance, the statement “You seem like a nice guy. Would you help me out and come on out?” combines the strategies of Liking and Altruism. The speaker of this utterance is attempting to create a good frame of mind in the hostage taker and also utilizing Altruism in asking for compliance as a personal favor (Marwell & Schmitt, 1969). When two or more compliance-gaining strategies occurred in the same talking turn, this study applied a gestalt approach to coding the speaker’s turn. A gestalt method of coding involves selecting the code that seems more prevalent in the interaction. Prevalence, in this case, was determined through an examination of the number of words devoted to each strategy and the context in which they were spoken. To build on the previous example, if the speaker had been praising the other party in the exchanges before this utterance, then the compliance-gaining strategy of Liking would be selected. Alternatively, if the hostage taker has been expressing his desire to work with the negotiator in the lines before this
exchange, then the strategy of Altruism would be selected. Rogan and Hammer (1994) have successfully applied gestalt coding and uninterrupted talking turns in a previous analysis of hostage negotiation transcripts.

In order to code the responses to compliance-gaining attempts, this study examined the party’s immediate response to an attempt to utilize a compliance-gaining strategy. This response will be referred to as the response to a compliance-gaining attempt. While it may be possible that a party could respond to an attempt to gain compliance in a subsequent response, the immediate response was chosen as the unit for analysis for a number of reasons. As will be described in the following paragraphs, the immediate response was selected as the unit to represent the response to a compliance-gaining attempt based on theoretical evidence, applicability of the study’s findings, and methodological practicality.

According to Liddicoat (2007), the most basic structure of our talk occurs at the level of adjacency pairs. Adjacency pairs are paired sequences on which much of our conversational structure is built. Liddicoat said that adjacency pairs “(1) consist of two turns (2) by different speakers, (3) which are placed next to each other in their basic minimal form, (4) which are ordered, and (5) which are differentiated into pair types” (p. 106). For example, greetings are commonly paired with other greetings and questions are normally paired with answers. A conversation that is common when interacting with people consists of a greeting such as “hello” followed by a reply greeting like “hi”, and then an inquiry of “how is your day going?” followed by an answer. This paired sequencing allows language to maintain structure and creates elements of predictability.
and control in our conversations. As an attempt to gain compliance and a response to a compliance-gaining attempt relies on this paired sequencing, it was reasonable to expect that these utterances would function similarly to other adjacency pairs.

Liddicoat (2007) argued that adjacency pairs create control and predictability in language. He notes that the function of the first part of the adjacency pair is to elicit a reaction in the hearer. The conversational norm is for the hearer to complete the adjacency pair by replying with the second part of the pair. In this way, the first part of the pair largely constrains what can be said in the second part. Liddicoat’s argument predicts that an attempt at compliance-gaining (the first pair part) will likely be met with a response to the attempt to gain compliance (the second pair part) in the speaker’s next turn. Although the second party is not guaranteed to respond immediately to an attempt to gain compliance, the foundational structure of language predicted that this should regularly be the case. Accordingly, theoretical support exists for coding the immediate response to a compliance-gaining strategy as being the response to the compliance-gaining attempt.

Though the expectation was that an attempt to gain compliance would be followed by a response to a compliance-gaining attempt, the informal nature of conversation and the transcription procedures resulted in minor additions in the adjacency pair sequence. For example, Wood (2010) described the listening skill of minimal encouragers. These are small demonstrations of listening and include utterances such as “mmhmm,” “go on,” “uh-uh,” and other verbal actions that indicate listening, but are not responding to the content of speaker’s utterance. When such interruptions were present
between the compliance-gaining strategy and the responses to the compliance-gaining technique, this study treated the utterances both before and after the minimal encourager as the uninterrupted turn at talk. This procedure prevented the disqualification of important exchanges that included minimal encouragers.

The immediate response to the compliance-gaining strategy was also chosen as the unit for analysis for its potential to develop practical findings. By coding the use of each strategy and the immediate response this study has produced findings that are easily utilized by law enforcement officials. Negotiators will be able to purposefully utilize a compliance-gaining strategy and observe the immediate response as a means of testing the hostage taker’s readiness to resolve the incident. Such responses also provide valuable information that can be utilized by the negotiator in order to determine the necessity of a tactical raid.

Alternatively, attempting to code the responses to compliance-gaining attempts that occur in the turns subsequent to the compliance-gaining strategy would not result in such easily adoptable strategies. Even if this study was able to identify more complex patterns in the negotiation process, utilizing the findings would require the negotiator to monitor and identify potential responses for numerous exchanges. This means that negotiators would have to selectively listen to multiple utterances by the hostage taker while also monitoring their own communication and continuing to attempt to build a relationship with the perpetrator. This would be a very difficult task given the often-hostile nature of hostage negotiation events. While there may prove to be some value in
eventually exploring the subsequent exchanges, the findings from such an approach would not yield the most readily useable results.

In addition to theoretical and pragmatic concerns described in the preceding paragraphs, methodological concerns were also taken into account when deciding to examine the immediate response to an attempt to gain compliance. Extending the analysis into subsequent responses would have created the problem of the researcher having to subjectively decide which response belongs with which strategy. Coding in this manner would have created pairs of codes and responses that overlap with one another. This would further have complicated the analysis.

In sum, by treating the immediate response to the use of a compliance-gaining strategy as the response to an attempt to gain compliance, this study minimized subjectivity and produced pragmatic findings for the law enforcement community. The approach was theoretically supported in the concept of adjacency pairs and allowed for simplistic deductive coding procedure to be utilized in this investigation.

An essential part of the coding process involved establishing an acceptable level of intercoder reliability. In this study the researcher served as the primary coder of the data. A second coder was trained on the compliance-gaining and response to compliance-gaining attempt typologies. The second coder was a tenured Associate Professor of Psychology with a Doctorate in Psychology and experience teaching persuasion. Training consisted of a discussion of each category and the examination of several examples of each type of compliance-gaining tactic and a response to each compliance-gaining tactic. When the second coder felt comfortable with the categories the training process moved to
a practice session where the coder was provided with several examples so that she could practice coding the categories. Once the coder was confident in her ability to utilize the typologies, the researcher provided a set of 30 randomly selected compliance-gaining strategies and 30 randomly selected responses to compliance-gaining attempts for the coder to examine. Each compliance-gaining action in the data set was assigned a number and the selection of strategies was determined utilizing a random number generator. The researcher was present for the coding and provided the coder with contextual information when requested. Such information was necessary in order to determine referents such as “it” and “they.” The coder was blind as to the outcome of the incidents from which the samples were selected. The training and coding process took place over the course of two days and lasted approximately nine hours.

Though there does not seem to be universal agreement on a recommended sample size, several scholars have offered their perspectives. According to Hayes (2005), the number of samples coded should represent a small fraction of the larger data set. Crewson (2005) identifies 30 cases as a good rule of thumb if a moderate or better level of agreement is expected. The intercoder reliability was assessed using Cohen’s Kappa which is a measure of agreement (Hayes, 2005). The intercoder reliability on the 30 randomly selected compliance-gaining strategies was excellent ($\kappa = .93$). The intercoder reliability on the 30 randomly selected responses to compliance-gaining strategies was also excellent ($\kappa = .96$). While the minimal scores of agreement are arbitrarily defined, it is generally accepted that agreement should measure above .70 (Hayes, 2005). According to Fleiss (1981), an agreement score of .40-.60 is fair, .60-.75 is good, and above .75 is
excellent. The level of intercoder reliability in all coding aspects of this study was excellent.

**Inductive approach.** Recognizing that a number of studies have attempted to identify compliance-gaining strategies not included in Marwell and Schmidt’s (1967) coding scheme (Schneck-Hamlin et al., 1982; Wiseman & Schneck-Hamlin, 1982), this study also inductively coded for compliance-gaining strategies which are not included in Marwell and Schmitt’s taxonomy. These strategies were developed through an inductive coding process described by Smith (1995). Smith’s general process involves beginning with a single set of data and developing a coding scheme that can then be applied to examine additional data sets. This process involves cycling through a series of stages geared towards producing a master list of themes that can be utilized as a coding typology. Smith’s procedure was originally designed to be utilized with transcribed interviews, and so, was highly compatible with transcribed hostage negotiations. This process was utilized for both supplementing Marwell and Schmitt’s (1967) typology of compliance-gaining strategies and developing a typology of responses to compliance-gaining attempts.

**Stage 1.** The first stage of Smith’s (1995) coding process involves noticing the elements of the transcript that are interesting or significant. As this study is focused on compliance-gaining and response strategies, attention was paid to any instances where “one person is trying to induce another to do something” (Miller et al., 1977, p. 42). This definition of compliance-gaining was useful to this study as it describes the interactional dynamics that exist when compliance-gaining strategies are employed. Responses to
compliance-gaining attempts consisted of the uninterrupted talking turn that occurs immediately after an attempt by another party to utilize a compliance-gaining strategy. A pilot study of the data indicated that compliance-gaining strategies and responses to compliance-gaining attempts would be identifiable through this approach.

**Stage 2.** The second stage of Smith’s (1995) process involves documenting the emerging themes and identifying key words that describe the observed themes. For example, this study observed that responses to attempts to gain compliance sometimes explained why the listener could or would not comply. Some of the key identifying words that appeared in the stage included “repercussions,” “danger,” and “authority.” During this stage of the process the researcher is only identifying the emerging themes and is not yet working to develop any conceptual relationships or orders amongst them.

**Stage 3.** During the third stage of the process the researcher begins to look for connections between the emerging themes. Smith (1995) says that some of the themes may cluster together or some themes may act as master themes. The researcher also may develop additional master themes for organizational purposes. For example, the responses that included “repercussions,” “danger,” and “lack of authority” all provide some type of explanation as to why the other party can or will not comply. Therefore, a master theme that describes these types of messages would be Explanations. According to Smith, an important part of this stage involves the researcher referring back to the original data in order to ensure that the themes are representative of the parties’ comments. This was accomplished through a review of the transcripts. Smith further described this stage as
one where the researcher relies on his or her own interpretative processes to create some type of order from the data.

**Stage 4.** In this stage the researcher produces a list of the master themes. These master themes, when appropriate, should reflect the sub-themes that have been identified in the data. This study identified several master themes including “Disagreement” and “Trust” in addition to “Explanations.” According to Smith (1995), this list of master themes should have some type of coherent order. While Smith’s (1995) example describes the development of five master themes, Smith does not prescribe a specific number or range of themes that should be developed through this process.

**Stage 5.** In the fifth stage Smith (1995) recommends that the researcher return to the transcript and identify the locations where the master themes can be found. In the event that the data do not seem to fit the categories well, the researcher should reconceptualize the master themes that have been previously identified. Smith also states that this process may lead to changes in the interview format or focus of the project, although the option to change data collection methods did not apply to this study.

**Continuing the analysis.** After the fifth stage Smith (1995) moved away from a stage model and described a less procedural approach to examining the data. Once the fifth stage is complete, Smith’s approach involves moving beyond a single transcript and either applying the coding scheme to a new set of data or beginning the coding process again with a second set of data. This study extended the original coding set rather than develop an entirely new set of codes. Smith states that, when applying the coding scheme to a new set of data, the researcher should be open to the identification of new themes. If
new themes are identified, the researcher needs to return to the earlier transcripts and incorporate the modified coding typology. This procedure was completed in this study.

Though this method can be used effectively for five or six transcripts, Smith (1995) stated that it becomes difficult for the researcher to conceptually keep track of the cases once this number has been exceeded. In order to apply this coding scheme to a larger data set Smith recommended a series of steps that can help to refine the categorization system. These steps are designed to be utilized in addition to the five procedural stages. This study will not review these additional steps as these steps are very detailed and somewhat antiquated as qualitative computing programs now perform the entire sequence of steps with a single click. Essentially, this series of steps encompass the idea that the examples of the themes need to be continually sorted in order to ensure that the themes are clearly defined. As new data are added to the findings, the researcher should continue to make comparisons across the categories and be open to the development of new themes. This evaluation was made regularly due to the ease of utilizing a qualitative data analysis program.

Though Smith’s (1995) coding procedure is laid out in several distinct stages, the author also advised that there is no one correct way to analyze qualitative data. Rather than forcing a study to fit within specific constraints, the researcher should utilize systemic methods that reflect of the goals of the study being conducted. Smith’s description of qualitative methods acknowledged that the researcher’s own perspective will be incorporated into the analysis and that there is a certain amount of creativity
involved in the formulation of themes. This study was conducted utilizing the stages identified by Smith.

As demonstrated in the preceding paragraphs, Smith’s procedure is effective at identifying compliance-gaining attempts and responses to compliance-gaining attempts. The process provided a logical starting point for the analysis and also included a number of important checkpoints where the researcher returned to data in order to make sure the developing themes are representative of the parties’ utterances and also to evaluate the accuracy of the categories that are being developed.

**Summary of Procedures**

This study of compliance-gaining attempts and responses to compliance-gaining attempts utilized both deductive and inductive approaches to identify the communicative actions of the parties involved in hostage negotiation incidents. By beginning the deductive portion of this study with a well-established typology, this study ensured that the coding scheme was conceptually valid and also accepted by the research community. By supplementing Marwell and Schmitt’s (1967) coding scheme with an inductive approach, this study identified additional strategies that may be specific to the hostage negotiation context. This was an important aspect of the methodology as hostage negotiations are an unusual type of interaction and the incidents selected for this study represent a wide variety of negotiation scenarios.

Smith’s (1995) coding procedure proved to be capable of creating a typology of responses to compliance-gaining attempts. Utilizing Smith’s approach resulted in the identification of a number of additional compliance-gaining strategies as well as a set of
responses to compliance-gaining attempts. With these communication actions identified it became possible to examine the impact of compliance-gaining attempts and responses to compliance-gaining attempts on hostage negotiations.
Chapter Four: Results

Research Question 1

Research question one was designed to explore the types of compliance-gaining techniques utilized by negotiators in hostage incidents as well as the frequency with which negotiators employed these techniques. As can be observed in Table 2, negotiators utilized a number of the strategies described by Marwell and Schmitt (1967).

Table 2

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strategy</th>
<th>Total Use</th>
<th>Percentage of Total Attempts to Gain Compliance</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Positive Altercasting</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1.22%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Altruism</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>3.67%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Positive Esteem</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>2.45%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Positive Expertise</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>11.02%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Liking</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>6.53%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Positive Moral Appeal</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>5.31%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Promise</td>
<td>79</td>
<td>32.24%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Suggested Solution</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>11.84%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trade</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>6.12%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pregiving</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>.41%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aversive Stimulation</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>.41%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Debt</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>5.71%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Negative Expertise</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>6.94%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Threat</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>4.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Negative Moral Appeal</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>.82%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Negative Self-feeling</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>.41%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Several strategies were not employed, including Negative Altercasting, Negative Esteem, and Positive Self-Feeling.

Though the majority of the techniques were identified as belonging to the categories identified by Marwell and Schmitt, this study also revealed the presence of three additional categories that were named Trade, Positive Moral Appeal, and Suggested Solution. The Trade strategy consists of one party asking another if they will partake in an immediate exchange e.g., “I’ll trade you the food for one of the hostages.” This strategy is very similar to Promise except that it entails an immediate exchange whereas Promise ensures of a future course of action. The second strategy is Positive Moral Appeal. In Marwell and Schmitt’s original typology the researchers identify Moral Appeal as a strategy, but describe the strategy as highlighting the immoral actions of the target. The description provided by the researchers was that the target was morally wrong if he did not comply. The strategies observed in this study indicated the need for a similar category with a positive valance. This new strategy does not say that the target is morally wrong if he does not comply, but rather that he is morally right if he does comply. Accordingly, Marwell and Schmitt’s category will be referred to as Negative Moral Appeal and the new category identified in this study will be referred to as Positive Moral Appeal. Lastly, this study identified the Suggested Solution strategy. In this strategy the speaker suggests an idea that that solves the problem the parties are discussing. For example, in a domestic incident the negotiator says “the three of us could sit down and you could think and we could hash things back and forth between us.” This strategy is
focused on presenting a plan for resolving the incident while simultaneously asking that the party carry through with the idea.

The total number of strategies employed by the negotiators across all incidents was 245. On average, negotiators include compliance-gaining strategies in 6.17% of their total turns at talk. It was found that negotiators utilize compliance-gaining strategies with different frequencies. Strategies that were employed in more than 75% of cases included Promise (89%), Positive Expertise (78%), and Suggested Solution (78%). Strategies that occurred in less than 25% of cases included Positive Altercasting (22%), Threat (22%), Negative Moral Appeal (22%), Pregiving (11%), Aversive Stimulation (11%), and Negative Self-Feeling (11%). Table 3 contains data on how frequently the strategies were employed across the cases examined in this study.
Table 3

Percentage of Cases where the Negotiator Employs Compliance-Gaining Tactics

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strategy</th>
<th>Percentage of Cases in which Strategy was Utilized</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Positive Altercasting</td>
<td>22%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Altruism</td>
<td>56%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Positive Esteem</td>
<td>44%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Positive Expertise</td>
<td>78%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Liking</td>
<td>67%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Positive Moral Appeal</td>
<td>56%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Promise</td>
<td>89%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Suggested Solution</td>
<td>78%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trade</td>
<td>67%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pregiving</td>
<td>11%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aversive Stimulation</td>
<td>11%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Debt</td>
<td>67%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Negative Expertise</td>
<td>44%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Threat</td>
<td>22%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Negative Moral Appeal</td>
<td>22%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Negative Self-feeling</td>
<td>11%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Overall, the descriptive statistics reveal that negotiators utilize a variety of compliance-gaining strategies in hostage incidents.

**Research Question 2**

The second research question was designed to explore the frequency with which hostage takers utilize compliance-gaining strategies. As can be seen in Table 4, hostage takers utilize Promise, Trade, Altruism, and Threat.
Table 4
Hostage Taker Use of Compliance-Gaining Strategies

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strategy</th>
<th>Total Use</th>
<th>Percentage of Total Attempts to Gain Compliance</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Promise</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>41.66%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trade</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3.33%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Altruism</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1.67%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Threat</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>53.33%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Hostage takers utilized these strategies a total of 60 times in the incidents. These strategies occur with varying regularity across the cases examined in this study. Promise and Threat are the most popular strategies, as they occur in 67% of cases. The least frequently-used tactics are Trade, which occurs in 22% of cases, and Altruism, which occurs in 11% of cases. On average, hostage takers utilized compliance-gaining techniques in 1.35% of their total turns at talk. Overall, hostage takers utilize a limited number of strategies in order to gain compliance from the negotiator.

Research Question 3

This question was designed to provide insight into the types of responses that are utilized by negotiators and hostage takers when the other party attempts to utilize compliance-gaining strategies. An inductive coding process described by Smith (1995) resulted in the identification of several possible response strategies. These strategies are presented in Table 5.
Table 5
*Responses to Compliance-gaining Strategies*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strategy</th>
<th>Descriptions and Examples</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Agreement           | Targets agree to comply
|                     | “Okay, I’ll call you about 1:45”                                                         |
| Deal                | Targets respond with their own proposal
|                     | “The best thing for you do to is to walk out of there”                                    |
| Explanation         | Targets explain their non-compliance
|                     | “Yeah, but as soon as I walk out of that door you’re going to start firing”               |
| Topical             | Targets shift conversation to topic irrelevant to that referenced in the compliance-gaining strategy
|                     | “You know I’m in my pajamas”                                                             |
| Information Request | Targets respond with request for more information
|                     | “Right, Okay. Now what about the repercussion?”                                          |
| Tone                | Targets respond with comments on the speaker’s tone or emotional state
|                     | “Let’s just settle down for a minute”                                                     |
| Disagreement        | Targets openly disagree with request
|                     | “The answer to that is ‘no.’”                                                             |
| Challenge           | Targets question speaker’s willingness to follow through with action referenced in compliance-gaining statement
|                     | “You don’t want to hurt that girl. I don’t think you do.”                                 |
| Willingness         | Targets comment on relationship or interaction with speaker
|                     | “You’re really not negotiating”                                                           |
| Prior Completion    | Targets respond that they have completed the task or another one similar in nature
|                     | “I gave you all of the time that you need”                                               |
| Interruption        | A third party prevents the target from responding
|                     | “Two-eight-solo”                                                                         |
| Trust               | The targets respond that they do not trust the speaker
|                     | “That’s bullshit”                                                                        |
| Lament              | The targets express emotions over the incident or actions to lead to the incident
|                     | “I have done the right thing until last night”                                           |
| Un-codeable         | Researcher is unable to determine meaning
|                     | “They want a thing, but”                                                                 |
| Earlier Plan        | The targets refer to an agreement or offer posed earlier in the negotiation process        |
“But a deals a deal”

The targets express that they are not yet ready to comply

“Let me think about it. Let me think about it.”

Table 6 reveals that negotiators utilize strategies that fall into a number of categories. The response strategy that is utilized in the largest number of cases is Agreement, which occurs in 78% of incidents. Several categories of responses are not employed by the negotiators. They include Trust, Lament, Earlier Plan, and Delay.

Table 6
Negotiator Responses to Compliance-gaining Strategies by Frequency of Use

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strategy</th>
<th>Percentage of Cases in which Strategy is Utilized</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Agreement</td>
<td>78%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Deal</td>
<td>56%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Explanation</td>
<td>56%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Topical</td>
<td>44%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Information Request</td>
<td>22%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tone</td>
<td>22%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Disagreement</td>
<td>11%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Challenge Willingness</td>
<td>11%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Relational</td>
<td>11%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prior Completion</td>
<td>11%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interruption</td>
<td>11%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trust</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lament</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Un-codeable</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Earlier Plan</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Delay</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The most popular response strategies utilized by negotiators in terms of frequency of use are Agreement (28.33%) and Deal (23.33%), which account for over half of all responses. Further details on the frequency of strategy use can be found in Table 7.
**Table 7**

*Negotiator Responses to Hostage takers’ Compliance-gaining Strategies*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strategy</th>
<th>Total Use</th>
<th>Percentage of Total Responses</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Agreement</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>28.33%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Deal</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>23.33%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Explanation</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>10.00%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Topical</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>8.33%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Information Request</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>6.67%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tone</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>6.67%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Disagreement</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>6.67%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Challenge Willingness</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>5.00%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Relational</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1.67%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prior Completion</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1.67%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interruption</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1.67%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

This study also examined the hostage takers’ responses to the negotiators’ use of compliance-gaining strategies. The response strategies that are utilized in the largest number of cases are Disagreement (89%), Deal (78%), and Trust (78%). The hostage takers did not utilize the Tone or Challenge Willingness response strategies. Further details on the frequency of strategy use across all cases can be seen in Table 8.
**Table 8**
*Hostage taker Responses to Compliance-gaining Strategies by Frequency of Use*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strategy</th>
<th>Percentage of Cases in which Strategy is Utilized</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Agreement</td>
<td>67%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Deal</td>
<td>78%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Explanation</td>
<td>56%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Topical</td>
<td>33%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Information Request</td>
<td>44%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tone</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Disagreement</td>
<td>89%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Challenge Willingness</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Relational</td>
<td>33%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prior Completion</td>
<td>22%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interruption</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trust</td>
<td>78%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lament</td>
<td>22%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Un-codeable</td>
<td>44%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Earlier Plan</td>
<td>33%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Delay</td>
<td>44%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The three most popular strategies in terms of frequency of usage are Disagreement (21%), Agreement (19%), and Deal (16%). The overall counts and percentage of use can be observed in Table 9.
Table 9  
*Hostage taker Responses to Negotiators’ Compliance-gaining Strategies*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strategy</th>
<th>Total Use</th>
<th>Percentage of Total Responses</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Agreement</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>19.59%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Disagreement</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>21.22%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Deal</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>16.33%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Delay</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>8.57%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trust</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>5.71%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Explanation</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>10.61%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Topical</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>2.45%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Information Request</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>5.31%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lament</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>2.45%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Earlier Plan</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>2.45%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Relational</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1.22%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prior Completion</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>.82%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Uncodable</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>3.27%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Research Question 4**

This question was designed to explore the possible relationships between the negotiators’ actions and the outcomes of the incidents. Negotiators in unsuccessful cases employed compliance-gaining strategies in 5.85% \( (SD = 2.86) \) of their turns at talk, whereas successful cases involved negotiators utilizing compliance-gaining strategies in 6.51% \( (SD = 3.76) \) of their turns at talk. Subsequent analysis focusing on the use of strategies revealed significant relationships between strategies and outcomes.

This study first examined the possible relationship between the negotiators’ use of strategies and the outcome of the event. As can be seen in Table 10, negotiators employed a wide range of strategies in the successful and unsuccessful cases.
Table 10
Negotiator Use of Compliance-Gaining Strategies by Case

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strategy</th>
<th>Unsuccessful</th>
<th>Successful</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>A</td>
<td>B</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Positive Altercasting</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Altruism</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Positive Esteem</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Posi+ive Expertise</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Liking</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Positive Moral Appeal</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Promise</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Positive Suggested Solution</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trade</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pregiving</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aversive Stimulation Debt</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Debt</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Negative Expertise Threat</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Negative Moral Appeal</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Negative Self-feeling</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
However, negotiators did not consistently use all of the compliance-gaining strategies. Negotiators tended to rely on a few strategies, and there were many cases in which not all strategies were employed. Due to the large number of compliance-gaining techniques available for use and the negotiators’ tendency not to utilize all of the strategies, the data contained a number of cells with values of zero. Consequently, the data set violated assumptions built into the logistic regression statistical test. This study was unable to assess the effectiveness of specific strategies utilizing logistic regression testing.

In Marwell and Schmitt’s (1967) study of compliance-gaining techniques, the researchers found correlations in the data that supported sorting compliance gaining strategies along terms of social acceptability. The socially acceptable tactics identified were Pregiving, Liking, Promise, Positive and Negative Expertise, Positive and Negative Self Feeling, Positive and Negative Altercasting, Positive and Negative Esteem, and Positive Moral Appeal. The compliance-gaining activities that were considered to be socially unacceptable were Threat, Aversive Stimulation, Debt, and Altruism. This study also coded Trade and Suggested Solution as socially acceptable techniques due to techniques’ resemblance to others in this category. A Fisher’s Exact 2x2 test was completed to look for relationships between the use of compliance-gaining techniques when sorted into these two categories and the outcome of the hostage events. The results were non-significant ($p = .09$, one-tailed test).
Table 11  
*Categories Collapsed According to Marwell and Schmitt’s (1967) Guidelines*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Incident Outcome</th>
<th>Socially Acceptable</th>
<th>Socially Unacceptable</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Unsuccessful Cases</td>
<td>111</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Successful Cases</td>
<td>98</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The compliance-gaining techniques were also organized conceptually according to the strategies’ impact on the relationship. As discussed earlier in this study, one of the central goals of the negotiation process is to create a “we-are-in-it-together” relationship between the negotiator and the hostage taker (Borowsky, 2011; Donohue & Taylor, 2006). The strategies were organized according to their potential to either reduce or create distance between the parties. For example, a Promise was categorized as reducing relational distance due to the positive and interdependent nature of the action, whereas a Threat was categorized as creating relational distance due to the expressed willingness to harm the other party. Organizing the strategies according to this criterion resulted in clearly delineated categories. Strategies which reduced relational distance included Positive Altercasting, Altruism, Positive Esteem, Positive Expertise, Liking, Positive Moral Appeal, Promise, Suggested Solution, Trade, and Pre-giving. The categories that increased relational distance included Threat, Aversive Stimulation, Debt, Negative Expertise, Negative Moral appeal, and Negative Self-Feeling.

Once organized according to these established principles, statistical tests resulted in telling findings. A Fisher’s Exact Test revealed that strategies that increased relational
distance occurred more often than by chance in unsuccessful incidents and that strategies that decreased relational distance occurred more often than by chance in successful cases (p = .042, one-tailed test).

**Table 12**
*Categories Collapsed According to Effect on Relationship*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Incident Outcome</th>
<th>Decrease Relational Distance</th>
<th>Increase Relational Distance</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Unsuccessful Cases</td>
<td>98</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Successful Cases</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

This data set presented above contains an incident in which outlier data was identified. This outlier data consists of the unusually frequent use of Threats in a successful incident. The use of this strategy occurred during a prison riot that is examined in more detail in the Discussion chapter of this study. Removing the values associated with this incident results in the following contingency table.

**Table 13**
*Categories Collapsed According to Effect on Relationship without Prison Riot*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Incident Outcome</th>
<th>Decrease Relational Distance</th>
<th>Increase Relational Distance</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Unsuccessful Cases</td>
<td>98</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Successful Cases</td>
<td>58</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

A Fisher’s Exact test resulted in statistically significant findings (p = .011, one-tailed test). By removing the case that contains outlier data the contingency table is more
reflective of the regularities in these incidents. The results of the test continue to
demonstrate that the relationships between compliance-gaining strategy use and incident
outcome are unlikely to occur by chance.

**Research Question 5**

This question was designed to explore the potential effect of the hostage takers’
use of compliance-gaining strategies on the outcome of the event. Though negotiators in
successful and unsuccessful cases show little difference between their time spent
attempting to gain compliance, there appear to be some differences when examining how
frequently hostage takers use these strategies. In unsuccessful cases, hostage takers
included a compliance-gaining strategy in 1.55% ($SD = 1.12$) of their turns at talk. In
successful cases this average was 3.36% ($SD = 3.48$).

As discussed in research question two, hostage takers employ fewer compliance-
gaining strategies than negotiators. The strategies utilized included Promise, Trade,
Altruism, and Threat. Table 14 details the use of these strategies.

**Table 14**

*Hostage Taker Use of Compliance-Gaining Strategies by Case*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strategy</th>
<th>A</th>
<th>B</th>
<th>C</th>
<th>D</th>
<th>E</th>
<th>F</th>
<th>G</th>
<th>H</th>
<th>I</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Altruism</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Promise</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trade</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Threat</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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Fisher’s Exact Tests were performed on both the two most frequently utilized individual strategies (Promise and Threat), the categories described by Marwell and Schmitt (1967), and by the strategies’ impact on relational distance. All of these tests resulted in non-significant findings. The Fisher’s Exact test of the strategies when arranged by relational impact was expected to provide the best chance of finding a significant relationship, but this was not the case ($p = .25$, one-tailed test). These tests failed to demonstrate any statistically significant relationships between hostage taker strategy use and incident outcome.

**Research Question 6**

An examination of the ways that negotiators respond to hostage takers’ attempts at compliance gaining revealed that negotiators utilize several distinct strategies in responding to hostage takers. An explanation of the strategies can be found in Table 5 and the frequencies of strategy use in successful and unsuccessful events is detailed in Table 15.
Table 15  
*Negotiator Response to Compliance-Gaining Strategies by Case*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strategy</th>
<th>Unsuccessful</th>
<th>Successful</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>A</td>
<td>B</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Topical</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tone</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Deal</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interruption</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Relational</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Information</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Explanation</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Disagree</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Challenge</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Willingness</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prior Completion</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The wide range of response categories and limited numbers of compliance-gaining attempts by the hostage taker resulted in a data set that cannot be tested utilizing logistic regressions or Fisher’s exact tests.
Further collapsing of the responses to compliance-gaining strategies would be problematic for a number of reasons. First, the limited number of studies on responses to compliance-gaining attempts means that there are not any previously-established typologies or guidelines that could be utilized to organize these strategies. Attempting to organize strategies according to relational implications or within an agreement/disagreement classification system also proved problematic due to the characteristics of the responses. This issue can be further illustrated with a discussion of the Delay response.

In the Delay response the speaker expresses that they are not yet ready to comply. One example that illustrates the issues with further categorical organization is the hostage taker’s response “Well, I’m gonna come out after a while.” In this utterance, the speaker can be seen as agreeing with the compliance-gaining strategy in that he is planning to “come out” in the future, but also disagreeing with the strategy as they are not complying at that point in time. It is also difficult to organize this strategy along the lines of its relational implications. One interpretation could be that this response is decreasing relational distance as the perpetrator has expressed a willingness to work with the negotiator. However, in this case, it was later observed that the Delay strategy was utilized to placate the negotiator so that the perpetrators could develop a plan. The issues observed in this example prevent the further collapsing or categorization of the response to compliance-gaining strategies.

The best possible insight into any relationships between negotiator response and incident outcome can be observed in the frequency counts presented in Table 15. The
data reveal the trend that the use of Agreement as a response strategy may be linked with successful outcomes. This trend, however, cannot be examined further due to hostage takers’ limited use of compliance-gaining attempts and the variety of ways that the negotiator is able to respond.

**Research Question 7**

This question was designed to uncover the possible differences between the way that hostage takers respond to negotiators in successful and unsuccessful events. Several statistical tests were planned in order to observe any responses that might be predictive of incident outcome. A logistic regression could not be completed, as hostage takers employed a wide variety of response strategies that resulted in cells with a zero value. Such values violate assumptions built into the test. This data can be observed in table 16.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strategy</th>
<th>A</th>
<th>B</th>
<th>C</th>
<th>D</th>
<th>E</th>
<th>F</th>
<th>G</th>
<th>H</th>
<th>I</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Topical</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tone</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Deal</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>11</td>
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<td>2</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
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<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
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<td>2</td>
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<td>6</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Disagree</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prior Completion</td>
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<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agreement</td>
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<td>4</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>17</td>
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<tr>
<td>Trust</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Relational</td>
<td>0</td>
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<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lament</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Earlier Plan</td>
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<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Delay</td>
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<td>3</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>15</td>
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<td>0</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Uncodable</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
However, it was possible to test the Agreement and Disagreement strategies. There is conceptual support for examining these two responses together, as the responses are reflective of the target’s willingness to comply and have opposite values. These were also the two most popular strategies employed by the hostage taker with Disagreement accounting for 21.22% of all responses and Agreement accounting for 19.59%. A Fisher’s Exact test revealed a statistically significant relationship between the use of these strategies and the outcome of the event ($p = .0001$, one-tailed test).

**Table 17**

*Hostage Takers’ Response to Compliance-Gaining Strategies*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Incident Outcome</th>
<th>Agreement</th>
<th>Disagreement</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Unsuccessful Cases</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Successful Cases</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Hostage takers’ use of Agreement was more likely in successful cases, whereas their use of Disagreement was strongly related to unsuccessful cases.

**Research Question 8**

This question was designed to determine if the negotiators’ actions during one stage of the hostage negotiation event had a more significant impact on the outcome than their actions in other stages of the event. As previously discussed, the negotiations were treated as having three distinct stages. These stages include the Initiation Phase, the Problem-Solving Phase, and the Resolution Phase. The frequency of negotiator compliance-gaining strategy use across the stages of the incidents can be found in Table 18.
An examination of the negotiators’ total use of compliance-gaining strategies across the stages revealed significant relationships. A 3x2 Fisher’s Exact test revealed the presence of a relationship between one of the stages and the outcome, but the test did not reveal which stage was producing the significant result ($p_a = .004$, two-tailed test; $p_b = .004$, two-tailed test).

### Table 18
**Negotiator Compliance-gaining Strategy use by Stage**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Cases</th>
<th>Initiation</th>
<th>Problem-Solving</th>
<th>Resolution</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Unsuccessful</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shoots Daughter</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bus Hijacking</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Senior Couple</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kidnapping</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bank Robbery Couple</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Successful</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Plane Hijacking</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prison Riot</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bank Robbery</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Child</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Table 19
**Stage of Compliance-Gaining Strategy Use by Negotiator**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Incident Outcome</th>
<th>Initiation</th>
<th>Problem Solving</th>
<th>Resolution</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Unsuccessful Cases</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Successful Cases</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>49</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Further post hoc testing consisted of the researcher examining each possible combination of stages using 2x2 Fisher’s Exact Tests in order to determine which stage contained values that were producing a significant result. The Fisher’s 2x2 tests allowed the researcher to test for differences in frequencies of outcomes between each pair of stages. The results indicate that the number of compliance-gaining strategies which occur in the Resolution stage of the negotiation process is a predictor of the outcome of the incident (Stages 1 & 2 \( p = .08 \), Stages 1 & 3 \( p = .0006 \), Stages 2 & 3 \( p = .01 \)). Statistical testing demonstrates that the Resolution stage is significantly different from the other two stages.

**Research Question 9**

This question was designed to uncover any possible relationships between the hostage takers’ use of compliance-gaining strategies, stages of the negotiation, and outcome of the hostage incident. The hostage takers’ use of strategies can be observed in Table 20.

**Table 20**

*Hostage Taker Compliance-gaining Strategy use by Stage*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Cases</th>
<th>Initiation</th>
<th>Problem-Solving</th>
<th>Resolution</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Unsuccessful</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shoots Daughter</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bus Hijacking</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Senior Couple</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kidnapping</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bank Robbery Couple</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Successful</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Plane Hijacking</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prison Riot</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bank Robbery</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Child</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
A Fisher’s Exact 3x2 test performed on the total number of compliance-gaining strategies did not produce statistically significant results ($p_a = 1.0$, two-tailed test; $p_b = 1.0$, two-tailed test). This data set can be observed in table 21. The hostage takers’ use of compliance-gaining strategies did not differ across stages of successful and unsuccessful negotiations.

**Table 21**  
*Stage of Compliance-Gaining Strategy Use by Hostage Taker*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Incident Outcome</th>
<th>Initiation</th>
<th>Problem Solving</th>
<th>Resolution</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Unsuccessful Cases</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Successful Cases</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Chapter Five: Discussion and Conclusion

This study sought to examine the role that compliance-gaining behavior plays in hostage negotiation events. Specifically, this study investigated both the negotiators’ and hostage takers’ use of compliance-gaining tactics as well as the ways that parties responded to attempts to gain compliance. The ultimate goal was to uncover any possible relationships between the parties’ actions and the outcome of the incidents. Such relationships were discovered during the course of this study.

The findings from this study revealed a number of insights into the role that compliance-gaining plays in hostage negotiation events. One of the most important is the identification of a relationship between the compliance-gaining strategies utilized by the negotiator and the outcome of the incident. Strategies that reduce relational distance were related to successful incidents, whereas strategies that increase relational distance were related to unsuccessful incidents. Compliance-gaining strategy selection was shown to have an impact on the development of the relational context necessary for these incidents to be resolved peacefully.

This study also resulted in the creation of a typology of responses to attempts to gain compliance (see Table 5). The response strategies employed by the parties reflected their objectives in the interaction: negotiators tended to respond with strategies that
focused on securing the release of the hostage, whereas the hostage takers’ response strategies were more often directed towards emotional expression. An additional finding with important pragmatic implications was that a relationship exists between the hostage takers’ response strategies and incident outcome. The two most common response strategies, Agreement and Disagreement, proved to be statistically significant predictors of whether the incident would end peacefully or violently. The incidents in which the hostage taker utilized Agreement were more likely to end successfully, whereas the use of Disagreement was shown to relate to unsuccessful outcomes.

Lastly, this study also discovered that the use of compliance-gaining actions that occurred in the Resolution Stage of the hostage negotiation process were a predictor of the outcomes of the incidents. Successful incidents involved the negotiator utilizing compliance-gaining strategies through the end stages of the negotiation when the hostages were released.

When considered together, these findings provide a descriptive picture of successful hostage negotiation events. First, successful events involve the negotiator utilizing compliance-gaining strategies that minimize relational distance between the two parties. These strategies should be employed starting early in the negotiation process. The hostage taker’s responses to these strategies provide a reliable indicator of their willingness to settle the situation peacefully. The successful negotiator will utilize these strategies through the Resolution stage of the incident in order to secure the release of the
hostages and the surrender of the perpetrator. These findings will now be discussed in greater detail.

**Negotiator Use of Compliance-gaining Strategies**

Findings from this investigation were surprising in that no single compliance-gaining tactic proved to be a predictor of incident outcome. Positive Esteem, Positive Expertise, and Liking showed trends that were expected to indicate that these strategies were predictors of successful outcomes and Trade, Negative Expertise, and Threat showed trends towards being related to unsuccessful events. However, when all strategies were tested together the zero values in the data set violated test assumptions built into the factorial logistic regression. Consequentially, this study was unable to identify any specific strategy that was a predictor of incident outcome.

A review of the negotiators’ use of compliance-gaining tactics indicates that Promise was the most commonly utilized tactic (see Table 2). In order to provide additional insight into promise the researcher examined both the negotiators’ goals when using promise as well as immediacy of the promise. Negotiators overwhelmingly utilize Promise in attempts to either secure the release of the hostages or the surrender of the perpetrator. The negotiators’ use of promise is directed at these two goals 94% of the time and only a single negotiator utilized the Promise strategy in securing peripheral goals such as keeping the perpetrator on the phone. A further examination of the Promises as they occurred in both successful and successful incidents did not produce any insights or patterns. The researcher also examined the immediacy of the negotiators’ Promises and identified two distinct categories. The two categories were promises that
could be completed during the course of the negotiation or promises that could be completed in the future after the negotiation had concluded. A review of the data revealed that 78% of all promises could be completed during the negotiation whereas 22% would be completed after the conclusion of the incident. Further examination of these categories of promises and any potential relationships to the outcome of the events did not produce any patterns or insights.

Compliance-gaining tactics were also organized and tested according to the socially-acceptable and socially-unacceptable categories developed by Marwell and Schmitt (1967). The expectation was that organizing the compliance-gaining strategies into Marwell and Schmitt’s categories would result in values that were predictors of incident outcomes. The statistical tests indicated that there was not a relationship between these categories and the outcome of the incident. An examination of Marwell and Schmitt’s categorization system reveals why these results were not statistically significant and challenges some of the nomenclature developed by the researchers.

Marwell and Schmitt’s (1967) original study created categories of compliance-gaining strategies by having study participants self-report on the likelihood that they would use these strategies. Subsequent analyses resulted in categories that were organized along the lines of likelihood of use and by the mechanisms functioning in order to gain compliance (rewarding activity, punishing activity, etc.). The organizational procedures employed by Marwell and Schmitt utilized frequency of use and mechanism of compliance as a means of creating the categories that were labeled social acceptability and social un-acceptability. This organizational scheme is problematic for use in studies
such as this one, as these criteria fail to account for message valance or relational implications. For example, Altruism and Threat were both included in the category of socially unacceptable techniques due to their frequencies of usage and activation of personal commitments. Organizing the data along these criteria places fundamentally different compliance-gaining statements into the same category. For example, a friend might utilize Altruism and say “It would really help me out if you could loan me five dollars,” while a mugger might use a Threat and say “Give me five dollars or I will stab you.” Employing Marwell and Schmitt’s categorization system problematically places these two statements in the same category despite the very different levels of social acceptability. The researchers’ organization of the data along the lines of frequency of use and compliance mechanism results in the misnomers of socially acceptable techniques and socially unacceptable techniques.

The organization system employed in this study diverges from Marwell and Schmitt’s (1967) in that the categories tested in this study were organized around the relational implications of the compliance-gaining strategy. Rather than creating categories based on quantitative criteria as Marwell and Schmitt did, this study categorized strategies according to the strategies’ impact of the relationship. The strategies that were identified as reducing relational distance were Positive Altercasting, Altruism, Positive Esteem, Positive Expertise, Liking, Positive Moral Appeal, Promise, Suggested Solution, Trade, and Pre-giving. The strategies that increased relational distance were Aversive Stimulation, Debt, Negative Expertise, Threat, Negative Moral appeal, and Negative Self-feeling.
Earlier studies in compliance-gaining also divided compliance-gaining strategies utilizing similar criteria. These studies organized the strategies into either categories that are often described as pro-social or anti-social categories. Johnson (1992) described pro-social messages as being strategies that are “based on the persuader's desire to elicit positive feelings or evaluation in the target whenever possible” (p. 55) whereas anti-social strategies “attempt to gain relational rewards through either psychological force or punishing activity” (p. 56). Studies that divided messages in similar ways include Baglan, LaLumia, and Bayless (1986), Grant, et al. (1994), Hunter and Boster (1987), Kearney et al. (1988), and Roloff and Barnicott (1978). Despite the number of studies that have created categories utilizing the pro-social or anti-social distinction, a universal classification system currently does not exist for Marwell and Schmitt’s (1967) strategies. The lack of an established organization system exists largely due to common practices of employing selected categories from Marwell and Schmitt’s typology or of researchers creating their own typology tailored for their study. As such, this study was unable to employ a previously-established classification system.

Statistical tests performed on the categories when organized according to their relational implications resulted in statistically significant findings that linked compliance-gaining strategies with incident outcomes. Results from the Fisher’s exact test indicated that the relationship between the use of strategies that reduce relational distance in successful incidents and the use of strategies that increase relational distance in unsuccessful incidents was greater than would be expected to occur by chance. This finding is discussed in greater detail later in this chapter.
A comparison of the two categories of compliance-gaining strategies reveals a limited usage of the strategies that increased relational distance. The infrequent use of strategies that increase relational distance is very likely a manifestation of modern approaches to hostage negotiation and negotiator training. Prior to the invention of modern approaches to managing a hostage incident, police relied on the Contending Model for resolving hostage events. This model employed displays of the officers’ superior firepower to in order to intimidate the hostage taker into surrendering. The model was often problematic, as expressive hostage takers became desperate and unpredictable, whereas instrumental hostage takers responded with displays of their own power (Borowsky, 2011). The limited usage of strategies that rely on psychological force or punishment is likely the result of police training that accompanied a move away from the Contending Model.

The Contending Model illustrates the problems with utilizing strategies that serve to create distance between the two parties. Accordingly, the Model predicts that the use of strategies that increased relational distance may serve to immediately escalate the incident. Statistical tests did not reveal any relationships between the use of any specific strategy and incident outcome. Any potential relationships between the strategies that increased relational distance and outcome would have been difficult to detect due to the limited number of times each strategy was utilized. The data depicted in Table 10 reveals that there were two cases in which the use of strategies that increase relational distance was unusually frequent. The unusual use of these strategies occurred during a prison riot.
and in an incident where the hostage takers executed a suicide pact. These specific cases and explanations of the outlier data is discussed in more detail later in this chapter.

One of the primary concerns of the negotiator in hostage incidents is to create a “we-are-in-it-together” type of relationship with the hostage taker (Borowsky, 2011; Donohue & Taylor, 2006). In this relational context, the hostage taker perceives collaboration between the parties and is more likely to continue to engage in the interaction. Donohue and Taylor (2006) explained that this strategy is based on the idea that a person is less likely to withdraw from a situation where he or she has a perceived stake in the outcome. This type of relationship is crucial if the parties are going to develop a relationship that allows them to work towards a resolution.

Building this type of relationship, however, is not a straightforward process, due to the paradoxical nature of the parties’ roles in the negotiation event (Donohue & Taylor, 2006). The parties find that a collaborative relationship entails resistance to high levels of engagement as the parties do not want to expose themselves extensively, whereas a competitive approach involves pulling the other party close in order to defeat them. The relational challenges that characterize hostage incidents have also been articulated by other scholars. Taylor and Thomas (2005) write that “these are intense, emotional interactions in which messages often have serious consequences and in which relational dynamics (e.g., building trust, saving face) are as important as the need to exchange information and reach substantive agreements” (p. 290). Rogan and Hammer (1994) say that hostage negotiations are a “highly explosive and volatile situation in which competition for relational control and individual goal achievement is heightened"
The findings in this study indicate that the use of compliance-gaining strategies that reduce relational distance may be one way to attend to the paradoxical and relational challenges that characterize hostage incidents.

By employing compliance-gaining strategies that reduce relational distance, the negotiator is able to build a relationship with the hostage taker, to pull the perpetrator closer, while simultaneously convincing him to comply with their requests. Hostage negotiation scholars Rogan and Hammer (1995) posited that “language is the vehicle through which negotiators strive to build a relationship with a perpetrator and ultimately secure his or her surrender and the safe release of hostages” (p. 554). The critical idea expressed in this statement is that conversation is both the means to building a relationship and a means of gaining compliance. Through the use of compliance-gaining strategies that reduce relational distance, the negotiator both convinces the hostage taker to change his behavior while also creating a “we-are-in-it-together” relationship. No strategy better illustrates the potential of compliance-gaining strategies to achieve these seemingly incongruent goals than Positive Expertise.

In the Positive Expertise strategy, the negotiator relies on his experience and knowledge of law enforcement in order to convince the hostage taker that releasing the hostages or surrendering is the best course of action. For example, a negotiator in the prison riot incident said “You all get back in your cells and let these lawyers speed that red tape along and everything will be cool.” Another negotiator managing a botched bank robbery employed this strategy by saying “The best thing to do now is just to chuck it in. The best thing is, I’ll walk out there in the street, you open the door, throw that gun
out, and then I’ll walk on up there and then you and I will come walking on out.” In
these utterances the negotiator is both attempting to gain compliance while also
demonstrating concern for the well-being of the hostage taker by trying to involve him in
a joint action that both peacefully ends the incident and reinforces a positive outcome for
the hostage taker. In the first example, the negotiator is assuaging the prisoners’ fears of
being treated violently, and in the second example, the negotiator is relying on his
experience to give the hostage taker an opportunity to surrender safely. This technique
provides the negotiator with a conversational strategy that is able to both persuade the
hostage taker to comply while also reinforcing the “we-are-in-it-together” context. The
compliance-gaining strategies that reduce relational distance allow the negotiator to
successfully navigate the hostage negotiation paradox that is both building a relationship
and exerting influence on the other party.

This study also examined the negotiator’s use of compliance-gaining strategies
that increased relational distance. These strategies were identified as being Aversive
Stimulation, Debt, Negative Expertise, Threat, Negative Moral appeal, and Negative
Self-feeling. This group of strategies shares commonalities with the anti-social strategies
that attempt to gain relational rewards through the use of punishing activity or
psychological force (Johnson, 1992). These strategies were categorized as increasing
relational distance as they either expressed a willingness to harm the hostage taker or
emphasized the undesirable repercussions of their actions. For example, a negotiator
responding to a bank robbery utilized Negative Expertise by saying “You know the
longer you hold that hostage the more trouble you are getting into. Why don’t you just
come on out?” Another negotiator utilized the same strategy by saying “Well you know, you got that hostage and if you continue with your hostage you’re looking at serious problems. If you surrender to me we can resolve the matter.” In these examples, the negotiator is emphasizing the undesirable consequences that the hostage taker will face for his lack of compliance. The negotiator is focusing on the negative repercussions the hostage taker will have to endure and not including their own self in the utterance. The negotiator is not re-enforcing the “we” aspect of the “we-are-in-it-together” context, but is instead drawing a line between the parties. The negotiator’s assertions that the situation will escalate and the outcome will become less desirable for the hostage taker sets up a frame that the hostage taker should worry as to what may occur during and after their surrender. The use of these tactics creates distance between the parties and sets up a frame that the hostage taker may be harmed due to his actions. This is antithetical to the objectives identified as being a crucial part of the negotiation process.

**Hostage Taker Use of Compliance-Gaining Strategies**

This study also examined the compliance-gaining strategies employed by the hostage takers. Though analysis of the data did not reveal any statistically significant links between the hostage takers’ strategy selection and the outcome of the incident, a comparison of strategy use between the two parties provides several insights into negotiation dynamics.

When comparing the average use of compliance-gaining strategies between negotiators and hostage takers, several differences are immediately discernible. First, comparing the average percentages of total turns at talk with how often the speaker
utilizes a compliance-gaining strategy reveals that hostage takers utilize far less attempts to gain compliance than negotiators (1.35% for hostage takers vs. 6.17% for negotiators). This finding suggests that negotiators are driving the negotiation process and are making numerous attempts to resolve the incident. Hostage takers do make attempts to gain compliance from the negotiator, but it appears that they may also be attempting to achieve goals aside from gaining an agreement. This finding is discussed in greater detail in the following sections of this chapter.

When compared to negotiators, hostage takers also utilize a narrow range of strategies. In the cases analyzed in this study, negotiators utilize the sixteen different strategies detailed in Table 1, but hostage takers utilize only Promise, Threat, Altruism and Trade. The two most popular strategies are Promise and Threat. Together they account for 98% of the hostage takers’ use of compliance-gaining strategies. Promise and Threat also represent a unique pair of negotiation strategies as the strategies are essentially the same utterance with opposite relational implications and valances. Threats ensure the target that the speaker will harm the hearer unless they comply, whereas Promise ensures future action, but in this case the action is desirable.

Considered together, the frequency with which hostage takers employ the Promise and Threat strategies indicates that the hostage takers are relying on their control of the hostage as a source of power in the negotiation. This insight is supported by additional findings from previously published studies. Taylor and Donohue (2002) explained that hostage takers take hostages as a source of leverage in the negotiation. Hostages become the bargaining chips in the negotiation. Borowsky (2011) asserted that the hostage taker’s
sense of power is intrinsically linked with their control of the hostage. For example, a bank robber who has taken hostages stated “Do what I tell you or a couple people gonna be killed, including the girl.” In a domestic case after the hostage taker had exchanged gunfire with the police officers, the hostage taker stated that “If one more bullet comes through here I’m putting it (my gun) in her mouth.” The hostage takers’ consistent use of strategies that reflect control of the hostage supports conceptualizing the hostage as the source of the hostage takers’ power.

Understanding that hostage takers see hostages as the source of their power in the negotiation has implications for negotiation strategies. As described by (McClain et al., 2006) hostage takers may be motivated by instrumental or expressive goals. Expressive hostage takers may take hostages in an attempt to communicate their emotions or frustrations to the rest of the world. Hostages are not simply bargaining chips, but they become key parts of the mechanism that allows for self-expression. Negotiators may be able to capitalize on this underlying motivation by convincing the hostage taker to trade one mode of expression for another. For example, a hostage taker may barricade himself with his children for fear that his former partner is neglecting them. In this case, the negotiator may be able to provide the hostage taker with the opportunity to file an official complaint with a child protection agency or create an agreement that ensures the children receive needed supervision. The underlying strategy involves the negotiator channeling the negative expressive energy into a more constructive form of expression and utilizing access to that means of expression as an item to be negotiated. Findings from this study
indicate that convincing hostage takers to trade one form of power for another may be a strategy that could be utilized in order to resolve hostage incidents.

**Hostage Taker Responses**

This study also examined the ways that hostage takers respond to the compliance-gaining strategies employed by the negotiator. The responses utilized by hostage takers were surprising in both the variety and the strong relationship between responses and outcomes of the incidents.

Examining the variety of responses employed by the hostage taker provides insights useful for understanding the role of the negotiator in these events. Rogan and Hammer (1994) stated that the primary role of the negotiator was to manage the expressive needs of the hostage taker. A review of Table 16 demonstrates that a number of response strategies utilized by the hostage takers are expressive in nature. For example, the response strategy of Lament involves expressing distraught feelings over the current situation or the factors that lead to the incident. In the case of a domestic incident in which the hostage taker shot a family member the hostage taker stated “I don’t want nobody to go through this. I wish it was a personal thing. You know I could have resolved it you know.” Similarly, the Trust strategy involves the hostage taker expressing a distrust of the negotiator. In an example of the trust strategy that occurred during a plane hijacking, the hostage taker said “You’re always just bullshitting me in trying to get her here. What about Mama? Tell me the damn truth. I wanna hear the truth. I don’t wanna hear a bunch of fucking computer cases okay.” In this utterance, the hostage taker is expressing a distrust of the negotiator. The Lament and Trust responses
were not utilized by the negotiator, but instead appear to be manifestations of the hostage takers’ desire to express their dissatisfaction with their situation or the negotiation. Other strategies, such as Explanation, that were employed by both parties also tended to focus more on relational concerns when employed by the hostage taker.

This investigation also found that the Agreement and Disagreement responses were predictors of the outcome of the incident. It seems logical that hostage events where the hostage taker agrees to comply with the negotiators’ requests are more likely to be successful than hostage negotiation events in which the perpetrator disagrees with the negotiator. Despite being somewhat intuitive, the quantitative data produced on this topic are valuable for the law enforcement community. As illustrated in Table 16, hostage takers in successful cases periodically respond utilizing the Disagreement strategy. The data indicate that negotiators should always expect to encounter hostage takers that openly disagree with the negotiator when they are attempting to resolve the incident. Resistance is a common and predictable aspect of the negotiation process and the negotiator should be prepared to continue the negotiation in spite of direct opposition.

Several recommendations for the application of these findings in order to better manage hostage incidents are discussed in more detail in the Practical Applications section of this chapter.

In sum, the responses employed by hostage takers extend beyond the boundaries of the basic items that need to be negotiated to resolve the incident. Rather than being limited by tangible topics such as the release of the hostages, surrender, or other material items such as food or money, the response strategies employed by hostage takers reflect a
number of expressive or emotional concerns. A key aspect of the negotiation process appears to be managing these concerns as first posited by Rogan and Hammer (1994). The fact that hostage takers respond with emotionally-laden utterances not relevant to the compliance-gaining technique being employed or the exchanges expected to occur in a negotiation event demonstrates just how important it is for the negotiator to attend to the expressive and emotional concerns of the hostage taker. Negotiators should also expect to encounter direct opposition to their requests in all incidents.

**Negotiator Responses**

This investigation also examined the negotiators’ responses to the hostage takers’ attempts to gain compliance. As hostage takers employed fewer compliance-gaining strategies than negotiators, this study was unable to identify any statistically significant relationships between responses and incident outcome. The failure to observe any relationships was due to generally low cell counts in the data set. Although analysis did not reveal any statistically significant relationships between the negotiators’ responses and outcome of the event, comparing the responses that are employed by both parties provides insights into the negotiation process.

As can be seen in Table 6, negotiators employ a narrow range of response strategies when compared with the hostage takers. The two most commonly utilized strategies are Agreement and Deal, which account for roughly 50% of all responses. This finding is not surprising, as the negotiators’ primary role in the interaction is to secure the release of the hostages and the surrender of the perpetrator. When the hostage taker attempts to elicit compliance from the negotiator, the negotiator will often attempt to
extract some type of reciprocity from the hostage taker. Though this approach makes sense in terms of negotiation strategy, the use of the Agreement and Deal response tactics were not proven to be significant indicators of incident outcome.

A review of the response strategies employed by the negotiators also reveals that there are several response strategies that are employed by the negotiators, but not by the hostage taker. These strategies are Tone and Challenge Willingness. The Tone response strategy was employed as means for maintaining a low level of emotion excitation. In this response strategy the negotiator is not necessarily responding to the attempt to gain compliance per say, but rather, the negotiator is attempting to keep the other party calm. For example, during a plane highjacking, the hostage taker was becoming increasingly emotional. In a single turn at talk he uses profanity, accuses the negotiator of lying to him, and tells the negotiator to “keep pushing them [police vehicles], bring them a little closer, bring them within bomb range, bring them within bomb range.” The negotiator responds to the hostage taker by saying “Let’s just settle down for a minute and let’s just you and I talk.” The negotiator’s response does not address the concerns expressed by hostage taker or directly respond to the hostage takers attempt to gain compliance. Instead, the negotiator is attempting to calm the hostage taker so that they can continue the negotiation process.

The other strategy employed by the negotiator, but not the hostage taker, is Challenge. In this strategy, the negotiator directly challenges the hostage taker’s willingness to follow through with the action described in their attempt to gain-compliance. For example, during a bank robbery the hostage taker stated “If I don’t get
the car, if I’m not allowed to take this girl with me, I will kill her. Simple as that.” In this case, the negotiator responded with the statement “Okay, there’s not much answer I can give you to that. I know you don’t wanna do that.” In this exchange the negotiator directly challenges the hostage taker’s willingness to follow through with their Threat. The Challenge strategy is a risky one as it places the hostage taker’s commitment to a course of action in question. However, this response strategy also allows the negotiator to occupy a very powerful role in the conversation. As described by Borowsky (2011) “this strategy, when coupled with a high level of rapport and conversational flexibility, allows the negotiator to directly challenge the hostage taker in a face-supporting manner” (p. 15). Borowsky describes how strategies that challenge the hostage taker’s willingness to harm the hostage may assist the negotiator in framing a peaceful resolution as the best option for ending the incident.

**Negotiation Stages**

Several of the research questions posed in this study were aimed at providing greater insight into the stages that occur in the negotiation process. Many scholars have argued that hostage negotiations occur in stages (Borowsky, 2011; Donohue & Roberto, 1996, Holmes, 1993; Holmes & Fowler, 1997; Rogan & Hammer, 1995; Taylor and Thomas, 2005). Despite some slightly different conceptualizations, these strategies usually resemble the three-stage model of crisis negotiation, which consists of the Initiation, Problem-solving, and Resolution stages. This study found that compliance-gaining is a multi-stage endeavor.
Holmes and Sykes (1993) state that the stages of the negotiation process are characterized by a series of goals. According to the researchers, the Initiation Stage involves stabilizing the situation and building a working relationship with the suspect. In the Problem-Solving Stage, the negotiator builds on the rapport established during the first stage, clarifies the problem, and focuses on continued relationship development. The third stage is the Resolution Stage, during which the parties enact the agreement reached in the earlier stages. Surprisingly, the data produced by this study indicate that negotiation events are often characterized by the relatively even use of compliance-gaining strategies throughout all stages of the negotiation. The expectation would be that the negotiator would employ these strategies only towards the end of the negotiation process, but that was not reflected in the data. A review of the successful cases indicates that 41% of the strategies utilized by negotiators occurred in the first stage of the negotiation. These findings suggest that negotiators attempt to influence the other party more often than the stage models account for. It appears as though attempting to gain compliance is not an objective that is isolated to the Resolution Stage, but rather is an activity pervasive in hostage incidents.

This study also discovered that the frequency of compliance-gaining strategies employed by the negotiator during the Resolution stage was a predictor of the outcome of the incident. Holmes and Sykes (1993) describe this stage as one in which the negotiator attempts to enact the agreement that was created in the Problem-Solving Stage. The finding that compliance-gaining strategy use in the last stage of the negotiation relates to incident outcome provides support for continuing to conceptualize hostage incidents as
having a series of stages with distinct goals. It appears as though the use of compliance-gaining strategies is a key aspect of executing the agreements developed in the earlier stages of the negotiation.

The idea that gaining compliance may be important across all stages of hostage incidents is one that has been previously discussed in the hostage negotiation literature by both Taylor and Donohue (2006) and Mullens (2002). Mullens describes how a series of smaller requests and agreements in hostage incidents may set the stage for the more important issues to be agreed upon. He describes this as one way that a negotiator can utilize the foot-in-the-door persuasive tactic. Mullens endorses this technique as one that could be utilized in hostage incidents, but his study does not provide any empirical data to support this claim. The results of this study, however, lend quantitative evidence of this technique’s effectiveness. The use of compliance-gaining techniques throughout the hostage incident appears to be one way to capitalize on some of the motivational forces that underlie the foot-in-the-door strategy.

Taken together, the findings presented in this study and the ideas posited in Mullen’s (2002) and Taylor and Donohue’s (2006) works suggest that a modification to stage models of hostage negotiation may be appropriate. Compliance-gaining strategies play an important part of building a relationship between the parties and as a means of enacting the foot-in-the-door technique. Utilizing compliance-gaining strategies early in the negotiation process may also serve as a model for future exchanges between the two parties. That is, the early use of compliance-gaining strategies may set precedents for how the situation may be resolved. In this way, compliance-gaining strategies facilitate
the important function of relational development, which is a central component of both the Initiation and Problem-Solving Stages. Accordingly, this study recommends that stage models of hostage negotiation include the additional goal of gaining compliance on peripheral issues during the Initiation and Problem-Solving Stages. This goal could be conceptualized as “Practicing Agreement,” in which the negotiator gains compliance on smaller issues in order to build a working relationship, introduce the hostage taker to the linguistic exchanges that will take place during the Resolution Stage, and build a basis for employing the foot-in-the-door technique. This sub-goal should be included in the Initiation and Problem-Solving stages and should manifest with the use of compliance-gaining strategies in the Resolution stage of the hostage incident.

**Cases Containing Outlier Data**

Table 10 depicts several incidents in which outlier data was discovered. These were cases where the negotiator’s use of a specific compliance strategy or strategies deviated greatly from the normal frequency of use observed in other cases. The cases included for further analysis are the Bank Robbery Couple, Prison Riot, and Kidnapping. Details as to the specific outlying data points are provided in each case description. When these cases are looked at in terms of contextual elements and outcomes the findings suggests that the outlying data points may have been important factors in the cases and not just statistical anomalies.

**bank robbery couple.** In this case an armed male-female couple attempted to rob a bank and were unable to exit the premises before the arrival of the police. The hostage takers released the manager, but demonstrated great disdain for the idea of surrendering
and going to prison. They refused to surrender and the incident ends with the hostage takers both committing suicide.

This case was chosen for further analysis due to the negotiator’s unusually frequent use of the Negative Expertise compliance-gaining strategy (see Table 10). The negotiators in most cases do not employ this strategy, and the most it is utilized in any other case is twice. The negotiator utilizes the strategy 13 times for a total of 1.4% of his total turns at talk or 22.03% of total strategies utilized in this incident. This strategy relies on the expertise of the person utilizing the strategy in order to foretell of an undesirable outcome if the other party does not comply (Marwell & Schmitt, 1967). For example, the negotiator in this case says “You know the longer you hold that hostage, the more trouble you’re gettin’ into. Why don’t you just come on out.” The strategy emphasizes the negative repercussions of a failure to comply. All 13 uses of this strategy occurred during the Initiation Stage of the negotiation.

In this case, there are grounds to argue that the negotiator’s excessive use of Negative Expertise during the early stages of the interaction potentially influenced the hostage takers’ suicides. By reinforcing the negative and undesirable implications of not surrendering the negotiator may have been unintentionally reinforcing the suicide pact that was being discussed by the hostage takers. Framing the consequences of not complying with requests as undesirable may also have had the effect of creating relational distance between the negotiator and the hostage takers. The negotiator may have been unknowingly distancing himself from the other party and helping to rationalize the hostage takers’ suicide pact. This would have been occurring during the stages when
the negotiator is ideally focusing on building a working relationship with the hostage taker (Holmes & Sykes, 1993).

The negotiator in this case also utilized the Threat strategy, which may have served to create additional relational distance between himself and the hostage takers. The willingness to harm the other party that is articulated in the Threat strategy may have reinforced the perception that the officers were not concerned for the well-being of the hostage takers. Once the hostage takers expressed their contemplation of committing suicide, the negotiator discontinued the use of the Negative Expertise strategy, and the strategy was not employed during the second and third stages of the negotiation. During the final two stages, the negotiator was able to modify his behavior based on available information and made subsequent attempts to persuade the hostage takers using more positive techniques. The negotiator was able to change compliance-gaining behaviors in an attempt to prevent the suspects’ suicides; however, it may also be possible that the negotiator’s early use of this tactic was counter-productive to creating the “we-are-in-it-together” context necessary for successfully resolving the incidents.

**prison riot.** In this case, a group of prisoners overpowered the guards and took control of several sections of the prison. This incident is one of the two incidents in which the negotiator employs the Threat strategy to gain compliance from the hostage takers. During this incident, the negotiator utilizes the Threat strategy on nine occasions which constitutes .9% of the negotiator’s turns at talk or 16.66% of his total usage of compliance-gaining strategies. These numbers constitute an unusually high degree of use, as seven of the nine cases included in this study do not utilize the strategy.
Issuing a threat to the hostage taker has been identified as a strategy belonging to the now defunct Contending Model of negotiation (Borowsky, 2011). The Contending Model essentially relied on the police officers’ demonstrations of superior firepower as a means of intimidating the hostage taker into surrendering. This model was often met with either displays of aggression or desperation from the hostage taker. In either case, the model proved dangerous to hostages and others involved in the incident.

The negotiator in this case employed the Threat tactic during the final stage of the negotiation during which the negotiator was attempting to convince the prisoners to return to their cells. In this case, the hostage takers responded to the Threats using the Agreement strategy approximately half of the time, while also complying with the negotiator’s demands. The responses by the hostage takers to the use of Threats runs counter-intuitive to what the Contending Model would predict.

The effectiveness of the use of Threats in this case may have been due to the context in which the incident occurred. In this case, the hostage takers did not have access to firearms or means of communicating with others outside of the incident. Due to their incarceration, the hostage takers would also have a long-term relationship with the individuals they took hostage (the guards) and the other prison administrators with whom they were negotiating. One of the primary concerns expressed by the hostage takers was that there would be repercussions for their actions either in the form of physical abuse or being placed in solitary confinement. The combination of inferior firepower coupled with the legitimate fear of being assaulted and incurring long-term repercussions made the negotiator’s threats very effective and ultimately the use of threats may have saved the
lives of the hostages as well as the hostage takers. This incident suggest that contextual factors may influence compliance-gaining message selection and effectiveness.

**Kidnapping.** The final case worth discussing individually is an unsuccessful kidnapping case. In this case, the suspect has kidnapped the negotiator’s son and demanded a ransom for his return. This case is unique in that the negotiator only employs two compliance-gaining strategies in their 120 turns at talk (1.67%). Compared to all other cases, this case contains the fewest attempts to gain compliance by 2.41%. These findings may be reflective of fundamental differences between kidnappings in which the suspects are not in immediate contact with the negotiator and other hostage incidents in which the two parties are at the same physical location. Further communication-based studies may be necessary to explore if interactional differences between these contexts warrant that kidnapping incidents be treated as fundamentally different from hostage situations.

The suggestion that the compliance-gaining actions of the negotiator in both the kidnapping case and the prison riot were influenced by contextual features is supported by a number of studies in the compliance-gaining field that describe relationships between compliance-gaining strategy selection and context (Hirokawa & Miyahara, 1986; Javidi et al., 1994; Kearney et al., 1988; Kipnis et al., 1980; Miller et al., 1977; Neuliep & Hazleton, 1985; O’Hair et al., 1991). It may have been possible that the contextual factors in these cases were manifested in the negotiators’ actions resulting in the outlying data points. This suggests that incidents such as kidnappings and prison riots may be fundamentally different from other types of hostage incidents. If these types of
incidents are fundamentally different than numerous assumptions regarding the management of these situations should be called into question. Hostage negotiation researchers should continue to explore the possibility that the parameters of the case may have a direct effect on the communication actions of the parties.

**Contributions to Hostage Negotiation Research**

This study makes several important contributions to the body of research on hostage negotiation events. This study serves to both advance the communication-based approach to examining hostage negotiations as well as address some of the most important questions being discussed in this body of literature.

First, this study serves to advance the communication-based approach to hostage negotiation. The communication-based approach entails examining the communicative actions of the parties and linking these actions with the outcomes of the hostage events (Donohue, 2003). Several studies have called for researchers to employ the communication-based approach in order to investigate hostage incidents (Donohue, 2003; Rogan, 1997; Rogan & Hammer, 2002). However, this call has remained largely unanswered. As noted by McClain et. al (2006), research studies have examined “the overall process of verbal communication in crisis negotiation, but neglected to examine specific verbal behaviors” (p. 31). The charge leveled towards recent studies conducted in this paradigm is that they have neglected the interactional elements of the negotiation.

This study makes a direct contribution in this area. By examining the relationships between compliance-gaining strategy use, responses to compliance-gaining attempts, and negotiation outcomes, this study provides direct data regarding the specific verbal
behaviors that occur in negotiation events. McClain et al. (2006) argued that this was a key element of the communication-based approach. Specifically, the researchers said that the field needs to move towards developing pragmatic findings by uncovering the patterns of interaction and then identifying where these patterns diverge in incidents that end successfully and unsuccessfully. Through an examination of the parties’ compliance-gaining speech acts and responses to compliance-gaining strategies, this study reveals some of the patterns present in both successful and unsuccessful events. The methodologies employed begin to redress the problematic approaches employed by other studies and demonstrate the potential of the communication-based approach to make valuable contributions to the study of this topic.

The contributions of this study extend beyond advancing a specific research paradigm in that this study also provides topical contributions to our understanding of hostage incidents. Specifically, this study makes contributions to our understanding of the persuasive elements of the negotiation process.

One contribution concerns the overall use of compliance-gaining strategies that are employed during these events. It was discovered that hostage takers utilize far less compliance-gaining strategies than negotiators (1.35% for hostage takers vs. 6.17% for negotiators). This finding indicates that in terms of persuasion, hostage incidents are primarily characterized by the negotiator attempting to influence the hostage taker as opposed to hostage taker attempting to exert influence over the negotiator. This finding also illustrates that although compliance-gaining strategy use may be an important part of the negotiation process, other communicative actions occur during these incidents. As
described in the first chapter of this study, hostage negotiation research has neglected to
address the critical verbal-interactional components of the hostage negotiation event. The
studies that have examined utterances are limited in number. Giebels and Taylor (2009)
found that negotiators and hostage takers engage in making persuasive arguments,
exchanging threats, sharing information, and compromising, although these actions only
account for 29% of the negotiators’ utterances and 25% of the hostage takers’ utterances.
Rogan and Hammer (1994) found that hostage incidents could also be described along
the lines of face management. Their study revealed that hostage takers are primarily
concerned with saving their own sense of face and that negotiators are primarily
concerned with restoring the hostage takers’ sense of face. While numerous studies have
attempted to describe the general feature of hostage incidents, hostage negotiation
research has yet to describe many of the communicative exchanges present in the
interactions (McClain et al., 2006).

Hostage negotiation researchers have long described the negotiation process as
one in which the parties attempt to gain compliance from one another. The struggle for
control that occurs in the negotiation process has been discussed by Borowsky (2011),
Rogan and Hammer (1994,1995), and Mullens (2002), but had not been explored through
the communication-based approach. This study operationalized this struggle as attempts
to gain compliance from the other party and discovered the regularities of how both
parties utilize compliance-gaining techniques, respond to compliance-gaining techniques,
and the impact of these activities on the outcome of the event. In this manner, this study
has brought specific insights into the struggle for control described as an understudied but
important part of the interaction. The study has also provided the framework and suggestions for future studies that may serve to shed even more light into the persuasive elements of hostage negotiation events. A specific course of future study is discussed in greater detail later in this chapter.

This study has also resulted in findings that indicate a need to modify the stage model of hostage negotiation events. The finding that compliance-gaining strategies occur throughout the entire event and may serve relational and persuasive functions suggests that current models of negotiations should be expanded to account for this important factor. Current approaches to negotiation treat Resolution as the goal of the final stage of the incident; however, this study posits that critical components of Resolution are occurring in the early stages of hostage events in the form of compliance-gaining strategies. Current models need to be modified to account for these negotiation activities.

The final contribution that this study makes to the field of hostage negotiation concerns the importance of the “we-are-in-it-together” context. This study explored the communicative actions of the parties in terms of potential to either construct or erode the togetherness aspect central to this concept. Though the “we-are-in-it-together” criteria has been posited as a critical part of the negotiation process (Borowsky, 2011; Charles, 2007; Mullens, 2002; Taylor & Donohue, 2006), no previous studies have explored this concept from a quantitative approach. The findings presented in this study lend support for this characterization and go so far as to provide the professional negotiator with
insights into how he can facilitate this context in negotiation events. This is discussed in more detail in the Practical Implications section of this chapter.

**Contributions to Compliance-gaining Research**

This study also serves to make contributions to the study of compliance-gaining. These contributions span from beginning to address major criticisms of the current field to providing specific insights into the workings of compliance-gaining strategies.

There have been a few, but very important, criticisms of the study of compliance-gaining. The first criticism deals with the lack of any substantial conclusions that can be drawn from the research. Grant et al. (1994) explained that despite having decades of knowledge as to how people may attempt to gain compliance, researchers know very little about a target’s willingness to comply. Levine and Boster (2001) write that “one of the greatest ironies in the compliance-gaining literature is that the issue of compliance-gaining (i.e. message effectiveness) has so often been ignored” (p. 28).

One of the most ubiquitous understandings in the compliance-gaining literature is that the use of pro-social messages is correlated with communication satisfaction and willingness to comply (Boster et al., 1985; Burgoon, et al., 1987; Grant et al., 1994; Hecht, 1984; Johnson, 1992; Levine & Boster, 2001). These messages have a conceptual overlap with the strategies identified as reducing relational distance that were identified in this study.

The findings presented build on the well-established idea that pro-social messages are more effective than anti-social messages by examining the neglected aspect of this field, message effectiveness. The findings from this study indicated that the messages that
reduced relational distance were predictors of the incident outcome. These messages tended to be ones that would be described as pro-social, although the specific categories utilized in this study have not been established in previous studies. Alternatively, the messages that were more anti-social in nature were predictive of unsuccessful outcomes. The findings lend further evidence to the understanding that message valance is a predictor of effectiveness. Grant et al. (1994) offered an anecdotal view of the impact of pro-social and anti-social messages. They said “aggressive strategies sacrifice long term satisfaction and goodwill for short-term compliance” (p. 106). The results of this study lend further evidence to the idea that compliance-gaining strategies that reduce relational impact or are generally more pro-social are more effective than anti-social messages that increase relational distance.

This study also makes contributions in terms of understanding how responses to compliance-gaining strategies operate. A limited number of studies have examined resistance to compliance-gaining strategies. These include Burrows et al. (1989), O’Hair et al. (1991), Plax et al. (1986), and Reardon (1989). One commonality between these studies that has been described as a weakness by Boster, et al. (1993) is that they rely on self-reported data in terms of the types of resistance that would be employed. Though a number of these studies allowed for open-ended responses by the study participants, the lack of naturalistic data is a concern. As demonstrated in this study, one party can respond to another party’s use of a compliance-gaining strategy in numerous ways. These responses appear to be affected by both the context and by the emotional state of the respondent. Accordingly, the responses that one may receive when attempting to employ
a compliance-gaining strategy may be much more diverse than the current literature suggests, as it is unlikely that self-reported data would be able to capture the variety and complexity of emotionally-driven responses to attempts to gain compliance.

This study has also demonstrated that studies on compliance-gaining need to adopt a more longitudinal approach to the data. As was demonstrated with compliance-gaining attempts, compliance-resistance may also occur not as an isolated utterance, but as an aggregate. Such insights are likely not addressed in self-reported data. Researchers in this area should continue to work to obtain naturalistic data that can provide more insights into the processes of resistance. Recent technological advances should facilitate this line of inquiry.

This study also challenges the categorical assumptions that are presented in the seminal work of Marwell and Schmitt (1967). In this study, the researchers organized strategies into socially acceptable and socially unacceptable groupings based on frequency of use and compliance mechanism. This study claims that while Marwell and Schmitt’s study did create a quantitatively-based categorization system, the categories developed in their system are perhaps not best described along lines of social acceptability. Rather, this study posits that future studies in compliance-gaining should utilize the strategies’ potential impact on the relationship as a means of determining social acceptability.

The other contribution made by this study deals with understanding message effectiveness as an aggregate of compliance-gaining tactics. The hostage incidents examined in this study revealed that compliance-gaining, at least in hostage incidents, is
not simply a matter of setting the correct context and then employing a compliance-gaining strategy. Rather, attempts to gain compliance vary in strategy selection throughout the course of the entire negotiation. Compliance-gaining strategies seem to have more of a cumulative effect that cannot be captured by treating the strategies as isolated attempts at resolving the incidents. In examining the hostage incidents, this study failed to observe any specific compliance-gaining strategy that was able to be employed at the right time and successfully resolve the encounter. Rather, the use of compliance-gaining tactics was a factor in both persuading the other party and setting the relational context that was necessary for the strategies to be effective. Compliance-gaining strategies are both the tool for persuasion and the tool that creates the relational context that allows for persuasion to occur. Future studies of compliance-gaining actions should not treat compliance-gaining tactics as isolated attempts when the parties are involved in a relationship that extends beyond a short encounter. Further, future studies of compliance-gaining in relational contexts should examine not just individual strategies, but instead focus on aggregate usage of strategies.

**Methodological Contribution**

This study also makes a contribution to interpersonal methodology due to its unique research design. In this study acontextual data was subject to a secondary data analysis in order to investigate the linguistic features that constitute relational development. This is a unique approach for interpersonal scholars who often utilize primary data and attend to as many contextual elements as possible in order to explain salient features of human interaction. In this way, this study takes an approach similar to
Haworth’s (2006) study that utilizes both Conversation Analysis and Critical Discourse Analysis. By attending to the dialogue that occurs between the parties as well as the salient contextual factors and social identities of the interactants, this study draws from traditions and take both a micro and macro approach to examining behavior. This approach is unique as varies from more traditional interpersonal approaches to examining identity.

**Theoretical Contributions**

The theoretical underpinning of this study rests of the idea that speech acts are the creators of identity. Tracy (2002) argued that speech acts are the means through which parties negotiate their Relational Identities. The link between speech acts and identity formation illustrates how compliance-gaining actions utilized in hostage incidents are an important factor in creating Relational Identities characterized by the “we-are-in-it-together” context that is necessary for resolving these incidents. The findings presented in this dissertation provided empirical support for the conceptualization of identity posited by Tracy.

According to Tracy (2002), our identity consists of multiple types of identities that can be described according to two set of descriptors. The first set of criteria focuses on the stability of the identity, and identities are conceptualized as being either stable and preexisting or dynamic and situationally dependent. The second set of descriptors involves factors that describe the locus of identity. In this classification, identity can be defined and constrained by social factors or identity can be described as personal and unique. This conceptualization results in four types of identity: Master, Personal,
Interactional, and Relational. This study provides further insight into the two types of identity that Tracy posited as being dynamic, Interactional and Relational.

According to Tracy, the Interactional Identity is a social identity that “people take on in a communicative context with regard to specific other people” (p. 18). These are the identities that we take on in social situations due to our role in that social interaction. The key difference between the Relational and Interactional categories of identity is that the Interactional Identity is defined primarily by society. In the case of hostage negotiations there is an underlying tension between Relational Identities and Interactional Identities.

In hostage negotiations the negotiator is working to create the “we-are-in-it-together” context in order to resolve the incident. However, the Interactional Identity that normally defines the law enforcement officer creates a challenge when it comes to the creation of “we.” On a daily basis police officers interact with others in situations where they exert a level of control. Officers may engage in traffic stops, write summonses, conduct investigations, and make arrests. The aspect of the Interactional Identity that is stable for law enforcement officers is one that normally embodies a power differential between the officer and the people he or she may engage with in the course of their duties.

In the case of hostage incidents, it has already been established that an approach to resolving these incidents that relies on the power differential between the police and the perpetrator is often ineffective and dangerous. This approach was essentially the basis for the Contending model in which officers would attempt to display power and intimidate the hostage taker in order to gain compliance. Essentially, law enforcement
officers engaged in a hostage negotiation are unable to rely on the norms that accompany their Interactional Identity. This assertion is supported through a number of findings in this study.

First, this study found that compliance-gaining strategy use occurs in hostage events. The very presence of these strategies indicates that law enforcement officers must deviate from the Interactional norms that characterize their regular line of work. For example, police officers do not and are not expected to use compliance-gaining strategies in many aspects of their interactions with the public. An officer is not expected to rely on Altruism to pull over a speeding vehicle. Similarly, an officer may, but is not required to, make a Promise to a suspect that he or she is taking into custody. Essentially, a law enforcement officer’s social standing provides them with the right to make lawful demands of people with whom they interact. Officers may find that utilizing compliance-gaining or other linguistic strategies are useful in keeping potentially volatile situations under control, but the basic tenants of law enforcement are not based on officers linguistically convincing people to obey the law or comply with their demands. The presence of compliance-gaining strategies in hostage incidents indicates that officers have to deviate from their Interactional Identities as a means of creating a Relational Identity that supports convincing the hostage taker to surrender.

A more specific finding that supports this idea is the negotiators’ use of Promise. Promise was the most commonly utilized compliance-gaining strategy in the incidents investigated in this study. The mechanism that allows Promise to be a tool for compliance-gaining involves the speakers rewarding the listener upon compliance. This
is a speech act that was utilized in hostage incidents that officers may not utilize in their other everyday interactions with the community. As described in more detail in the preceding paragraph, police officers are not expected to have to convince people as a means of enforcing laws and are not expected to reward people who comply with a lawful demand. The use of Promises indicates that officers are attempting to build a Relational Identity that, in many cases, modifies their Interactional Identity.

However, as the results of this study indicate, law enforcement officers involved in hostage negotiations cannot simply shed their Interactional Identity, for to do so would undermine any of the officer’s attempts to gain compliance that rely on their position within society. For example, if the law enforcement officer could not create a plan of surrender that would be safe for the perpetrator, then the officer would not be able to effectively utilize Promise as a compliance-gaining strategy. The incidents in this study revealed that negotiators promised to continue talking with the hostage taker, bring the hostage taker food, get the hostage taker psychiatric treatment, bring the hostage taker money, make sure the hostage taker’s children are cared for, etc. The fulfillment of these promises, or the creation of the perception that the officer can fulfill these promises, relies on the officer’s Interactional Identity. Positive Expertise is another strategy that illustrates this idea. This strategy relies on the officer’s expertise in these types of interactions in order to assure the hostage taker that surrendering would be in their best interest. The strategy involves a reference to selected aspects of the negotiator’s Interactional Identity, while also concealing aspects of the power differential that exists between the parties. If a negotiator is going to create a “we-are-in-it-together” context,
than the negotiator must shed the part of their normal Interactional Identity that does not foster a “we” orientation to interacting with others and instead develop a Relational Identity suitable for resolving the negotiation.

A similar tension may be experienced by officers in all aspects of law enforcement. The most common policing strategy current being utilized is community policing. In community policing police officers collaborate with the community to jointly identify and solve problems (Bureau of Justice Assistance, 1994). This approach involves officers working in close proximity to the public. However, scholars such as Caem et al. (2013) have identified issues with this model. The researchers explain that the model involves an officer being engaged with the daily lives and issues facing the public, but that an officer’s ability to intervene in critical situations requires a degree of distance from the citizenry. Expressed in terms of identity, the researchers are claiming that the officers’ development of close Relational Identities, while rewarding in certain cases, may also compromise the Interactional Identity they are expected to fulfill during a time of crisis. The negotiation of Interactional and Relational Identities appears to be a salient aspect of general police work that becomes vital in hostage negotiations.

The relationship that exists between Relational and Interactive Identities is important to Tracy’s (2002) conceptualization of identity as consisting of both dynamic and stable elements. The speech acts performed by negotiators in an effort to develop a positive Relational Identity involve both highlighting and obscuring aspects of their Interactional Identity. This suggests that the interaction between the parties involves not just the creation of a Relational Identity, but also the refinement or re-defining of the
Interactional Identity. The compliance-gaining speech acts employed by the negotiator are a critical component of defining the Relational Identity, but the use of the speech acts also draws attention either to or away from their Interactional Identity. Although Tracy posited that the categories that constitute identity influence one another, the findings from this study provide further evidence of the veracity of Relational and Interactional Identities as being conceptualized as dynamic aspects of identity. Consequently, this study provides support for Tracy’s dynamic conceptualization of identity.

**Limitations**

This study uncovered important relationships between compliance-gaining behaviors and the outcomes of negotiation. However, several research questions could have been more thoroughly addressed through a larger sample size. Additional inquiry into persuasive tactics not able to be accessed through the methodology employed in examining in this data set may also be appropriate. These two limitations will now be discussed in greater detail.

The first question that could have been addressed with a larger sample size dealt with the use of specific compliance-gaining strategies and incident outcomes. As discussed in the previous chapter, the data collected did not fit within the assumptions built into the factorial logistic regression that would have revealed these relationships, but the data did show trends in those directions. During the course of the study, the researcher uncovered the use of sixteen distinct compliance-gaining strategies. The data set would have to be increased dramatically in order to test all of these categories and any possible interaction effects.
The other area where a larger sample size would have been valuable was in the negotiators’ responses to the hostage takers’ attempts to gain compliance. First, hostage takers utilize far less attempts to gain compliance than the negotiator. This, in itself, is a valuable insight into the negotiation process. This finding also meant that it would be unlikely that this study could establish a statistically significant link between the negotiator’s responses and outcome. Given the wide range of potential responses and the limited number of data points, it may be possible that this study was unable to fully articulate any possible relationships between negotiator responses and the outcome of the incident. The logistical and legal challenges entailed in gaining access to hostage incidents may have made it impossible to expand the data set in order to more thoroughly address these questions.

An additional limitation to this study stems from the use of transcribed data. In this study compliance-gaining attempts and responses to compliance-gaining attempts were observed in acontextual transcribed data. The transcriptions do not contain contextual information that would allow for the identification of additional persuasive tactics that are primarily defined by nonverbal communication. For example, the data set does not identify emotional tone, rate of speech, volume, or other paralinguistic features of the negotiations. It would be reasonable to assume that additional persuasive strategies would be manifest in these features such as when a hostage taker begins yelling at the negotiator in an attempt to intimidate the other party. As such, the results of this study should be viewed as providing insight into a very crucial aspect of the persuasion that
occurs in hostage negotiation events coupled with the understanding that additional paralinguistic persuasive strategies may also exist.

**Directions for Future Research**

This study set out to uncover relationships between the communication actions of the parties and the outcome of the hostage event. A nationwide survey of hostage negotiation professionals revealed that this was a central area of concern for law enforcement (Rogan & Van Zandt, 1997). An examination of the communication actions of the negotiator and hostage taker revealed findings that suggest that contextual elements may influence the communicative actions of both parties.

A review of Tables 10 and 14 illustrates the ranges and frequencies with which the parties both employ and respond to compliance-gaining strategies. Although specific themes can be identified in the data, the differences in frequencies with which these strategies are utilized suggest that contextual factors may influence strategy selection. This idea is further supported by the outlying data points that were discovered in both the Prison Riot incident as well as the Kidnapping incident discussed earlier in this study.

If contextual factors influence the use of compliance-gaining strategies and responses and these actions are related to the outcome of the incident, then it may be worthwhile for future communication-based studies to control for differences between contexts. Other researchers have suggested that it is possible to categorize hostage incidents by contextual elements. Feldman (2001) examined the demographic information of 120 incidents and found that hostage incidents can be categorized into several broad groupings based on the motivation of the hostage taker. The categories
identified include Domestic Disputes, Criminals, Mentally Ill, Workplace Violence, Alcohol and Drug Related, and Students. The cases examined in this dissertation span across several of these categories.

The variations between strategy use discovered in this investigation and the specific cases which contain unusual data points suggests that contextual factors may influence communication activities. Future studies may be able to further articulate possible relationships between specific compliance-gaining strategies, responses, and outcomes by strictly controlling for contextual factors in the data set. Researchers may be able to uncover single compliance-gaining tactics that prove very powerful in a specific type of incident. The findings presented in this study were discovered in a data set that contains a wide variety of cases. These findings indicated that compliance-gaining actions are a key element of resolving hostage incidents and that it may be possible to develop negotiation strategies that are tailored to specific types of incidents. Completion of a study that controlled for the different contextual factors while recording enough compliance-related actions to observe statically significant relationships would require a data set several times larger than the one investigated.

Another promising future study would involve examining potential relationships between the topics on which the parties are attempting to gain compliance, the stage of the incident, and the outcome. According to Mullens (2002), negotiators should attempt to gain compliance on less important topics before attempting to secure the release of the hostages or the surrender of the perpetrator. Mullens refers to this idea as being the foot-in-the-door approach where convincing one party to act in a certain way will result in
them making continued concessions. The data reported in this study indicated that compliance-gaining strategies occur throughout the negotiation process. This finding lends support to the idea that ongoing attempts to gain compliance or compliance on certain negotiation issues may be a critical aspect of the negotiation process. These data also demonstrate that hostage incidents contain the requisite regular attempts to gain compliance that are a key aspect of the foot-in-the-door technique. Future studies should examine the compliance-gaining actions of the parties as the negotiation progresses through the various stages focusing on the manifestations of the foot-in-the-door technique that are expected to occur in the third stage. The identification of how compliance-gaining activities differ across the stages of the negotiation should uncover the potential effect of the foot-in-the-door approach and provide further insight into the inner workings of the Resolution stage of the incident. Such a line of inquiry may also have implications for the stage model of hostage negotiation.

**Practical Implications**

This study resulted in a number of findings can be utilized by hostage negotiation professionals. Due to the potential loss of life associated with hostage incidents, negotiation strategies, in general, should be advanced tentatively. However, the quantitative nature of this study coupled with the theoretical support indicates that several compliance-gaining tactics discovered in this study are appropriate for professional use.

The first set of recommendations for negotiation professionals is that negotiators begin to employ a sub-set of the compliance-gaining strategies that reduce relational distance. These strategies identified for use in this study are Promise, Suggested Solution,
Positive Expertise, Liking, Altruism, Positive Esteem, and Positive Altercasting. This group of strategies is part of a larger set that also includes Pregiving, Positive Moral Appeal, and Trade. This larger group of strategies was found to have a statistically significant relationship with successful outcomes, however, further examination of the data revealed that certain strategies that were thought to reduce relational distance may not be appropriate for use in hostage incidents. These strategies include Pregiving, Positive Moral Appeal, and Trade. Each of these strategies and the specific concerns with the findings will now be discussed.

In the Trade strategy the negotiator essentially asks for an immediate exchange. For example, the negotiator in a bank robbery said “All right, so you want a package of cigarettes. Will you give me the gun for a package of cigarettes?” Another negotiator in a bus hijacking said “if we agree to put this on the air then you’ll let everybody go.” The Trade strategy was originally categorized as a strategy that would reduce relational distance, however, it seems as if attempting to extract reciprocity from the hostage taker may not be an effective strategy as the data in Table 10 indicates a trend towards the technique being more prevalent in unsuccessful cases. It may be the case that reciprocity is an inherent component of functional ongoing relationships. When the negotiator explicitly asks for reciprocity, the nature of the tit-for-tat request may serve to highlight differences between the negotiation process and an ongoing relationship. Calling attention to the features of the negotiation that indicate a lack of trust between the parties may serve to increase the relational distance experienced by the negotiator and hostage taker. Accordingly, the researcher does not advance the use of this strategy.
The second strategy identified was Positive Moral Appeal. In this strategy the speaker highlights that compliance is the morally right course of action. In this study it was observed that the use of this strategy was relatively balanced between successful and unsuccessful cases with the exception of a single unsuccessful case in which the negotiator utilizes the strategy an unusually frequent number of times. The potential effect of this strategy is that it may cause the hostage to see an opportunity to do something that is morally right in a situation that where the individual is acting in a way that would be considered immoral. The “do the right thing” message may be particularly effective if the hostage taker has taken hostages in order to obtain resources for himself or family members. However, hostage takers who are less-rational or motivated by ideological causes may not have the same as moral principles as the negotiator. Use of this strategy in such cases may cause the hostage takers to act in ways that are undesirable. It could also be the case that pointing out a morally right course of action may serve as a reminder that the hostage taker is currently acting immorally thereby increasing the stress and emotional excitation experienced by the perpetrator. The inconclusive data and potential for this strategy to backfire on negotiators means that the use of this strategy may not be suitable in all type of hostage incidents.

The last strategy that fits into the category of reducing relational distance, but resulted in inconclusive findings is Pre-Giving. Pre-giving (Marwell & Schmitt, 1967) entails one party giving the other party something and then indicating that the gift involves expected compliance. This strategy is thought to reduce relational distance as it is a rewarding strategy, however the strategy was only utilized once in an unsuccessful
case. The general lack of data surrounding this strategy only allows the use of the strategy to be advanced tentatively. Further discussion on the role of reciprocity and how negotiators can utilize this strategy can be found in Mullens (2002).

It should also be noted that while the strategies that were thought to reduce relational distance were tested together, there were some strategies were utilized more frequently that others (see Table 10). In order of descending frequency of use in successful incidents the strategies are Promise, Suggested Solution, Positive Expertise, Liking, Altruism, Positive Esteem, and Positive Altercasting. The differences with which these strategies are utilized is most likely reflective of relational aspects of the negotiation process. For example, Liking and Altruism are unlikely to occur in the early stages of the negotiation process as when the hostage taker is acting irrational. The hostage taker will not be easily put in a good frame of mind nor will they care about helping the negotiator. Other strategies such a Promise and Positive Expertise would be more appropriate during stages of the negotiation process where the parties have not yet developed a relationship. As such, it is recommended that the strategies be integrated into previously existing negotiation strategies and utilized with regard to the contextual factors of the incident.

This study also suggests that negotiation professionals avoid compliance-gaining strategies that increase relational distance. These strategies include Aversive Stimulation, Debt, Negative Expertise, Threat, Negative Moral Appeal, and Negative Self-feeling. These strategies may serve to increase relational distance and complicate the negotiator’s efforts to create a “we-are-in-it-together” context. These tactics also embody negotiation
strategies that were common in the Contending Model of negotiations which has proved to be problematic.

Employing compliance-gaining strategies that reduce relational distance and avoiding strategies that increase relational distance should support the negotiator in developing the “we-are-in-it-together” context necessary for resolving these incidents (Borowsky, 2011; Taylor & Donohue, 2006). This type of relationship requires that the negotiators strike a delicate balance between their Relational and Interactional Identities. In hostage incidents, negotiators must foreground their Relational Identity and work to build a relationship with the hostage taker. This occurs, in part, by partially obscuring the normal more-powerful Interactional Identity that is inherent in regular law enforcement work. However, the negotiator should not completely abandon the Interactional Identity that accompanies their profession. The persuasive and relational effectiveness of strategies such as Promise and Positive Expertise rely on the perception of the negotiator as having access to knowledge or authority to follow through on the utterances. Accordingly, negotiators should foreground the development of Relational Identity in order to build the “we-are-in-it-together” context while maintaining their Interactional Identity in the background so that the hostage taker can be assured of the resources the negotiator brings to the interaction.

The results of this study also provide some insight into the conceptualization of negotiations as a series of stages. Findings from this study indicate that the third stage of the negotiation, the Resolution Stage, is the most important in terms of being a predictor of the outcome of the incident. The compliance-gaining actions of the negotiator during
this stage were clearly related to the outcome of the event. However, this finding needs to be coupled with the earlier discussion that compliance-gaining tactics have a cumulative effect. Negotiators should not wait until the final stage of the negotiation before attempting to gain compliance, but rather, negotiators should employ compliance-gaining strategies that decrease relational distance throughout the course of the negotiation. This will allow negotiators to re-enforce the “we-are-in-it-together” context, familiarize the hostage taker with the utterances that will occur during the surrender, and possibly employ the foot-in-the-door technique by building a pattern of agreement. Negotiators should not push the hostage taker to release the hostages until they have sufficiently developed a “we-are-in-it-together” relationship, in part, through the use of compliance-gaining techniques. At that point, negotiators should employ compliance-gaining tactics that reduce relational distance and observe the response of the hostage taker as the hostage takers’ responses were linked to incident outcome. This finding is discussed in greater detail below.

One factor not previously discussed in this dissertation, but prevalent as a backdrop in hostage events, is the possibility of a tactical intervention. The police must always balance the risks of sending in a SWAT team and utilizing deadly force with the likelihood of the hostages being harmed if the negotiation continues on its current course. The relationship discovered in this study indicates that the Agreement and Disagreement responses are strong predictors of success. Agreement was linked to successful events and Disagreement was linked to unsuccessful events. The frequency with which the hostage takers use Agreement and Disagreement may provide negotiators with an
additional criterion for making the decision to proceed with the use of force. The use of or absence of these responses provides negotiators with a tangible piece of information on which to base a risky decision. Despite statistically significant findings, the use of hostage taker responses as a predictor of outcome is not absolute and should be utilized in conjunction with other means of making a decision. As can be seen in Table 16, it is possible that cases in which the hostage taker utilizes Disagreement can still be successful. The regularity with which the strategy is utilized means that negotiators should expect to encounter the use of the strategy and may want to use this type of response as a piece of decision-making criteria, but should not enact a tactical intervention solely on the hostage takers’ use of Disagreement. In the event of continued Disagreement, the negotiator should switch to the use of another compliance-gaining technique or may switch the topic of discussion to one of lesser importance in order to build the foundation for the use of the foot-in-the-door technique.

Conclusion

The goal of this study was to explore the relationships between compliance-gaining behavior, responses to compliance-gaining, and the outcomes of hostage negotiation events. By treating compliance-gaining actions as speech acts capable of building relationships, this study was able to describe the specific linguistic strategies that help to create a working relationship between the negotiator and hostage taker.

This study has made methodological and topical contributions in several areas of inquiry. By examining the interactive elements of compliance-gaining strategies, this study fulfills researchers’ calls to utilize the communication-based approach to examining
hostage negotiations. This study provides insights into the important but understudied strategies employed as negotiators and hostage takers attempt to exert power and influence in hostage cases. The naturalistic quality of the data allowed this study to build on understandings developed in earlier studies of compliance-gaining and begin to redress the lack of studies which explore messages effectiveness.

The necessity of understanding the interactional dynamics present in hostage incidents is both unfortunate and critically important. As I drafted the final sections of this dissertation a high-profile hostage incident was unfolding in Alabama. A man known for being aggressive throughout his neighborhood killed a school bus driver and kidnapped a five-year-old boy. He held the boy hostage in an underground bunker for six days. Law enforcement officials transformed the quiet Alabama countryside into a staging area complete with SWAT teams, Emergency Medical Technicians, fire personnel, and surveillance aircraft. Despite the overwhelming efforts put forth by these organizations, the outcome of the incident rested primarily in the hands of the negotiation teams speaking directly with the hostage taker. The negotiator’s ability to build a relationship and gain compliance from this individual represented is the best option to resolve the situation without further loss of life. In the end, the negotiation process failed and FBI agents were forced to breach the door and kill the hostage taker in order to rescue the child. Studies such as this one ultimately provide negotiators with the tools necessary to bring about peaceful outcomes to these incidents.
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