MAKING MEANING IN ACADEMIC WRITING: MATURE WOMEN STUDENTS IN HIGHER EDUCATION

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A thesis submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements of
Sheffield Hallam University
for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy

May 1998

To Jean and Noel Lillis

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I would like to thank the many people who have helped and encouraged me during the time I have worked on this research project. I would especially like to express my sincerest thanks to the following people.

The student-writers who participated in this research project on writing. As well as enjoying the time we spent talking, your comments made me question my understandings about writing. Without you, this project would not have been possible.

My academic supervisors, Asher Cashdan and Karen Grainger for always believing that I would finish writing this thesis.

My academic adviser, Roz Ivanic for being enthusiastic yet critical about what I was attempting to say.

The Learning and Teaching Institute at Sheffield Hallam University, for providing me with a research studentship and considerable material support at all points during the research project. I would especially like to thank Jane Brewer, Meg Handscombe, Hazel Oliver, Mark Pettigrew and Jeremy Lord for coming to my aid on the many occasions that I struggled with word-processing.

Peter Ashworth, for always being willing to listen to my concerns, both about this research project and about teaching and learning in higher education more generally.

Fellow research students at the Learning and Teaching Institute during the period of this research project for their company, coffee and encouragement: Lyndsay Aitkenhead, Kerry Cripps, Iain Garner, Chris Glover, Rachel Johnson, Shauna Morton, Mark Neath, Li Wang.

The Academic Literacies Research Group, organized by Mary Scott at the Institute of Education, London, for welcoming me to their regular meetings and thus providing me with the opportunity to listen to, and talk about, ideas on student writing.

And finally, Guillermo, Liam and Carmen who have throughout reminded me that there is more to life than 'la tesis'.

ABSTRACT

This study was motivated both by my own experiences as a working class student at university and as a tutor working with so called 'non-traditional' students studying on higher education courses. The central focus is the experience of making meaning in academic writing of ten women students with whom I met on an individual basis over a period of between 1 and 3 years to talk about specific instances of their writing for undergraduate course work. Most of the study reported here is based on discussions of their academic writing at first year undergraduate level.

In exploring the student-writers' experience my analysis has been significantly informed by the following writers and notions: Fairclough's three levelled framework for analyzing the production and interpretation of texts which builds on Halliday's *contexts of situation* and *culture* (see Halliday 1978; Fairclough 1989, 1992a); the work of Clark and Ivanic on *critical language awareness* about academic writing (see for example Clark and Ivanic 1991); the work of Ivanic on social identity and authorship in student academic writing (1993; 1998); the notion of *literacy practices* as developed by a number of writers (Street 1993; Barton 1994) and in particular the notion of *essayist literacy* (Scollon and Scollon 1981; Gee 1996); Bakhtin's dialogic notion of language and, in particular, the significance he attaches to *addressivity* in, and for, meaning making (1981).

The central argument in this thesis is that any exploration of students' writing at university should be premised on a view of student-writers as **meaning makers.** This perspective has implications for the methodology necessary in order to carry out such an exploration, as well as for the specific arguments about the student-writers' experience made in this thesis. In relation to methodology, I argue for the centrality of dialogue and present a methodological framework for constructing this dialogue. In relation to the student-writers' experience of meaning making, I argue the following specific points:

- The demands surrounding student academic writing are embedded in an institutional practice of mystery. This practice of mystery is ideologically inscribed in that it works against those least familiar with the conventions surrounding academic writing, limiting their participation in higher education as currently configured.

- Although the conventions surrounding student academic writing remain implicit, they constitute a particular literacy practice, *essayist literacy*, which is privileged within the university. The conventions of this practice work towards regulating individual student meaning making in specific ways.

- The type of student/tutor *addressivity* surrounding student meaning making in academic writing significantly contributes to both the nature of the students' possible participation in HE and to the meanings that they make.

I end by discussing the pedagogical implications of the arguments made in the study.

AUTHOR'S STATEMENT

I declare that while registered as a candidate for the University (or previously, CNAA's) research degree, I have not been a registered candidate or enrolled student for another award of the University, CNAA or other academic or professional organisation.

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PART A: LOCATING THIS STUDY

Chapter 1
INTRODUCTION

1.1 Why this study?

1.1.1 Official version: CARS (creating a research space, Swales 1990:141)

The nature of student intake into higher education, particularly into 'new' universities, has changed substantially in recent years in Britain, with an increasing number of so called 'non-traditional' students entering higher education (HE). These include a rising number of students from working class backgrounds, those who are older than eighteen when they start a university course, and students from a range of cultural, religious and linguistic backgrounds (for recent figures on students in higher education, see HEFCE Report, 1996; DFEE 1998). A significant dimension to this is the increasing number of older women students: they now constitute nearly half of all mature students in HE (DES Statistical Bulletin 16/94). The institutional and pedagogical implications of the presence in HE of large numbers of adults with a wide range of life experiences have yet to be fully explored. The dimension to be explored in this thesis is that of meaning making in academic writing.

'Non-traditional' is institutional discourse for referring to individuals from social groups which have historically been excluded from higher education in England. They do not constitute a homogeneous group but nevertheless can be defined as a group in terms of their historical relation to the institution of HE.[1] The group of ten students who have been involved in the three year research project from which this thesis is drawn, are 'non-traditional' in a number of interrelated ways. As a group they have in common the following: they are mature women students, aged between 20 and 50 years of age; they all describe themselves as being from working class backgrounds; they have all been through the English state education system with little expectation of ever going to university. They differ, however, in their ethnic and linguistic backgrounds: two are African-Caribbean and speakers of Creole and English; two are Yemeni and speakers of

Arabic and English; 1 is Pakistani and a speaker of Urdu and English; 2 are Bangladeshi and are speakers of Sylheti and English; one is Welsh and monolingual in English; two are white English, and are monolingual in English. The aforementioned range of dimensions of experience are ones which the student-writers in this study have indicated when describing themselves as not belonging, as being outsiders to higher education. Particular dimensions of their experience as outsiders take on significance at specific moments of their meaning making in writing .

In exploring the students' experience as meaning makers in academic writing, my understanding has been significantly informed by the following writers and notions: Fairclough's three levelled framework for analysing the production and interpretation of texts which builds on Halliday's' *context of situation* and *culture* (see Halliday 1978; Fairclough 1989, 1992a); the work of Clark and Ivanic on *critical language awareness* about academic writing (see for example Clark and Ivanic 1991); the work of Ivanic on social identity and authorship in student academic writing (1993; 1998); the notion of *literacy practices* as developed by a number of writers (Street 1993; Barton 1994) and in particular the notion of *essayist literacy* (Scollon and Scollon 1981; Gee 1996); Bakhtin's dialogic notion of language and, in particular, the significance he attaches to *addressivity* in, and, for, meaning making (1981). I draw together my understanding of these writers in specific relation to students' meaning making in academic writing in chapter 2.

The aim of this study is to contribute to an understanding of the experience of 'non-traditional'-outsider meaning makers in HE, which to date is based on a limited number of studies (these are small scale studies by Benson and others 1993; Ivanic and Roach 1990; Ivanic and Simpson 1992; Karach and Roach 1994 ; Lea 1995 ; and a detailed exploration of writer identity by Ivanic 1993, 1998).

Writing an introduction, creating a research space

I can't write an introduction like this! These aren't the reasons I decided I wanted to spend time exploring and thinking about student writing, language and meaning making at university. I'll have to show that whilst I'm able- that is I know how- to write a conventional introduction, it's not something I feel personally

comfortable with or in any way reflects how studies come to be carried out. I'll have to show that I know the rules of the game whilst indicating that I'm not happy with them. But I can't do this throughout the whole thesis. I'd need a lot more time and I'd be worried that I'd never finish, either because the recursive nature of such reflective commentary could go on forever, or because I'd decide I really don't want to write a PhD thesis after all. Perhaps I'll include now and again some reflections on the process in which I'm engaged.

1.1.2 Unofficial version: personal connections

I am juxtaposing official/unofficial here in a way which reflects common current use of the words- the notion of the official, public and publicly acceptable within conventions and the 'other' version which makes public what is not conventional- but also consciously echoing Bakhtin's notion of official versus unofficial (see Volosinov [2] in Morris: 46). He uses them to differentiate between consciousness which accords with the established, dominant values and practices in society and consciousness which resists and/or offers alternative ways of knowing and being. In this section I am contrasting the official, although increasingly resisted, practice (for examples in feminist research, see Stanley and Wise 1990; for research on language see Cameron and others 1992) of presenting a reified research space, with the unofficial practice of acknowledging personal connections with, and motivations for engaging in, this research.

The fragments below are vivid memories of significant moments in my first steps towards university and my first year at university.

Careers interview at 17 years of age

Teacher: (uninterested) And what do you want to do then when you leave school?
Me: (nervous)er, I thought about studying Spanish and French at university
Teacher: University? Are you sure?
Me: Well I 've got 7 O levels
Teacher: Have you? (surprised) Let's have a look. Hmmm yes, I see (unconvinced). Okay. So have you thought about which university?
Me: er, Leeds.
Teacher: Why Leeds?
Me: er, I support Leeds United.
Teacher: (perplexed) Why? Have you got relatives there or something?

Me: (perplexed) No. I just support Leeds United.

I went to as many home matches as I could, sometimes alone. I loved getting on the bus in town with crowds of fans and standing in the Kop

Getting a grant, spending money on books, reading books

I can't believe we get money just to read. It's marvellous. I spend money on books that have nothing to do with my course- like Hesse. I think it's fantastic to go to a bookshop, buy books, read books and then drink coffee with a friend discussing ideas. I love it.

After six weeks at university (sitting on the stairs in the hall of residence)

I don't think this is the place for me. I don't fit. I hate seminars and tutorials. I feel physically sick in case the lecturer is going to ask me something. He did ask me something about one of Lorca's poems, I think it was **me la lleve al rio.** I can't remember what he asked me or what I said but I remember he said, 'that's a rather obvious comment'. I felt ridiculous and mortified.

The other students seem to know what they're talking about, using isms here and isms there. They're all so posh and so sure of themselves. I try really hard to work out what they're talking about, to make sense of the long words. But when I do, when I think I've understood what they're saying, I think It can't be that, that's too easy. I could have said that...not in those words. But I could have said that.

Spoken feedback after my first essay, written in Spanish, given in a tutorial with 3 other students

Tutor: Este ensayo no esta mal, Theresa, pero es bastante ingenuo.
(Transl.) This essay's not bad, Theresa, but it's quite **ingenuo.**

I knew he couldn't mean 'ingenious' but what did 'ingenuo' mean? I asked a fellow student who was bilingual, from Panama. He told me it meant 'naive'. I was confused, was the tutor describing my essay or me? I didn't know what to do with such a comment.

At the end of my first year

I got a 2:1 at the end of my first year in Spanish. I didn't know anything about the grades or marks or that there were different types of degrees. My middle class room mate was surprised. And she said I'd done very well. I began to think that maybe I wasn't as stupid as I sometimes thought.

The experience of the students who talked with me about their writing over a period of between 1 and 3 years in this study resonates strongly with my own experience as a student from a working class background and as a member of the first generation in my family to go to university. My memories above connect with their strong sense of being an outsider at university, experiencing a range of contradictory emotions: hating the place as well as loving the possibility of learning that it seemed to offer. Language was often at the centre of these emotions, conscious as I was of not having the right language to express myself in speech or in writing, and of the risks involved in publicizing the fact that I was of the wrong background, as I did, every time I opened my mouth. I had a strong fear of being 'found out', that although I had passed the official tests- 11 plus, A levels- I wasn't really good enough to be at university. At the same time I had a strong sense of the injustice of the power wielded by those who possessed the appropriate linguistic capital.

So. Whilst this study is about the experience of ten women students who worked with me to explore their experience as meaning makers in HE and is not a reflexive autobiography, it is strongly connected to both my lived experience and my perspectives on language, learning and higher education. More specifically, it reflects my interest to explore the ways in which dominant attitudes and practices within institutions are enacted on a daily basis and work towards exclusion of those on the margins. It reflects my commitment to the possibility of learning and an interest in the ways in which formal institutions of learning can be more inclusive.

1.1.3 Working at an integrated account

In any attempt at making sense of the experience of others, there are dangers in imposing a perspective drawn from personal experience and/or a rigid theoretical stance. In problematizing the knowledge I am making in this thesis, I have found Lather's exploration of how researchers can engage in openly committed research useful (see Lather 1986, 1991, 1995). She describes the processes that a researcher must construct, and engage with, as a three-way conversation between empirical data, self and theory:

Empirical evidence must be viewed as a mediator for a constant self and theoretical interrogation between self and theory (Lather 1991:62).

I suggest that the understanding presented in this thesis is the result of a three-way conversation: between the data, that is, the students' written texts and the taped discussions around the texts; the literature, that is published work of writers whose voices were significant before I began work on this project as well as the voices who have become significant for my understanding of student writing in higher education and which I explore in the sections below; and me, that is my evolving understanding and experience of the relationship between language, learning and self in formal institutions of learning.

There are two obvious implications from Lather's statement above which I have taken on board for engaging in research as knowledge making and in the textual staging of such knowledge in this thesis. In the research as knowledge making, it is important to acknowledge the centrality of empirical evidence for challenging, as well as confirming, what I expect to see and understand based on my personal experience and theoretical stance. This raises important questions about the nature of the empirical evidence in this study and how I engage with it. For example, given that much of the empirical data used in part B in this thesis are the thoughts and feelings that student-writers expressed in talk about the production of such texts, of central concern was, and is, the nature of the dialogue in which we engaged. As I discuss in chapter 3, in order to work towards collaborative research and knowledge making, I have attempted to open up the institutionally given space for our talk.

In the knowledge as thesis presented here, I have attempted to make all dimensions to the three way conversation available to the critical gaze of the reader by doing the following: textually locating my self, stating the theoretical positions (in)forming this thesis and showing my analysis of the data-experience. The written account of the study as presented here is partial in the way that all knowledge is partial, as it represents predominantly one individuals' attempt, mine, to make sense of one aspect of the experience of a group of individuals at a specific moment in time (see Stanley and Wise 1990:23 for discussion of the contextual nature of knowledge making).This thesis

does not, and cannot, explore all the many areas arising from the data-experience of this research project: the many hours of discussion and the large number of drafts collected have raised more questions than can be explored in a thesis such as this. What I aim to do in this thesis is to explore strong themes which have emerged across the data-experience pointing to commonality of experience, whilst consciously focusing on individual student difference within those themes.

1.2 Epistemological frameworks for this study

There are three important overarching theoretical strands, drawn from the literature, which are significant in my approach in researching and interpreting the experience of the student-writers in this project. These can be described as *critical, collaborative-feminist* and *discourse oriented.* The critical strand involves an approach which acknowledges that the structural inequalities within society ensure that there is differential access to resources of both a material and cultural nature. A central concern, therefore, is to identify ways in which oppressive practices operate and can be transformed (examples from education are Freire 1996, orig. 1970; Giroux 1983; Apple 1993; and, from a specifically feminist perspective, Lather 1991). A key interest in this study is to seek to understand the ways in which dominant institutional conventions serve to constrain and/or enable the actions, and more specifically in this study, the meaning making potential of individuals, referred to by the institution as 'non-traditional students'. This stance is most evident in chapters 5 and 6.

However, I wanted to avoid imposing an oversimplified and essentialist reading of students' experiences by attempting to construct a space where the diverse voices of individual writers could not only be heard, but would also enable us, that is the students and I, to work towards jointly *redefining the knowledge* that we were in the process of constructing (see Cameron and others 1992): that is, re-thinking what counts as relevant knowledge and what needs to be known about (see Karach and Roach 1994 for an example of reframing the question of the 'problem' of student writing in HE). This reflects the second strand of my approach, *collaborative-feminist,* which draws on predominantly feminist writings about the need to develop collaborative frameworks, where researchers work *with* rather than on women in order that all those involved in the

knowledge making can benefit from sharing such knowledge (for discussion of issues surrounding involvement in, and benefits from, the research process, see Reinharz 1992:263-267). A more obvious example of my attempt to work at redefining what counts as knowledge in this study and thesis, is my decision to respond to the student-writers' emphasis on the importance of talk with a tutor around their writing. I do this by focusing on the talk between the student-writers and myself, as tutor-researcher, in chapters 7, 8 and 9.

The third strand in my theoretical position is a recognition of the contribution of theories of discourse to an understanding of the textual nature of social meanings; in particular, how dominant meanings are maintained and transformed through individual positioning in relation to dominant and oppositional discourses. I am drawing here on post structuralist writers such as Weedon (1987) but more centrally relevant to this project, two specific areas of the study of language: these are the areas of *critical discourse analysis* and *critical literacy*. I explore these more fully in chapter 2.

1.3 The ways in which literature is reviewed in this thesis

In writing this thesis, I am responding to the current context in which student academic writing takes place in England in institutions of HE, by offering a detailed exploration of specific moments of meaning making of a small group of students. To this end, I have drawn on literature which focuses specifically on student academic writing, as well as on literature which focuses more broadly on meaning making in language.

In order to locate this study within the existing research on 'non-traditional' students and academic writing, in 1.4 and 1.5 of this chapter I provide an overview of the strands within the literature on student academic writing, as they relate to the two general areas of focus in this thesis. The first, in 1.4, is an overview of the way in which 'non-traditional' students and their writing in academia has been problematized as a research phenomenon. The purpose here is to contextualize the stance adopted in this study, that is, towards student-writers as **meaning makers.** I explore more fully the ideas from a

number of writers which I have come to understand as significant for understanding what is involved in student meaning making in chapter 2.

The overview in 1.5 relates to the second principal focus in this thesis: that is, the way in which face-to-face talk between student and tutor mediates the meanings that are made in student academic writing. In 1.5, I provide an outline of the key questions that have been raised in studies focusing on student-tutor talk in relation to teaching and learning to write in academia.

However, whilst presenting such overviews I am conscious that I am not presenting a literature review in the more traditional sense: that is, as a discrete category at one particular point in the thesis with the specific function of supporting claims for a research space. The practice of presenting a thesis as literature review-method-findings represents a positivist approach towards knowledge as 'findings' rather than knowledge as constructed within a specific socio-cultural context (see McWilliam 1993). Although I am clearly not stepping outside of this tradition, and am writing, in Harding's words *with one foot in modernity (and the other in lands beyond*) (Harding 1990:100), I want to acknowledge the constructed nature of this thesis in at least some specific ways. I have already indicated some dimensions to its constructed nature: it is strongly connected to my personal lived experience and I do not claim in this thesis to explore all the range of possible dimensions of the data-experience emerging from the research project. Moreover, I am exploring the student-writers' experience of writing from a particular perspective, as I outline briefly below and in more detail in chapter 2.

A further dimension of the constructed nature of this thesis, in specific relation to the notion of the 'literature review', is that I am consciously engaging in particular debates about student academic writing within a particular socio-cultural context. Thus, within the current context of English academia, a deficit approach towards student writing, alongside the adoption of a 'skills' approach as proposed solution, seems to be pervasive: anecdotes abound amongst tutors in FE and HE about students' inability to write and are reflected in some studies focusing on spelling and grammar in student writing in Britain (see Lamb 1992; Winch and Wells 1995). In some cases explicit reference is made to 'non-traditional' students' limited skills in academic writing (see

for example Hoadley-Maidment 1994 who locates a focus on skills within the Access movement; see Wray 1995 who refers to the *broadening of university intake* to account for increasing errors in undergraduate writing). A 'skills' approach to the practice of teaching academic writing within institutions of HE seems to be widespread , as indicated by the following: a) the numerous study skills handbooks produced (see for example, Clanchy and Ballard 1983; Northedge 1990; Drew and Bingham 1997); b) skills as a prominent model underlying tutors' approaches to feedback on student writing (see Lea and Street 1998); c) a focus on 'skills' as a dominant discourse in official policy documents (see Barnett 1990,1994 for discussion). In exploring the student-writers' experience in this study, I am responding to this context. Thus in chapter 5, I draw on relevant literature to explore the student-writers' experience of attempting to make sense of academic writing conventions whilst at the same time engaging in the debate about the usefulness of a 'skills' approach to the teaching and learning of academic writing conventions. This involves raising questions about the theories of language and literacy underlying such an approach. In contrast, in chapter 6, whilst I again attempt to explore the student-writers' experience, I am responding predominantly to literature emerging from the North American context, concerning the extent to which conventions regulate meaning making.

Below I outline the ways in which I have engaged with literature in this thesis in order to both explore the student-writers' experience whilst responding to prominent voices in other texts.

How literature is reviewed in this thesis

Chapter 1- *overviews of the literature in relation to the two principal areas of focus: a) tracing shifting definitions of the phenomenon of non-traditional students and their writing in academia: b) overview of the ways in which student-tutor talk, in relation to the teaching and learning of academic writing conventions, has been explored.*

Chapter 2- *a discussion of the ideas from writers whose work is useful for exploring student academic writing from a social perspective in order to present a theoretical framework for exploring the experience of the student-writers in this study.*

Chapter 3- *a discussion of the literature relevant to constructing a methodology for this study given the participants' aims and interests.*

Chapter 5- *a discussion of the ways in which the gap between students' and tutors' understanding of the expectations surrounding student academic writing has been problematized in existing literature.*

Chapter 6- *a discussion of notions of regulation of meaning making in academic writing from existing literature.*

Chapter 7- *a discussion of a prominent dimension of essayist literacy, as suggested in existing literature.*

Chapter 8- *a discussion of the tensions surrounding the possibility of collaborative problem posing in higher education drawn from existing literature.*

1.4 Research on the academic writing of 'non-traditional students': tracing shifting definitions of a 'problem'

In exploring relevant research literature on the experience of 'non-traditional' students and their writing in HE, I have drawn on principally two geographically and institutionally distinct contexts: England and North America.

In this section my aim is to sketch an overview of the ways in which student writing in HE, particularly the writing of 'non-traditional' or 'basic writers' (used in the North American literature), has been explored. I will do this, firstly, by briefly tracing the ways in which student writing, in particular non-traditional student writing, has been problematized as a research phenomenon in North America; secondly, by outlining in some detail the comparatively smaller number of studies that have been carried out in England; and finally, I will point to the ways in which this study connects with different strands from research carried out in both contexts. Specific details from particular studies will be discussed in relevant chapters throughout the thesis.

1.4.1 The pedagogical and research contexts: North America

In North America, unlike in England, there is widespread consensus within the institution of HE that undergraduate student-writers need to be taught how to write academic texts as is evidenced in three types of provision: 'freshman composition'

where undergraduates spend time in learning to write (that there is wide variety in instruction is indicated in Larson's survey in Parker and Campbell 1993) ; 'basic writing' courses, which were introduced at the time of open admissions policies to HE in the late sixties, and aimed at those students who were identified as having problems with written Standard English in grammar, syntax, spelling, punctuation (see Shaughnessy 1977, discussed below; see Lu 1992 for critical review of practices in this period); and thirdly, and a less widespread provision, Writing Across the Curriculum initiatives (WAC) , much influenced by the work of Britton and others in England (1975), where the aim is to teach writing within subject areas, with an emphasis primarily on learning through writing (see Ackerman 1993 for review of effectiveness of WAC programmes; see also Russell 1991). This institutional context - where student academic writing is recognised as an area for teaching and learning- has given rise to a significant field of research and theory. There are different accounts of the emergence of composition as research field (see Nystrand, Greene and Wiemelt 1993) but that it exists as a field of study is well acknowledged; there is a writing research community institutionalized through PhD programmes in rhetoric and composition and a number of journals such as Written Communication, College Composition and Communication, Journal of Advanced Composition. Such a field has given rise to much empirical and theoretical debate over the past thirty years with ongoing conversations between participants about writing as a discrete phenomenon but also writing as it interconnects with fundamental concerns in the social sciences in general (see for specific example of the debate over foundationalism v anti-foundationalism Bizzell 1990; McKoski 1993; Bizzell 1994) .

During the 1970s, in addition to writing teachers wondering how to teach writing better, researchers began to investigate what sort of phenomenon they were dealing with. More than anything, the field evolved in its efforts to understand the central problem of meaning in discourse. (Nystrand and others, 1993:272)

The centrality of 'non-traditional' students to generating debates surrounding what is involved in academic writing is not to be underestimated. In what has become a landmark in perspective and study of 'non-traditional' student-writers in North America, Shaughnessy's *Errors and expectations* aimed to explore why so-called *ineducable* students write as they do, based on the scripts of 4,000 writers, and drawing on the

students' perspectives about the texts (1977). This work was innovative in treating ordinary students' writing as a worthy topic of research and Emig's attention to uncovering, what Flower has called, the *hidden logic* of student writing (Flower 1994: 51) has become a strong feature of researching different dimensions of the student writing experience. For example, Emig (1971) and Flower and Hayes (1977) use protocols in order to uncover and explore the processes writers engage in; Rose (1989) and Hull and Rose (1989) draw primarily on experiential accounts in order to explore the ways in which personal, social and educational experience contribute to the shaping of students' texts . These works lead away from deficit notions of *ineducable* students to an interest in developing a more complex picture of what is involved in writing a text within the university, with an emphasis on what real writers- novices and experts- actually do within this particular socio-discursive context. Focusing on the social dimensions of student academic writing intersects both the attempts to understand why writers write as they do and the processes in which they engage, and has become prominent in recent years. This involves viewing student academic writing as a social act, imbricated [3] in the social context in which it takes place rather than an act of autonomous and individual meaning making (see Flower 1994 as an example of the shift towards the social). Learning to write then is problematized not as the ability to manage standard English (American) grammar and syntax or of engaging in appropriate writing activities, such as drafting and revising, but as a process of learning the conventions of a discourse community (see Bartholomae 1985; Bizzell 1982a, 1982b; Brodkey 1987; Berkenkotter and Huckin 1995). This work is characterized by the use of theories of social constructionism to explore and theorise the practice of teachers of writing and the texts that the student-writers produce.

The notion that student writers are apprentices to academic discourse, rather than somehow deficient, led to questions about how student-writers do or do not become socialized into discourses (see Chase 1988) and also to an exploration of a range of interrelated questions, including the following: explorations of the differences across and within academic discourses (see Bazerman 1981; Myers 1985); a problematization of the meanings possible within academic discourses as currently configured (see Pratt 1991; Bizzell 1990, 1994); explorations of the significance of student-writers' sense of

social identity for their engaging in academic writing (see Cherry 1988 for self-representation in writing: Brooke for modelling identity 1988).

The focus on writing as meaning making within academia draws from and connects with work on *literacy practices*, predominantly the ethnographic work carried out by Heath (1983) who explored the different literacy practices of three distinct communities in North America and, more recently, Gee's focus on *essayist literacy* (1990, 1996; see also 2.4 and 6.2.1). These works highlight the different ways of meaning within different communities and point to the distance between the privileged discourses of academia and the discourses used by communities of predominantly working class social backgrounds, white and Black. The struggle around meaning making for student-writers from social groups traditionally excluded from HE, who are writing *at a site of conflict* (Lu 1992: 888) is explored in a number of ways, from a focus on how to learn the dominant literacy practice (see Delpit 1988), to an exploration of the ways in which different meanings can be made within the university (see Lu 1990, 1991,1994; Bizzell 1994). Such work also throws into relief fundamental questions about the function and purpose of the university towards the end of the twentieth century.

Debates continue about student, and 'basic writers', academic writing in North America and the range of interests continues to proliferate but the following shifts over the twenty years of study can be discerned: a shift from deficit notions to an interest in making visible student-writers' reasons for writing as they do; a shift away from cognitivisit approaches towards analysis of the social dimensions of writing; a focus on the nature of the dominant discourses of academic disciplines; a focus on the struggles surrounding 'non-traditional' students' meaning making in academic writing.

1.4.2 The pedagogical and research contexts: England

In England, the institutional contexts of both research and pedagogy in undergraduate writing differ significantly from those in North America. The teaching of writing is not institutionalised through provision: entry to HE been severely restricted until recent years with only a small and privileged part of the population entering.[1] It is only more recently that there has been an explicit focus on student academic writing,

predominantly as a result of a combination of phenomena, notably, the growth in participation in HE and tutors' attempts to respond to a more numerous and diverse student population, alongside a continued public debate about standards of literacy. This has led to a small number of studies focusing specifically on undergraduate writing, with research coming from a range of disciplines and interests.

The studies that have been carried out vary in terms of method, aims and underlying theoretical positions but can be organised around three approaches, broadly corresponding to the following: a predominant concern with students' texts as written product; a concern with students' understanding of the nature of the demands surrounding academic writing ; a concern to explore students' experience of engaging in meaning making in academic writing, which, in turn, has foregrounded the workings of the institution of HE.

Winch and Wells, working within the framework of the continuing public outcry against the so-called decline in literacy standards, focus on student writing as product by examining 400 undergraduate texts for errors in spelling, punctuation, handwriting and sentence structure. They highlight what they see as considerable problems in student literacy (1995). Also working with a surface taxonomy approach to student writing is Wray's study where she pursues a descriptivist linguistics approach to explore patterns of errors in student writing at first year undergraduate level and to raise questions about the transience or permanence of such errors; for example, the diverse uses of the apostrophe 's'(see Wray 1995).

A further strand to a focus on writing as product are studies with the underlying concern of how to improve students' academic writing, drawing primarily on the notion of writing as a skill to be taught and learned within HE. Robinson and Blair (1995) evaluated the effectiveness of a number of pedagogical initiatives aimed at making expectations around students' writing in a first year engineering course explicit . Pain and Mowl (1996) introduced peer and self assessment activities into a first year Geography course in order to actively inform students of the assessment criteria governing student writing.

The work of Torrance, Thomas and Robinson (1994), linking explicitly with the predominantly cognitivist perspective in the US (see Flower and Hayes 1977), examined student writing processes in relation to their final products. They used a questionnaire, sent to some 228 full-time social science graduate students, to explore correlations between the processes in which students engage, for example planning and revising, and 'productivity', that is the number of words produced. The findings suggest no clear cut correlation between 'process' and 'output'.

The second strand of studies, whilst examining the written product, focuses in particular on students' understanding of the nature of the task they are engaged in. Hounsell's work is significant in promoting an interest in this area. Through a series of semi-structured interviews, 17 students of history and 16 students of psychology were asked about the content of their essays and how they had gone about doing the essay. They were also asked to make comparisons with their writing of other essays and to discuss the course activities and setting (Hounsell 1984, 1987). Significant findings from his research include different perceptions amongst students of what was expected in an essay, differences between student and tutor perceptions and a lack of explicit guidance as to what was required. His work is drawn on by Norton (1990) who, through questionnaires and analyses of written texts of some 98 first year psychology students, as well as interviews with six tutors, set out to explore students' and tutors' perceptions of what is expected in student academic writing. Her findings echo those of Hounsell in showing a significant distance between students' and tutors' stated perceptions. But Norton further problematizes the potential significance of such perceptions for assessment practices, by contrasting the tutors' stated perceptions with the criteria they actually marked with.

The work of Mitchell (1994) and Andrews (1995) also explores student and tutors' understandings of the expectations surrounding student academic texts but they focus in particular on argument, drawing on rhetorical approaches to writing in North America. Their work links with the work of Cooper and others (1984) in North America where research highlighted undergraduate student problems with notions and practices surrounding 'argument'(see also Britton and others 1975; Gorman and others 1988 for argument at school level). Mitchell, through case studies of students across a number of

disciplines, explores not only students' perceptions of and constructions of written argument in fine art, English and sociology but raises questions about the nature of written argument as currently configured in formal education; for example, she problematizes the privileging of linear and rational argument and signals that what counts as argument is a culturally specific practice. In this way, her work links closely with the third strand of student writing research in England which sets out to problematize academic writing as a specific literacy practice within HE.

This third strand in student writing research draws on the notion of literacy practices, as already referred to within the North American context above, in 1.4.1. In England, this strand has been pushed to the fore, predominantly, as a result of practitioner led research. This is indicated in Street's conversations with other academic-practitioners about student academic writing generally (see Street 1996), as well as in some writings within the specific area of English for Academic Purposes (see for example, Turner and Hiraga 1996; Pennycook 1997). However, it is the work of researcher-practitioners in Adult Education which has played a significant part in bringing attention to the literacy practices of formal education, particularly in relation to 'non-traditional' students. In this work, emphasis has been on putting *the insights and perspectives of literacy learners and users at the centre of research about literacy* (see Hamilton 1994:3) in order to both learn of adults' experience and of the nature of the literacy practices in which they engage. An important study on writing in this context was carried out by Gardener in 1985 (see Gardener, reprinted 1992), which involved observation of a small number of sessions in Fresh Start and Return to Learning programmes, a mapping exercise with students to explore perspectives on language and identity, and interviews with tutors. A principal aim was to examine tutors' theories of writing development but Gardener also raises issues which are particularly relevant to students writing in HE: a critique of the essay as the privileged text in formal education; the exclusive nature of academic language; the learning of academic discourse as involving questions about personal and social identity.

The small number of research studies which specifically aim to explore the experience of writing of 'non-traditional' students in higher education in England all either draw on, or connect with, the notion of literacy practices as follows; work by student-writer

researchers- Benson, Gurney, Harrison and Rimmershaw (1993) ; Karach (1992) and Karach and Roach (1994); work by tutor-researchers with student-writers Ivanic and Roach (1990); Ivanic and Simpson (1992); Ivanic, Aitchison and Weldon (1996); Clark and others (1990); and work by tutor-researchers Clark (1992); Clark and Ivanic (1991); Ivanic (1993, 1998); Lea (1995).

The work of the student-writer researchers involves reflexive autobiographical accounts of their experience of writing in HE. The three student-writers in Benson and others (1993)- one of whom is a mature student- explore the ways in which past and present life and schooling experiences prepared them for writing academic essays at university. Karach (1992) and Karach and Roach (1994) focus on their experience as mature women students of making meaning in academic writing. They raise questions about the enforced institutional distance between academic knowledge, as constructed and taught within subject disciplines, and the knowledge they, as mature women students, bring to the institution from subjective and lived experience. In all the student-writer researcher works, they call for more collaborative ways of writing and meaning making . They give examples of the institutional spaces they have found to engage in such writing through the support of a small number of individual tutors.

The work of the tutor-researchers is driven by the aim to understand more about the experience of students writing in HE in order to transform pedagogy. Lea set out to explore mature student writing practices by focusing on the following; students' texts, students' self commentaries and staff comments on their texts (1995). She proposes that four interrelated frameworks are necessary for exploring and understanding student writing practices in HE: language, structure and form; features of subject specific discourse; the ideological nature of academic discourse; students' other experiences. More recently she has been involved in a research project exploring the theoretical frameworks underlying written tutor feedback on students' texts (see Lea and Street 1998).

The pedagogical research of Clark and Ivanic centres on exploring student-writers' experiences of making meaning within academic writing, focusing on the discoursal resources of both the individual and the institution. They are particularly concerned with

the potential of *critical language awareness* as an on-going activity in formal educational settings. Their work thus includes the following aspects: an exploration of the pedagogical implications of student academic writing being a socio-cultural act, by constructing problem posing activities in which to engage students about the experience of writing (see Clark and Ivanic 1991; Clark: 1992); collaborative explorations with student-writers about the implications of using specific discoursal features for their meaning making (Clark and others 1990; Ivanic and Roach 1990; Ivanic and Simpson 1992; Ivanic, Aitchison and Weldon 1996).

Ivanic has also focused specifically on writer identity in student academic writing (see 1993, 1998). She explores the *discoursal construction of writer identity* by carrying out linguistic analyses of one piece of writing of each of nine mature students, drawing on in-depth interviews with each student. The interviews both illuminate aspects in the text and generate further questions to be explored. Her analyses, point, not least, to the complexity of student-writers' texts both in terms of their heterogeneous nature and in the ways in which student-writers identify with aspects of them. This work has provided me with significant insights into the possibilities for research in this area, as well as considerable academic 'moral support' to pursue my interests.

The work of the tutor-researchers above is directly relevant to this project, both in terms of context and approach. Their work can be characterised as follows: it is reflexive- they critically examine their practices and perspectives as tutors in higher education; it can be located within an action research model- they are concerned not just to know about student writing practices, but also to effect change. I have drawn on their experience and appropriated some of their conceptual frameworks in specific ways (see, for example, my use of Clark's questions and Ivanic's dimensions to authoring in 6.3).

As can be seen from this brief overview, the work on student academic writing in England, although smaller, connects with the range of different interests in work in North America in the following ways; a focus on surface language features; a focus on individual writing processes in relation to written products; a focus on writing as a social phenomenon, drawing on the notion of literacy practices. A significant difference between the two contexts is that, unlike in North America, it is not possible to talk of

student writing research as an established area of inquiry in Britain, although it is now beginning to be possible to talk of the emerging field of academic literacies (see Lea and Street 1998; see also Jones and Street, convenors 1998).

1.5 Research on the importance of tutor-student talk for student writing

The second principal area of focus in this thesis is the talk surrounding student academic writing, between tutor-researcher and student-writer. In this section I outline prominent themes emerging from relevant literature relating to this focus

1.5.1 Talking and learning how to write in academia

Whilst the activity of talk between teachers and pupils at compulsory school level has been the focus of inquiry in Britain for some time, little research has been carried out on such talk in HE. Drawing on social theories of learning, in particular the work of Vygotsky and Bruner, school based research has focused on the importance of talk for learning in general (see for example Barnes, Britton and Rosen 1969; Bullock Report 1975; Maclure, Phillips and Wilkinson 1988; Stierer and Maybin eds.1994), as well as in specific relation to the development of literacy (see Lunzer and Gardner 1978; Wells and Chang 1986; Wells 1990). Emphasis has also been placed on the close relationship between talk for learning and talk for learning literacy, in that much learning in formal institutions involves learning what Mercer calls *educated discourse*, that is the discourse of written texts (whilst using this wording, Mercer acknowledges it be an oversimplification; see Mercer 1995:80).

Whilst the issues raised about talk in British school based studies have to date had little impact on HE in Britain both in general and around academic writing (for an exception, see Catt and Eke 1995), they have contributed to debates within HE in North America where talk around academic writing has been the focus of discussion and some research (see Ackerman 1993 for influence of Britton on writing across curriculum). In writing pedagogy, there is a tradition of engaging in and valuing talk around the production of student academic texts and the practice of talk has become institutionalised through writing centres and composition classes where both peer and tutor conferencing takes

place (see Carnicelli 1980; Murray 1985; Harris 1986). This talk has more recently been the object of numerous studies where questions have been raised about the nature of the talk (see for example Patthey-Chavez and Ferris1997); the nature of the relationship between tutor and student-writer (see for example Harris 1992, 1995; Newkirk 1991, 1995); the success of such talk (see Walker and Elias 1987 and Walker 1991 for high and low rated writing conferences); the purpose of such talk (see Harris 1992; Patthey-Chavez and Ferris 1997), some aspects of which I now explore.

1.5.2 Writing tutor as facilitator of personal voice or cultural imperialist

What the responsibility of the writing-tutor should be and hence, how she should talk to teach students to write in academia has been a prominent area of debate within North America often being polarised around notions of personal voice, exemplified in the work of Elbow (see 1973) and Murray (see 1985) and learning the discourse as part of entering a discourse community (see discussion in 1.4.1). Such positions have tended to be understood as having specific implications for the writing tutor's practice: for example, the writing tutor should be facilitative and work towards enabling student-writers to seek their own voice; or, presented as an alternative, the tutor should be directive and teach dominant conventions with the aim of enabling student-writers to contribute to such discourses (see Bizzell 1992 introduction, for account of the differences in this debate, between herself and Herzberg, Brannon and Knoblauch).

Although both positions claim student empowerment, particularly for students who are from social groups most distant from the dominant discourse practices of HE, both have been criticized for their exclusion of 'non traditional 'students. The first position has been critiqued as potentially working towards the exclusion of those students most distant from the dominant discourse practices, leading to calls, for example from Delpit for the explicit teaching of dominant academic conventions to Black groups . She argues that Black working class children need to be taught the dominant conventions and thus acquire the appropriate *cultural capital* rather than having their personal voices facilitated (see Bourdieu 1991 for cultural and linguistic capital). Delpit quotes one Black parent as saying *My kids know how to be Black- you all teach them to be successful in the White man's world* (Delpit 1988: 285) The second position, where there is an emphasis on teaching dominant conventions, has been strongly criticised as a

form of cultural imperialism. In recent times, many writers argue for heterogeneity and inclusion of new ways of meaning which dominant academic practices exclude (see for example Bizzell's critique, 1992, of Hirsch's notion of *cultural literacy*, Hirsch 1988, and indeed her own earlier position -similar in some ways to Hirsch- that teaching dominant academic literacy ultimately facilitates student-writers' meaning making). Delpit has argued against any dichotomised approaches, calling instead for a focus on what she refers to as a combined *skills-process* approach (see Delpit 1988).

1.5.3 Student-writer as active participant

More recently, there has been a move away from a focus on what the tutor does (and should/not do) towards a focus on the ways in which students shape the talk with tutors . Sperling, based on her research in high school classrooms, states that whilst research has focused on flaws in conferencing predominantly on the basis of directive talk being presumed inappropriate, useful tutor/student dialogue wears many guises (see Sperling 1990, 1991, 1994; Sperling and Freedman 1985). Thus, for example, student silence need not necessarily indicate poor student/tutor dialogue. She argues that students actively contribute to what is talked about and that thus students *co-labour* with tutors in order to meet their varied interactional, as well as their informational, needs (see 199I: 318). She writes of different emphases in talk between tutor and student with three principal processes at work for the individual students: *appropriation and discovery*; *rehearsal and mastery*; and, *increasing the options.* Although presented as three discrete sets of processes related to three individual students, in her 1990 article she talks of variation across students at different moments in time.

Patthey-Chavez and Ferris (1997), based on their research with university student-writers, also emphasize that the 'same' treatment does not meet with the 'same response' in student-writers. They argue that what student-writers bring to the talking event structures the ensuing activities. Thus the students they describe as 'weaker' demand direction by playing *receptive audience to their teacher* (1997:11) and their conferences are characterized by more tutor directed talk. In contrast, the 'stronger' students engage in more collegial talk with the tutor. The difference in talk is reflected in their texts, where 'weaker' students engaged in *transfer*- that is, more or less word for word repetition in their texts of suggestions and advice from tutors- whilst 'stronger'

students made *transformations*, that is ideas that came up and were discussed during the conference but were reworked by student for their text. Patthey-Chavez and Ferris view the different type of tutor talk and student action based on that talk as being appropriate to the different needs of student-writers and, in all cases, as evidence of teachers privileging *writing improvement over student ownership* (1997:26) and, in their view, as appropriate intervention into the student-writers acculturation into academic discourse.

Sperling and Patthey-Chavez and Ferris critique a tutor dominant scaffolding metaphor to explicate the talk between student and tutor. Sperling does so explicitly (see 1990:283), pointing to the active role of the learner in talk and learning about writing. Patthey-Chavez and Ferris do so implicitly, by emphasizing as they do the ways in which student-writers shape the talk with the tutor. Whilst wishing to acknowledge differences between student-writers in the ways in which they participate and shape talk, and I point to such differences within this project, there is clearly a danger in uncritically valuing talk between student and tutor per se as always useful, as always meeting the interests and needs of individual students . Such an approach construes the zone of proximal development, which Sperling and Patthey-Chavez and Ferris draw on, as a zone with *pure intentions* (Newkirk 1995: 195), ignoring the socio-discursive space within which conferencing takes place: Newkirk argues that in drawing on notions of scaffolding, there is a need to acknowledge *competing scaffolds* (after Goffman 1961), that is the range of resistances, concealed feelings and attitudes that are part of writing conferences (1995:195). I explore some dimensions of the socio-discursive space in which student/tutor talk takes place in chapters 5, 6, 7 and 8.

The work of Sperling and Patthey-Chavez and Ferris is important in directing our gaze to what individual student writers actually do in tutor/student interaction. Their work also emphasizes the importance of focusing on talk to discover the different ways talk impacts on the construction of written texts. But their work also returns us to the central interconnected questions within the more general discussion about tutor/student talk referred to earlier. How do/should writing tutors talk in order to teach academic writing? And interrelatedly, what is it that they (we) are aiming to teach?

1.5.4 Working with the tensions

The tension between tutor as facilitator and controller, signalled by several North American writers referred to above, is also clearly central to the writings and practices of *critical language awareness* (CLA), although to date there has been limited focus on tracing the work that talk actually does (see Clark and others 1991; Clark and Ivanic 1991; Clark 1992). A central aim of CLA is the naming of conventions in order that student-writers can participate more actively in constructing their written texts, taking conscious decisions about the conventions they are (or not) following and hence taking responsibility for the meanings they make. Clark points to the tensions within her work as a writing tutor, given that she sees her responsibilities as being

> *to provide access to the kinds of linguistic practice which are required in order to succeed in education and the need on the other hand to develop a critical language awareness of dominant conventions and alternatives to them* (1992: 135)

Although Clark and Ivanic illustrate the ways in which they attempt to work with one dimension to this tension- the raising of awareness of groups and individuals about these processes- and include examples from students' writing to demonstrate their increased conscious control over their meaning making (see for example Clark and others 1990:91-100; Ivanic and Simpson 1992) there is little focus on how they attempt to work with the other dimension: that of helping individual student-writers who are unfamiliar with dominant conventions to learn (about) them. Moreover, there is little focus on actual instances of student-tutor talk and the work that such talk does in enabling students' learning of dominant academic conventions and/or facilitate greater individual student control over meaning making. I attempt to explore aspects relating to such questions by focusing on instances of student/tutor talk in chapters 7 and 8.

1.6 This study

In broad terms, this study connects with the following positions taken in a number of the studies, already mentioned, in North America and England.

- The academic writing that student-writers are asked to engage in is part of an institutionally privileged literacy practice. Although diverse, it is possible to talk of a dominant literacy practice within HE, the conventions of which I outline in broad terms in 2.4 and 6.2. There is a need, however, to explore the specific ways in which the conventions of this practice contribute to meaning making.
- There are reasons why- *a hidden logic*- people write as they do: in order to explore why student-writers write as they do, for teaching and/or research purposes, the tutor-researcher must seek out these reasons. It is important therefore to develop methodologies which foreground this hidden logic.
- The difficulties which 'non-traditional' students experience in academic writing cannot be reduced to problems with 'mechanics': given the social nature of writing, who they are, want to be and don't want to be has a significant impact on their meaning making in writing as does the institutional context in which that writing takes place. It is important to explore the specific ways in which an individual sense of personal and social identity(ies) contributes to specific instances of meaning making within the institution of HE.
- Talk between student-writer and tutor-researcher plays a significant role in learning, and more specifically in relation to this study, meaning making in academic writing. There is a need to explore in detail what such talk does.

In 1.6.1 below I outline the ways in which this study aims to contribute to understandings about student academic writing in relation to existing studies both in England and in North America.

1.6.1 Focus, methods and participants

This thesis differs from works previously mentioned in that it attempts to focus on meaning making in students' written texts as well as on the student/tutor talk surrounding the construction of such written texts. Talk between student and tutor is viewed in this thesis both as a means of exploring the student-writers' experience of meaning making in HE and as interactional text in its own right. Thus part B is an exploration of the students' meaning making in academia as they currently experience it, drawn from their written texts and their talk about texts. In part B, I explore the

nature of the students' participation as meaning makers in HE which, in turn, foregrounds the ideological workings of the institution. I explore two principal dimensions and, in so doing, engage in the prominent current debate about writing as a study skill. The first is that of exclusion through the dominant practice of mystery surrounding the conventions for engaging in student academic writing. The second is that of the regulation of the meanings that can be made and the extent to which individual student desires for meaning making converge with and diverge from dominant conventions. What this thesis offers is an exploration of specific instances of student meaning making and how exclusion and regulation are enacted on a routine basis in the specific context of HE in England.

The second principal area of focus is the talk between the tutor-researcher (me) and the student-writers. Part C is an attempt to explore the purposes that tutor/student talk serves in teaching/learning essayist literacy and in potentially facilitating greater individual control over meaning making. To date, whilst there has been an implicit interest in student/tutor talk around academic writing, no such explicit analysis has been carried out in England. Moreover, whilst this section connects with studies focusing on student/tutor writing *conferencing* in North America, it differs in its focus on two specific dimensions to meaning making within academia. The first is the way in which talk mediates the teaching and learning of a central dimension to *essayist literacy*, that is, what I am calling *essayist unity* (see chapter 7). The second is the emphasis on specific instances of talk to explore the possibility of constructing a dialogue between student and tutor in order to collaborate around meaning making.

The principal method for gathering data-experience in this study is tape recorded talk between the student-writers and myself as tutor-researcher about the student-writers texts. Analysis of their texts is driven principally by the talk. The nature of the talk about texts in this study, however, differs from the studies in England and North America, referred to above, in two ways. The first is in the extended nature of our talk about the writing of several texts: in most cases, this has involved talk about three texts over a period of one year but with some students I have met for 2-3 years. The second difference is that our talk has also been about meaning making in process; that is, the student-writers not only talk about the meanings in their texts, but are often engaged in

the making of meaning at the point of talk, what Britton has called *shaping thought at the point of utterance* (Britton 1983), thus allowing us to glimpse the ways in which desires and constraints shape actual meanings being made in texts.

The participants are ten 'non-traditional' students who, as outlined in 1.1.1, both share particular dimensions of social experience whilst differing, most obviously, in terms of the languages they speak and their ethnic-cultural backgrounds. As participants they differ from the participants in other studies on 'non-traditional' students' experience of writing in England in the following ways: a) they constitute a group through the commonality of their experience; b) they also introduce specific social dimensions of experience which have to date not been highlighted, that is, ethnicity, gender and linguistic background (see chapter 4). Throughout the thesis I will explore both commonality and difference in their experience as writers in HE.

1.6.2 Outline of the thesis

Below is an outline of the way the thesis is organised.

PART A: LOCATING THIS STUDY

Chapter 1: Introduction

Chapter 2: Theoretical framework for exploring the making of meaning
I outline key notions from a number of writers which have come to be significant for exploring the making of meaning of the student-writers in this project.

Chapter 3: Research methods and processes
I discuss the methodology which evolved for the purposes of the project.

PART B: MAKING MEANING IN ACADEMIA
Introduction
I introduce chapters 5, 6 and 7 which represent my attempt to come to some understanding of who the meaning makers are when they come into HE and their

experience of attempting to learn of and negotiate the frameworks for making meaning in HE.

Chapter 4 -The meaning makers

I introduce the meaning makers, by presenting accounts of individual student-writers' life experiences

Chapter 5 - Student confusion and the institutional practice of mystery

I focus on the experience of the student-writers in coming into HE, in particular the confusion they experience about the conventions surrounding meaning making in academic writing. In this chapter, I focus on the commonality of their experience and argue that such confusion is not an individual phenomenon but signals a dominant institutional practice, which I refer to as the *institutional practice of mystery.*

Chapter 6- Authoring in academia: regulation and desire

I explore the nature of dominant conventions and the ways in which they regulate the meanings that student-writers can make in academia. By analyzing extracts from student-writers' texts and their talk about such texts, I argue that regulation is enacted in relation to particular areas of life experience through the dominant addressivity at the levels of contexts of situation and culture. The ways in which individual desire diverges from and connects with specific dimensions of regulation are explored.

PART C TALKING OUR WAY IN

Introduction

I introduce chapters 7, 8 and 9 in which I focus on the talk in which we engage for the purposes of teaching and learning essayist literacy and taking greater control over their meaning making, as well as on the student-writers' perspectives on this talk.

Chapter 7- Talking to teach and learn essay text literacy

I analyze the nature of the talk in relation to the teaching and learning of a central dimension to the practice of essayist literacy: unity in essayist literacy and trace the impact of such talk on the student-writers' final text. I argue that the learning of essayist

literacy is a long and fragile process, for which student outsiders need considerable support.

Chapter 8 -Talking to *populate with intention*

I analyze the extent to which talk can facilitate greater control over individual student meaning making. I explore the ways in which a) a renegotiated relationship around meaning making may work towards greater student-writer participation in, and control over, meaning making, and b) ways in which it is possible to make language more visible as a contributor to meaning making. I focus on the inherent tensions in attempts to construct a collaborative relationship around meaning making.

Chapter 9- Student-writers' views on talk

Drawing on specific comments made at the moment of talk as well as more general comments, I outline student-writers' perspectives on student/tutor talk around writing.

Chapter 10- Conclusion

NOTES

[1] For historical and continued under-representation in HE of students from working class backgrounds, see Halsey and others 1980; Blackburn and Jarman 1993, HEFCE 1996. For structural barriers to women's access, see Sperling 1991. For barriers to Black groups, see Rosen 1993; Lyon 1993. For expansion of higher education, see Wagner 1995.

[2] Whilst acknowledging the debates around the authorship of particular works, I refer throughout the thesis to Bakhtin as sole author of the texts usually attributed to him. For discussion on authorship see Clark and Holquist 1984; see also Morris 1994: introduction.

[3] See comment in 8.5.2.7 on my use of the word *imbricated.*

Chapter 2

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK FOR EXPLORING STUDENT-WRITERS' EXPERIENCE OF MAKING MEANING IN ACADEMIC WRITING

2.1 Introduction

The aim of this chapter is to present a theoretical framework for exploring the experience of meaning making in higher education of the student-writers who took part in this study. As such, this chapter is a presentation of what I have come to understand about what is involved in student-writers' meaning making. It is based on my reading of published texts, much of which took place at the same time as I was regularly meeting with the student-writers to talk about their writing: hence my understanding of such texts was influenced by my understanding of the student-writers' experience and vice versa.

In this chapter I outline relevant ideas from writers whose work is particularly useful for the social perspective on student writing adopted in this study and which I have organized under the following main headings; Halliday in 2.2, Fairclough in 2.3, Scollon and Scollon and Gee in 2.4; Bakhtin in 2.5 and Ivanic in 2.6. In exploring their work I focus in particular on the following dimensions: the socio-cultural context of, and for, meaning making; the relationship between the individual and socio-cultural context in which meaning making takes place; the relationship between the individual, meaning and wording. In the final section, 2.7, and on the basis of ideas discussed in the preceding sections, I outline my current understanding of what is involved in student meaning making in academic writing. At different points in the thesis, I refer the reader back to this chapter for elaboration of the notions I am drawing on.

2.2 Halliday and *learning how to mean*

The work of M.A.K. Halliday has provided a powerful framework for those writers and researchers who wish to work with a socio-cultural approach to language, both in terms of his philosophy of language (see for example, 1978, 1993b) and in providing a

functional grammar of language which is used as a descriptive tool (1994). Hence most writers working within a social perspective of language acknowledge the significance of his work (see for example Fairclough 1989, 1992a; Fowler and others 1979; Hodge and Kress 1993; Fowler 1996; Clark and Ivanic 1997). However, tensions within Halliday's work, which have led writers to pursue other frameworks of analysis, are often left unstated. What I want to do here is to outline the specific ways in which the work of Halliday is informing this study, but also point to the tensions at the heart of his work which have led me to seek out and explore notions from other writers in order to build a working theory of making meaning in student academic writing.

2.2.1 The socio-cultural nature of language

When I first decided to work with student-writers in order to explore their experience of writing in higher education, the title of Halliday's book on child language acquisition, *Learning how to mean,* was uppermost in my mind (1975). This text, where he traces the linguistic development of his son Nigel, is both a contribution to studies of child language learning and, of more direct relevance to this study, an exposition of his theory of language as a social semiotic. Using detailed examples of his son's utterances, he points to what he calls the *functional* nature of language: that is, that language has evolved to satisfy human needs and that this functional origin of the nature of human language has determined the nature of the language system. This work is central to his explication of language as a socio-cultural phenomenon. More recently he has drawn on his extensive work on child language learning to work towards developing a language-based theory of learning (see 1993a). In this article, he reiterates many of the points made throughout his works and which I consider to be central in my approach to exploring and understanding student-writers' experience of making meaning in HE. These are as follows:

- The primacy of language in our meaning making as human beings: all learning is learning to mean and one of the principal ways in which we learn to mean is through language: *language is the essential condition of knowing, the process by which experience becomes knowledge* (94).
- Our learning, of language and through language, is fundamentally a social phenomenon. Halliday talks of the *interpersonal gateway* through which we

construe ideational meanings. He states *we naturally think of information as something inherently experiential, and so, eventually it will turn out to be, but its origins seem to be interpersonal* (103). Here Halliday's' s focus on the social-as-interpersonal driving force of language and learning, seems to echo Vygotsky's emphasis on thought as being essentially social in origin (see Vygotsky 1986; see Wells 1994 for links between the work of Halliday and Vygotsky).

- Form cannot be separated from content in exploring language (as is often attempted in traditional approaches to grammar). Meanings are construed through the grammar of language, the *lexicogrammar* in Halliday's terms: using particular forms is a way of meaning, not something separate or peripheral to meaning.
- Making meaning involves drawing from an already existing system- a meaning making potential- in order to produce already coded meanings as well as new meanings. *A language is a system-text continuum, a meaning potential in which ready-coded instances of meaning are complemented by principles for coding what has not been meant before (105).*

Within Halliday's' work there is an explicit focus on language as being socioculturally situated in specific and different ways . One example is his focus on meaning making in relation to social class , drawing on Bernstein (see for example Bernstein 1971). He argues that through the codes available to different social groups, the meaning potential of the individual is filtered. Thus for example, children from a working class background mean in different ways from children from a middle class background (see Halliday 1978:26 for discussion of the implications of this for schooling). A second example of Halliday's focus on the social situatedness of language is his focus on the language of science (1993b). He describes the specific lexicogrammatical conventions of the language of science- passives, nominalizations, a focus on relations between objects rather than between human agents- highlighting the specific nature of the language of science. He points to the historical situatedness of the language of science and also to historical changes surrounding the language of science, such as the desire in the late twentieth century to move away from fixed meanings, as constructed through nominal groups, towards a focus on processes. As currently configured, he argues, the conventions of the language of science are experienced as constraining:

It is not too fanciful to say that the language of science has reshaped our whole world view. But it has done so in ways which (as is typical of many historical processes) ***begin by freeing and enabling but end up by constraining and distorting***. My emphasis. (1993b: 10).

Although Halliday focuses on the social situatedness of language, as exemplified in the two instances of social class and science, the text marked in bold points to a tension in his work around universality and specificity, which I briefly explore below.

2.2.2 Some problems with a universalizing tendency

As Wells has pointed out, Halliday's primary interest is in *the nature and organization of language as a resource for human social living* (1994:45). In this sense, Halliday's interest is in language as a **universal** phenomenon, indicated through his talk of language as *functional* and language *evolving.* which run through his work, including his major work of constructing a functional grammar (1994). Thus, although he points to the historically specific nature of the language of science (1993b:10-20) he emphasizes the universal nature of such language, again through the notion of function:

it is a common experience for such features to become ritualized over the course of time, once the social context has changed, but it is virtually certain that they would have been functional in origin (11)

He does not, in the extract above, problematize the social situatedness of the formulation of scientific language but seems to rather assume a functional origin of the conventions which is both benign- serving no one interest above any other simply a human interest-and unified- that is, no debate or struggle over the formulation of such conventions. Street has highlighted this dimension to Halliday's work in the specific context of literacy, where he criticises Halliday's emphasis on a polarity between written and spoken language and their presumed evolution to fulfill different functions.

The idea of evolution has a universalizing tendency: it does not help to us to explain why and how specific differences between written and spoken language have emerged and have been reduced in given contexts. Similarly, the idea that writing emerged to fulfil different 'functions' from speech seems rather essentialist: it does not fit well with the growing empirical evidence of variation between cultures and historical periods. (Street 1995:4)

A universalizing tendency runs throughout Halliday's work, where, although he

provides a framework for exploring language in its social context - and potentially hence for explicating texts as socio-historical events and differences between them- through a *context of culture* as well as a *context of situation,* he tends towards a normative stance at the level of a *context of situation.* The significance of the context of culture, although present in the overall theoretical framework, seems often to be minimized, as for example when he uses the school to illustrate the relationship between text and the context of culture, analyzing the roles and structures of the school, but then suggests the primacy of the context of situation in terms of his interest:

in describing the context of situation, it is helpful to build in some indication of the cultural background, and the assumptions that have to be made if the text is to be interpreted- or produced- in the way the teacher (or the system) demands. (Halliday and Hasan 1989:47)

Gee points to Halliday's social perspective on language as tending to remain at the interactional, rather than cultural level and, in reviewing Halliday's language based theory of learning, calls in contrast for a view of learning

as induction into Discourses (ways of being), not just discourses (ways of using words) (Gee 1994:39)

Halliday tends to theorise at the level of the context of situation which he acknowledges clearly in the extract below. The type in bold is my highlighting for the purpose of considering why Halliday remains at the level of context of situation.

Text represents choice. A text is 'what is meant', selected from the total set of options that constitute what can be meant. In other words, text can be defined as actualized meaning potential. The meaning potential, which is the paradigmatic range of semantic choice that is present in the system, and to which the members of a culture have access in their language, can be characterised in two ways, corresponding to Malinowski's distinction between 'the context of situation' and the 'context of culture' (1923, 1935). ***Interpreted in the context of culture, it is the entire semantic system of the language. This is fiction, something we cannot hope to describe. Interpreted in the context of situation, it is the particular semantic system, or set of subsystems, which is associated with a particular type of situation or social context. This too is a fiction; but it is something that may be more easily describable. In sociolinguistic terms the meaning potential can be represented as the range of options that is characteristic of a specific situation type.*** My emphasis(1978:109)

My aim here is to point to Halliday's declared interest of focusing on the context of situation which may account for normative versus critical approaches to text type in the

area of genre studies, much of which is significantly influenced by Halliday's work (see for example the debates in Reid ed. 1987). His reason for focusing on the context of situation seems to be the impossibility of describing texts at the level of the context of culture. This has been challenged in the work of Fairclough, who has been attempting in recent years to explore texts at the level of the context of culture, as well as the context of situation, as I outline below (see 2.3).

There are particular problems in drawing solely on Halliday's theoretical framework when attempting to explore the specific instances of meaning making of non-traditional students in the institution of higher education and suggested in the comments by Street and Gee above. Notably, difference, power and the nature of change are not theorised. Although in recent work he does incorporate elements of a critical perspective, explicating a scientific text in terms of dominant discourses (1993b:37) and is critical of the inaccessibility- and hence, he suggests, the anti-democratic nature- of the language of science, he seems less clear about how changes come about, emphasizing instead the notion of language as an evolved system with an implicit distancing from individual and/or collective human agency (1993b: see for example pages 21 and 111 where *system* is the agent).

2.2.3 Some problems with the notion of system: meaning, intentionality and addressivity

Halliday' s theorisation of making meaning involves a speaker/producer engaging in a whole number of choices from the language system at any one time. The notion of choice relates not so much to a decision on the part of the individual speaker as to the possibilities for making meaning within the language system

any choice made in transitivity has a sigrificant effect on other choices within the transitivity systems, but has very little effect on choices within the mood or theme systems (1978:113)

His interest is in choice at the level of the system:

*Let me make it clear, therefore, that I am not asking any questions that require to be answered in terms of individual psychology. I am asking: what is the potential of the system that is likely to be at risk, the semantic configurations that are typically associated with a specific situation type? (*1978:142)

He has less to say about choice in the sense of decisions which individuals make about meaning at specific moments in time and the way in which power imbricated in the context of culture influences the meanings that will be made. In order to explore meaning making in this way other dimensions need to be taken account, in particular, intentionality and *addressivity* within the context of culture (see 2.5.2 for addressivity). In order to exemplify why these interrelated dimensions need to be explored, consider briefly the following three different teaching/learning contexts surrounding the making of meaning; that of the child/adult; adult/adult education tutor; and student/university tutor. The meanings that are made - that is that come to be spoken and/or written- are significantly influenced by the nature of the relationship between the addressor and addressee within the *contexts of situation* and *culture*. So, often when a child is meaning making, an adult does more than await the child's meaning to be made. Wells talks about the child breaking into the adult language as only being made possible if the adult ascertains the *child's meaning intention* (1994:52); that is, the adult works at seeking out what it is the child wants to mean and helps her to say it. A similar type of meaning making between individuals is a significant dimension to adult education. As Gardener points out, adult education tutors are often *closer to the struggle to* write, less interested in the product, and work with the adult student to make meaning (1992:10). This stands in contrast I would suggest, and certainly on the basis of the experience of the student-writers in this study, to the type of meaning making relationship in HE between student-writer and tutor-reader where the emphasis is on evaluating the text as product rather than engaging in text as meaning making in progress. I return to the importance of the notion of *addressivity* below, in 2.5.2.

2.3 Fairclough and the contexts of situation and culture

2.3.1 A framework for analyzing the production of texts

Writers in the area of critical linguistics have further developed Halliday's notion, after Malinowski (see Halliday 1978:109) of the context of culture (see for example, Fairclough 1992a, 1992b 1995: Hodge and Kress 1993; see also contributions in Caldas-Coulthard and Coulthard eds.1996). It is important to point to critical linguistics as an area of study, rather than one approach towards the study of language, given the diversity of interests and methods of those involved. A key criticism of critical

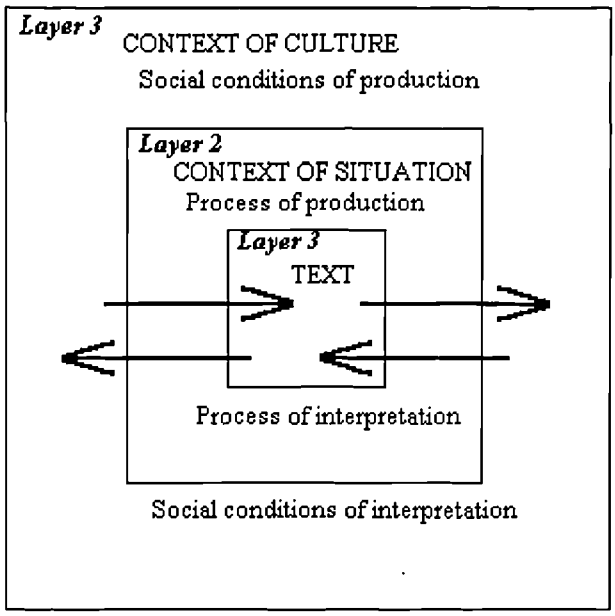
discourse analysis seems to stem from the claim to, and desire for, standardized practices which are made by some writers (see for example, Fowler 1996) but which are not evident in published texts (see Toulan 1997 for this criticism: see also Stubbs 1997).

In pursuing an analytical framework which attempts to connect the context of culture with the context of situation, I am drawing principally on the works of one prominent writer within this area of study, Fairclough, and, to a lesser extent, the work of Clark and Ivanic who have drawn closely on Fairclough's work (see 1997). Fairclough has worked on theorizing language at the level of a context of culture in a range of ways, with shifting emphases in his writings over time, as I discuss below in 2.3.3.

Fairclough offers a three dimensional framework for analysing any socio-linguistic event:

Any discursive 'event' (i.e. any instance of discourse) is seen as being simultaneously a piece of text, an instance of discursive practice, and instance of social practice. (1992a:4)

This framework enables us to begin to explore texts from the context of culture in a detailed way. The three levels are connected through a notion of *discourse* for which he draws on a more traditionally narrow intra-textual focus with a broader socio-discursive approach from Foucault, where the emphasis is on acknowledging and exploring socially constructed sets of meanings (see Fairclough 1989, 1992a, 1995). Acknowledging the lack of analysis of actual texts in Foucault's work, Fairclough's aim is to construct a framework where we can analyse instances of socio-discursive practices, whilst drawing on Foucault's broader philosophical explication of domains of knowledge. This is what he refers to as text oriented discourse analysis.



After Fairclough 1989:25: and Clark and Ivanic 1997:11

2.3.2 Orders of discourse, ideology and hegemony

Significant dimensions to an exploration of the context of culture are *orders of discourse*, *ideology* and *hegemony* (see Fairclough 1992a chapter 3). Orders of discourse are configurations of conventions underlying actual socio-discursive practices, particular to and constitutive of different social domains. The institutional order of discourse which is of concern in this study is that of higher education (HE), where the range of discursive practices includes amongst others seminars, lectures, essay writing. Although distinct practices, they are interrelated through the underlying conventions governing the institution of HE and which regulate both the objects and subjects of discourse; that is, the rules governing the nature of what can be known about, and who can know it .

The conventions underlying the institutional order of discourse and hence the particular practices within that institution, are not unitary or fixed but rather at any moment in time are *the product of the struggles over meaning that have taken place in the recent socio-political history of particular institutions* (Clark and Ivanic 1997:129-130). As Fairclough points out, it is widely accepted in sociolinguistics that any linguistic event is bound by conventions embedded in social practice

but these conventions themselves are seen as solid facts, not as themselves stakes in and outcomes of struggle between social forces (1995: 248)

In order to explicate the nature of these conventions critically, Fairclough draws on the notions of *ideology* and *hegemony.* Although in earlier texts Fairclough offers a broad notion of ideology, after Thompson (1992a:87) he argues later that a critical theory must focus on a pejorative view of ideology, that is the means through which social relations of power are reproduced (1995:18). Thus Fairclough, like Foucault, highlights the need to focus on power but, unlike Foucault, he locates power with specific dominant social groups within a social system which is capitalist *and dominated by-but not reducible to-relations of class* (1995:18), pointing to the need to theorise power and relations of domination inclusive of gender and ethnicity.

When a student-writer sits down to write an essay, even the first time she does so, she is taking part in a wider social practice which is bound to a particular social institution, the university. Her meaning making is therefore powerfully mediated by the ideologically inscribed dominant conventions within the institution, which she must negotiate- accept, resist, transform- as she makes meaning in her writing. As Ivanic states,

A single instance of language use draws on conventions which are determined by particular values, beliefs and practices in the context of culture. The single instance of language use thereby minutely contributes to reinforcing those values, beliefs and practices, and opposing others.(Ivanic 1993: 43)

A central part of this study is an exploration of the nature of dominant conventions and how the student-writers experience and negotiate them.

2.3.3 Agency and identification

Although Fairclough has long since acknowledged the tension between reproduction and transformation, and has pointed to what he calls the *felicitous ambiguity of subject* (1989:39), his diagrammatic representation of the relationship between a specific text and the contexts of situation and culture- a text contained within discursive practice, which is in turn contained within social practice- seems to have pointed more towards a deterministic relationship between socio-discursive practices and the production of specific texts . Ivanic, drawing on his work, has emphasized the tension between the different levels of the framework (by adding two-way arrows-see diagram in 2.3.1), as has Fairclough himself:

Subjects are ideologically positioned, but they are also capable of acting creatively to make their own connections between the diverse practices and ideologies to which they are exposed, and to restructure positioning practices and structures. (1992a:91)

The *actively creating* here is not part of a romantic notion of an individual producing a unique text. Kress has pointed to the usefulness of Bourdieu's notion of *habitus* for thinking of how any individual subject engages in text production. *Habitus* is the set of dispositions which incline individuals to act and react in certain ways and which are acquired in social context gradually, from childhood through to adulthood (see Bourdieu 1991 chapter 2; see Kress 1996:17). To any act of meaning the individual brings particular ways of meaning associated with her habitus. Creativity in meaning making, then, should be viwed as follows;

On the one hand, it (writing) is 'creative' in that each individual act of writing produces a unique text containing unique meanings to serve a unique configuration of purposes in a unique situation. But on the other hand, those meanings are created within the constraints of a cultural and socio-political context. (Clark and Ivanic 1997: 110)

Taking greater control over meaning making involves becoming aware of the available ways of meaning, in Kress's terms, the *representational resources* (Kress 1996:18). I prefer to use Kress's *representational resources* here (rather than Bourdieu's *habitus*, Fairclough's *member's resources* 1992a:80, or Halliday's *habits of meaning* 1978:160) as this wording can be used to refer both to the representational resources both of the individual and of the institution of HE. Thus taking greater control over meaning making involves becoming aware of both our tacit habits of meaning as well as the nature of the representational resources made available by specific contexts of situation and culture. Moreover, this process of meaning making is not just about making texts, but is also about the making of our selves as a process of *becoming* (see 2.5.3.). More recently, Fairclough has explicitly taken up this post-modern theme of making of the self as a continuous project:

It is now a commonplace that a person's social identity is not unitary but a configuration of identities; so that we can see the external negotiation of difference with others as continuous with- and rooted in- the internal negotiation of difference in the struggle to constitute the self (Fairclough 1996:8)

He points to need for critical discourse analysts to focus on power and *identification,* the making of the self in discourse, as equally important dimensions for understanding texts in social contexts:

Power relations are not suspended while the process of identification goes on. People are trying to locate themselves in relation to structures they are trying to discern, while being caught up in struggles to control and transform these structures (Fairclough 1996:13-14).

This applies as much to our meaning making, as researchers and educators, as it does to the meaning making of others, in this instance student-writers. We need to be aware of the nature and extent of our own agency, the provisional and complex nature of understanding, but at the same time make sense of the world in order to be in a position to act on it. Fairclough calls for *serviceable maps* for us to understand our world, to establish *truths for practicable purposes* (1996.14). This echoes other writers in the social sciences working at combining critical with post-modern insights; for example, the *enabling fictions* of Hesse (Hesse 1994:210), Bizzell's *usable truths (*1990:665*)*. This is both an acknowledgement of the complexity surrounding any attempt to fix meaning but also a recognition of the need to fix our understanding in some way in order to act in and on the world. My aim in this study is to contribute towards an understanding of the experience of non-traditional students and their making of meaning in writing, and in doing so, to contribute to *a serviceable map* of what is at stake in meaning making in HE.

2.4 Literacy practices and *essayist literacy* (Scollons and Gee)

Implicit in a critical approach to language is a critical approach to literacy, where the notion of *literacies* and *literacy practices*, rather than *literacy* has come to reflect a growing understanding of literacy as social practice, and stands in sharp contrast to a dominant notion of literacy, where literacy is viewed as unitary both in its nature and its capacity to represent meanings. Street has critiqued what he calls this *autonomous* view of literacy, with its claims of alleged universal cognitive as well as economic development, arguing instead for an *ideological* model of literacy, where the focus is on acknowledging the socio-culturally embedded nature of literacies (see Street 1984, 1995). Ethnographic work carried out by Heath (1983), Scollon and Scollon (1981)

Scribner and Cole (1981), Street (1984, 1993) and recent accounts by Barton and Padmore (see Barton 1994; Barton and Padmore 1991) highlight the range of practices within and across societies where individuals and groups engage in a range of different literacy practices consonant with their socio-cultural histories, beliefs and interests.

The work by Ron and Suzanne Scollon is of direct relevance when considering schooled or academic literacies in that through their comparative work between English speaking Canadian/North American peoples and the Athabaskan communities of Alaska, they highlight essayist literacy as the dominant literacy practice of schooling in the Western world (see Scollon and Scollon 1981 chapters 3 and 4). Echoing much of Olson's description of what he calls the *essayist technique* (Olson 1977), they point to the ways in which essayist literacy is a particular way of being as well as knowing, consonant with notions of Western rationality:

The ideal of essayist literacy that all meaning resides in the text is of course impossible to achieve. As an ideal, however, it expresses a view of the world as rational and of an identity between rational knowledge and linguistic expression (Foucault 1973). The ultimate knowability of the real world is matched by the assumption of its complete expressability in text. One has only to observe clearly and think clearly, and clear expression will follow automatically. (Scollon and Scollon: 49)

They contrast the knowing and being associated with essayist literacy with the Athabskan way of being and knowing. A significant difference is the centrality of decontextualized display in essayist literacy: that is, the writer is expected to show knowledge, regardless of who the writer is writing to/for. This sharply conflicts with Athabaskan cultural practices, where display is only appropriate where the person doing the displaying is in a position of dominance in relation to the audience. Where the relationship is unknown, the Scollons suggest, the Athabaskan prefers silence. Given that the fictionalization of self (as writer) and audience is a central feature of essayist literacy, writing for Athabaskans within essayist literacy presents significant problems. The Scollons suggest that Athabaskans resist the fictionalization of participants within essayist literacy because it is outside of their *reality set*, thus foregrounding the centrality of social identity for participating successfully in essayist literacy . This connects with Ivanic's work on writer identity and mature students, as I discuss below in 2.6 (see also 6.2.1. for the ways in which particular meanings are privileged in

essayist literacy).

However, there are clearly limitations in working with the construct of 'one reality set corresponds to one culture' given the complexity and diversity of meanings within and across cultures, which the Scollons themselves signal. In order to acknowledge and work with such complexity in meaning making, it is useful to draw on key notions from the work of Bakhtin, which I now outline.

2.5. Bakhtin's dialogic notion of language

The work of Bakhtin is increasingly being used within studies of language (for examples in Britain see MacLure 1994; Mercer 1994; Clark and Ivanic 1997: for examples relating to student writing in North America, see Recchio 1991; Ewald 1993). Although Halliday's work does not explicitly acknowledge the work of Bakhtin, the similarity between Halliday and Bakhtin has been noted by Martin (1993:2) and indeed Halliday has explicitly referred to Bakhtin in more recent work (see for example Halliday 1993b: 35 for comment on Bakhtin *anticipating systemic interpretations of context* through his use of *speech genres*). Fairclough's work draws on him in a range of ways, and explicitly in the notion of intertextuality and interdiscursivity (see Fairclough 1992a, chapter 4, where he points to Kristeva's coining of the term intertextuality and which she in turn had developed from Bakhtin). Whilst acknowledging then an encounter and influence by Bakhtin on my understanding of the nature of meaning making, through reading other writers' work, I want here to return to Bakhtin's texts and to foreground the way in which some of his central notions are useful for exploring the student-writers' experience in this thesis.

2.5.1 The dialogic nature of language

Bakhtin's key notions are both descriptive as to the nature of language as he understands it, and idealized as to how he thinks language, that is human communication and activity, should be. In this sense his is a critical project, setting out to explore both what is and could be, in changed socio-political circumstances. Dialogue as a critical project

involves rejecting the right of any one truth, or right to truth, and thus provides for the possibility of linguistic and socio-political consciousness (see Bakhtin 1981:see also Holquist 1990).

The notion of dialogicality is central to Bakhtin's view on language. His focus is not on *language as system* but language as utterance, thus challenging the dominant Saussurean gaze in linguistics (see Volosinov in Morris 1994: 26). The nature of the utterance is dialogical; utterances are neither unitary in meaning nor can be fixed (as is suggested for example by a dictionary or a traditional grammar) but, embedded as they are in socio-cultural practice, are dynamic in their contribution to meaning making. Of the utterance Bakhtin states:

It is entangled, shot through with shared thoughts, points of view, alien value judgements and accents. The word, directed toward its object, enters a dialogically agitated and tension-filled environment of alien words, value judgements and accents, weaves in and out of complex interrelationships, merges with some, recoils from others, intersects with yet a third group: and all this may crucially shape discourse, may leave a trace in all its semantic layers, may complicate its expression and influence its entire stylistic profile.(1981:276)

This notion of the living utterance animates Halliday's notion of wording-as-meaning, by making the dynamic nature of wording-meaning relationship explicit. Moreover, his notion of the living utterance fundamentally challenges a transmission model of communication, underpinned by the conduit metaphor of language (see Reddy 1979; Wertsch 1991: 72), by emphasizing the socioculturally situated and saturated nature of language:

The living utterance, having taken meaning and shape at a particular historical moment in a socially specific environment, cannot fail to brush up against thousands of living dialogic threads, woven by socio-ideological consciousness around the given object of an utterance; it cannot fail to become an active participant in social dialogue. (1981: 276)

Bakhtin's *utterance*, anticipating the currently more widespread notion of discourses, also problematizes the nature and possibility of individual meaning making (see Holquist's glossary notes, Bakhtin 1981, where he discusses translation of *slovo* as discourse rather than word). Bakhtin argues that although utterances are *half someone else's* it is possible to take control over wordings and hence the possibility of

individual's voice:

It (language) becomes 'one's own' only when the speaker populates it with his own intention, his own accent, when he appropriates the word, adapting it to his own semantic and expressive intention. Prior to this moment of appropriation, the word does not exist in a neutral and impersonal language (it is not after all, out of a dictionary that the speaker gets his words!), but rather it exist in other people's mouths, in other people's contexts, serving other people's intentions: it is from there that one must take the word, and make it one's own. (1981:293-4)

But to take control over such wording, given its dynamic nature, is not an easy task:

not all words for just anyone submit equally easily to this appropriation, to this seizure and transformation into private property: many words stubbornly resist, others remain alien, sound foreign in the mouth of the one who appropriated them and who now speaks them; it is as if they put themselves in quotation marks against the will of the speaker. Language is not a neutral medium that passes freely and easily into the private property of the speaker's intentions; it is populated- overpopulated- with the intentions of others. Expropriating it, forcing it to submit to one's own intentions and accents, is a difficult and complicated process.(1981:294)

There are three points arising from Bakhtin's comments here that I want to highlight for the purpose of exploring the experience of the student-writers in this study. The first is that taking control over meaning making involves consciously **working at** making meaning. I explore in chapter 8 instances of how we engaged in this work. Secondly, meaning making is a process that is never finished and is usefully thought of as a process of *becoming*. I will return to this below in 2.5.3. Thirdly, a significant dimension to meaning making is that it occurs between participants, rather than transferred from one to another, as elucidated in Bakhtin's notion of addressivity, which I now explore.

2.5.2 Addressivity and meaning making

The notion of addressivity is a key dimension to dialogicality. At its most straightforward, it refers to the way in which all utterances, spoken and written, are addressed to someone, and that this addressivity contributes to the shaping of what will be said/written. At another level, addressivity encapsulates the way we use language to mean in a fundamental way in that making meaning always involves addressing- explicitly and implicitly- a person/people, a question or comment.

an essential (constitutive) marker of the utterance is its quality of being directed to

someone, its addressivity. As distinct from the signifying units of a language-words and sentences- that are impersonal, belonging to nobody and addressed to nobody, the utterance has both an author (and, consequently, expression, which we have already discussed) and an addressee... ***Both the composition and, particularly, the style of the utterance depend on those to whom the utterance is addressed, how the speaker (or writer) senses and imagines his addressee, and the force of their effect on the utterance.*** My emphasis (1986:95)

Bakhtin's notion of the living utterance is one in which meaning comes into being *between* participants rather than being transmitted from one to another (see Holquist 1981 :63). In this framework, the real or potential addressee contributes to what can be meant as much as the addressor. Acknowledging the centrality of types of addressivity, in and for meaning making, challenges the dominant way in which the writer/reader relationship's impact on what the writer writes is conceptualised; it is often viewed as an **additional** factor to consider rather than a central role in and for meaning making (Flower 1985:1, for example, writes of *adapting your writing to the needs of the reader*). I have briefly exemplified this in 2.2.3 (adult/child: adult educator/adult) but the importance of addressivity in meaning making is a theme which recurs across chapters (see in particular 5.6 and 6.3).

The centrality of addressivity to language and meaning making at a more abstract and fundamental level, connects with Bakhtin's notion of the living utterance in the way in which all meaning making involves drawing on the meaning making- the voices in terms of wordings beliefs attitudes- of others. Thus in any instance of meaning making, addressor and addressee are to be viewed as being involved in *a chain of speech communication* (1986:91). It is important to note that Bakhtin stresses throughout that in talking of **speech** genres, he is referring to both spoken and written utterances. [1]

The topic of the speaker's speech, regardless of what this topic may be, does not become the object of speech for the first time in any given utterance; a given speaker is not the first to speak about it. The object, as it were, has already been articulated, disputed, elucidated, and evaluated in various ways. Various viewpoints, world views, and trends cross, converge and diverge in it. The speaker is not the biblical Adam, dealing only with virgin and still unnamed objects, giving them names for the first time. (1986:93)

Taking more active control over meaning making hence involves working at meaning making, as I discuss in chapters 7 and 8.

2.5.3 Agency, intentionality and becoming

Increasingly, writer-researchers within the social sciences are working at problematizing individual agency in ways which move beyond any simple dichotomy as presented between subject and structure, discourse and transcendental ego. This is the case with Fairclough's approach, where, as discussed above, he points to the complex processes individuals engage in for the making of meaning and the self (see above ; for attempts to move beyond binary approaches see Lather 1991; Fraser 1991; Barrett 1992). This focus on the processes of making the text and the self is emphasized in Bakhtin's notion of *becoming*. Meaning making for the individual through negotiation of discourses involves the making of the becoming-selves (see Clark and Ivanic for becoming-selves of writers:1997:134).

The tendency to assimilate others' discourse takes on an even deeper and more basic significance in an individual's ideological becoming, in the most fundamental sense. Another's discourse performs here no longer as information, directions, rules, models and so forth- but strives rather to determine the very basis of our behaviour; it performs here as authoritative discourse, and as internally persuasive discourse.
(1981:342)

Briefly, authoritative discourse connects with the more current notions of dominant discourses and available subject positions (for discussion of these see Clark and Ivanic 1997:136-140). Authoritative discourses are ways of meaning and being which seek to impose particular meanings and are therefore monologic in nature. These stand in contrast to internally persuasive discourses which are ways of meaning with which the individual has dialogically engaged, that is, questioning, exploring connecting, in order to develop a *newer way to mean* (1981:346). Bakhtin argues that dialogue, rather than monologue, is the natural and ideal nature of human communication:

nothing conclusive has yet taken place in the world, the ultimate word of the world and about the world has not yet been spoken, the world is open and free, everything is still in the future and will always be in the future (Bakhtin 1984:166)

The question of how the individual can take control over meaning making within this ever shifting dialogic framework is answered with Bakhtin's notion of *becoming*,(see quote above). This emphasis on *becoming* is also central to the work of Freire on

literacy and critical consciousness. He raises questions about how such individual becoming can be facilitated by an other, and in the context of education, argues that active meaning making is facilitated through an approach to learning which is at its centre, problem-posing (dialogic), rather than banking (monologic)

*Problem-posing education affirms men and women as beings in the process of 'becoming' - as unfinished, uncompleted beings in and with a likewise unfinished reality---.The unfinished character of human beings and the transformational character of reality necessitate that education be an ongoing activity.(*1996:65)

In the specific context of student academic, several writers draw on these notions of becoming, of both the text and the self in the processes of coming into being. Bizzell argues for creating an institutional space which enables processes of becoming- *a process of constructing academic literacy, creating it anew in each class through the interaction of the professor's and the students' cultural resources* (1994:274). Work by Clark and Ivanic calls for critical language awareness as the process by which this might be facilitated. I will explore the tensions surrounding attempts to engage in such problem posing in chapter 8.

2.6 Ivanic and writer identity

If writing isn't equated with authorship, why bother to learn to write at all? (Ivanic 1994: 23)

Ivanic has put writer identity at the centre of our gaze on student writing in HE, contrasting this with more recent emphasis on writing processes (see Ivanic 1993, 1998). As she points out, although this dimension to writing is commonly discussed about writers of fiction, it is not usually discussed in academic writing. Yet, as she argues based on an exploration of mature students' experience of academic writing (1993,1998), student-writers' sense of personal and social identity is a significant dimension to their experience of meaning making, influencing as it does, what they (don't) write, and (don't) wish to write within academia. Her work on identity in academic writing connects with Fairclough's more recent focus on *identification*, where the production of texts is also about the production- reproduction, transformation- of the self (see 2.3.3).

Ivanic explores personal life histories as well as specific texts in order to understand why writers write as they do and how personal histories are traced in actual texts. Of particular interest are the ways in which the student-writers take on consciously and unconsciously the dominant subject positions encoded in academic conventions. In her study, she explores the fit that student-writers feel between their discoursal construction of selves within their texts and their sense of real selves (1993, 1998).

Ivanic's position is that students writing in academia have a right to be authors in academia. Being an author involves not least, having a purpose for writing, wanting to say something, having something to say and saying it. Although this may not seem to be a controversial position, being an author is not necessarily an obvious option for students writing texts which are primarily used for assessment of institutionally acceptable knowledge, as is indicated in the talk between student-writer and myself, as tutor-researcher, in chapter 7.

In arguing for authorship in students' writing, Ivanic is not working within a romantic notion of the author as expressing an individual *voice*. She suggests two uses of the word *voice* to foreground the discoursal nature of meaning making. Firstly, she discusses voice in the more traditionally acknowledged dimension, as content- ideas and beliefs- which are bound up with what Ivanic calls, *authorial presence* and *authoritativeness* (see Ivanic 1994; Clark and Ivanic 1997: 152-160). Authorial presence refers to the ways in which the writer constructs her presence (or absence) in her text: an obvious example is whether, and how, a writer uses the first person, *I*. How the writer constructs a presence within her text is closely bound up with her sense of authority- *authoritativeness*- in writing within a particular context, for example in the context of HE. This sense of authority relates to who she is in the text, that is, the dimension of her self (ves) that she decides, or not, to present. For example, in writing in response to an essay question on women's experience in education, does she present herself as a woman (*we*, rather than *they*) and foreground the relevance of her personal experience, or does she present only published authorities? The ways and extent to which an individual presents herself as an authority in her text is influenced, not least, by her belief in her right to see herself as an author- as a maker of meanings- within academia (see Ivanic 1994:21).

The second type of voice which Ivanic discusses is voice as form, that is the discourses that writers draw on in order to make meaning and which constrain and enable meaning making in complex ways (1994). This is the principal focus of Ivanic's research on student academic writing, where she traces the type of identity the writer constructs in her text through her use of specific wordings (see Ivanic 1993, 1998).

In this study where I am interested in what and how student-writers mean within their texts, I am drawing on both of these dimensions to authoring as I outline below.

2.7 Student-writers making meaning in academia

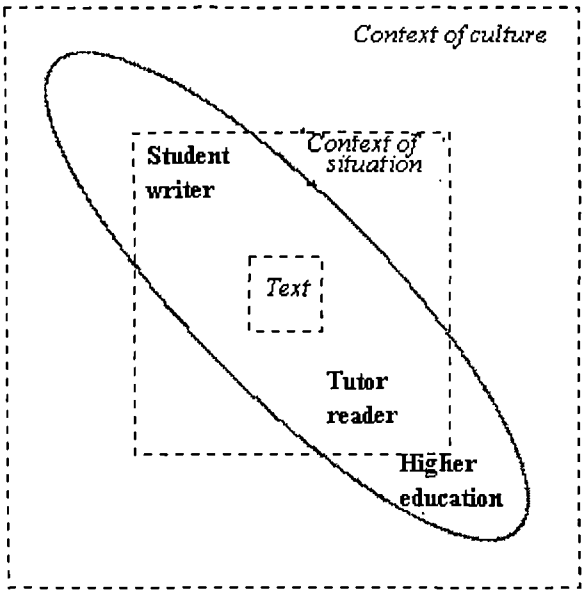
The principal aims of this study are twofold: firstly, to explore the actual experience of 'non-traditional' student-writers in making meaning in their writing in academia; secondly, to explore the ways in which tutor-student talk mediates such meaning making. In conceptualizing the nature of their meaning making, both as currently configured and as potentially configured, I have drawn on the work of the above writers as is indicated in the outline below.

2.7.1 The socio-cultural context of HE

Student academic writing, like all writing, is a social act. It takes place within a particular institution which has a dominant culture, values, practices and beliefs. In the context of writing, the practice of essayist literacy is privileged with its specific configurations of conventions which work towards shaping what it is possible to mean in academia.

I have drawn on Fairclough's elaboration of contexts of situation and culture to explore the nature of the context in which meaning making takes place, as indicated in the diagram below.

The context of meaning making in student academic writing



The diagram locates individual acts of student meaning making in writing within the contexts of situation and culture in HE. It also foregrounds the particular institutional context of culture within which the writing takes place: that is, the institution of HE and its dominant order of discourse. The particular element of the order of discourse which is the focus here is essayist literacy (see 2.4). Whilst acknowledging the diversity across literacy practices within HE, a central argument in this thesis is that it is both possible and necessary to talk of a dominant literacy practice within the institution when attempting to explore the experience of student-writers (for further discussion see 6.2).

2.7.2 Addressivity and meaning making in student academic writing

The oval area in the diagram above points to the significance of the nature of addressivity in and for meaning making in writing, at the levels both of the context of situation and the context of culture.

Individual acts of meaning making are embedded in actual relationships at the level of context of situation. Thus, student writing in HE typically involves a tutor setting a task, in response to which the student must write. In writing, the student-writer must work out

the tutor's expectations in order to establish the meanings which she is to make, which she does in a number of ways, from talking with the tutor to listening to particular lectures. The question of how this **actual** addressivity at the level of context of situation contributes to the student-writers' meaning making is discussed in relation to two dimensions. Firstly, I focus on the ways in which the dominant type of monologic addressivity in HE, as currently configured, contributes to the student-writers' meaning making in relation to the nature of their participation in HE , in chapter 5, and the meanings that they (can) make, in chapter 6. Secondly, I focus on the ways in which alternative types of addressivity might significantly alter the nature of student-writers' participation in HE and, potentially, their meaning making, as discussed in chapters 7 and 8.

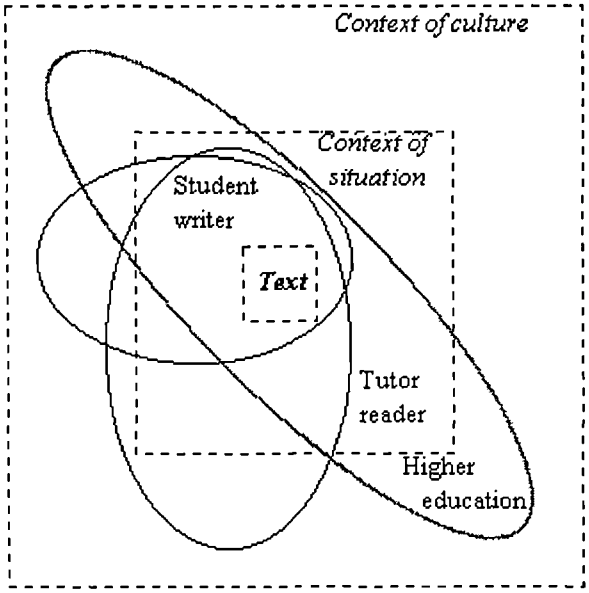
However, what I am calling **actual** addressivity at the level of context of situation is only one dimension to the nature of addressivity in and for meaning making . Addressivity of a more abstract nature, at the level of the context of culture also contributes to individual student meaning making. This includes the voices that student-writers bring with them to their specific acts of meaning making in writing, as well as the voices they feel they must respond to within the context of culture in HE.

The voices that they bring to specific moments of meaning making in writing is perhaps more straightforward to conceptualise, as I outline here. In talking of the voices that student-writers bring to academia, I have found it useful to distinguish between two major types of voice: *voice-as-experience* and *voice-as-language*. The first *voice-as-experience* does not correspond to Ivanic's *voice as author*, which I return to below in 2.6.3 but rather to her notion of the *autobiographical self* (see Ivanic 1994; Clark and Ivanic 1997 chapter 6). In talking about *voice-as-experience* in relation to the student-writers in this study, it is important to stress both commonality and difference: commonality, for example when talking about social class, and by acknowledging structural inequalities in British society; difference in terms of each individuals' specific configuration of life experiences. Feminist and post-structuralist writers in particular have highlighted the multiplicity of our experiences that we draw on and the heterogeneity of our voices (see for example, Weedon 1987: hooks 1994: Griffiths 1995). One obvious example relating to this study is that a mature woman student may

have, as part of the numerous voices, three voices- student, mother, worker- each of which carries different meanings for the individual and each of which she may draw on in her meaning making in academia. Another example relates to political-ethnic identity. The student-writers in this study are from a range of social and linguistic backgrounds. Some students may wish at times to refer to themselves as 'Black Bilinguals', but at other times wish to emphasise their religious or specific ethnic background, such as Pakistani or Yemeni, and/or Muslim. So, by talking about voice-as-experience, my intention is to recognise commonality and difference of experience in what the student-writers bring to their (our) writing.

In talking about *voice-as-language* I am echoing Ivanic's second type of *voice as discourse* (see 2.6) and, as in her work, want to avoid the idea of language as a conveyor of thought (see Wertsch 1991:71-3 for a critique of conduit metaphor of language) and work instead with a notion of language as being socio-culturally situated in complex ways. My focus in this study is not an exploration of the relationship between thought and language but rather starts from the premise of language, thought and lived experience being intimately connected. In doing so, I am drawing on Wertsch and Bakhtin who, in keeping with Fairclough, reject the binary position of language as either transparent or constitutive, and work with the intermediate position of, the *individual-operating-with-mediational-means* (Wertsch 1991: 96). The mediational means which are the focus of this study are the *representational resources* (Kress 1996:18) that the student-writer draws on, and in, her meaning making.

Framework for exploring the voices that student-writers bring/respond to in meaning making



Individual student meaning making , however, as indicated by the diagrams, is not only shaped by the voices the student-writers bring to a specific act of writing, but also by the voices they are attempting to respond to. This dimension of addressivity links with Bartholmae's notion (1985) of student-writers *inventing the university.* That is to say, in order to work out which meanings to make in their writing, particularly as outsiders to the institution, student-writers often have to invent the voices- that is voices as institutionally acceptable content and voices as institutionally acceptable wordings- that they have to respond to. This is necessarily a complex activity. In inventing the institutional voices, the student-writers draw on the voices they bring as language and experience from the many socio-cultural spheres of their lives, as indicated by the numerous spheres in the diagram above. Addressivity relates to student meaning making in, at least, the following ways:

Addressivity and meaning making in student writing

To make meaning in academic writing, the student-writer

- draws on voices as language and experience from spheres of socio-cultural life
- responds to voices within the university, as understood through actual addressivity and cultural/institutional addressivity

actual addressivity *includes*	**cultural/institutional addressivity** *includes*
what the tutors say what the tutors do written materials provided the values, beliefs of tutors, as understood by the student-writer	the institutional practices-including knowledge making practices within disciplines-values and beliefs as understood by the student-writer

Making visible the range of voices, as discussed in this section, in order to take greater control over meaning making is not a straightforward task, as is illustrated in 6.4 and 8.5.

2.7.3 The student-writer as author: tensions

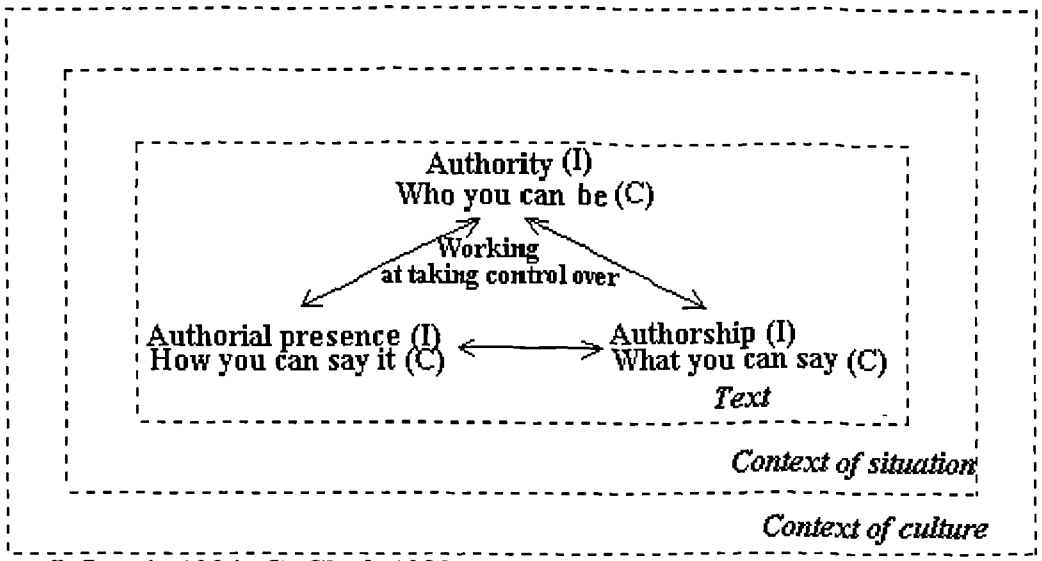
In exploring the experience of student meaning making in academic writing, it is important to be aware of the potential voices that the student-writers both bring and respond to in actual instances of meaning making in the specific context of academic writing in HE. In exploring specific instances of meaning making, I have found it useful to draw on Ivanic's interrelated notions of authority, authorial presence and authorship in relation to specific texts. These three, although interrelated, allow us to focus on the different dimensions of the student-writer's meaning making in written

texts. They also correspond, I think, in a significant way with the three questions posed by Clark for exploring the way in which the institutional context of HE works at shaping these individual dimensions of authoring (1992).

authorial presence	authority	authorship	*Ivanic 1994*
how can you say (it)?	who can you be?	what can you say?	*Clark 1990*

These questions/dimensions to making meaning provide a useful heuristic for exploring actual student meaning making in academia, as I illustrate in chapter 6. They also enable us to explore potential meaning making, that is what the individual student-writers might want to mean in a transformed socio-discursive space.

Authoring in academia



I=Ivanic 1994, C=Clark 1990

As argued by Bakhtin , taking greater control over meaning making - *to populate with intention* (Bakhtin 1981: 293-4)- is hard work. It involves, in the context of making meaning in academic writing in HE, the student-writer and tutor-researcher working at making visible the *representational resources* (Kress 1996:18) of both the institution and of their (our) habits of meaning. Academic discourses need to be problematized rather than taken for granted in order to explore how particular types of knowledge are constructed through particular wordings. The wordings used by the student-writer must

also be explored in order to explore the relationship between her wordings and intended meanings and her ownership of such meanings. The ways, and extent to which it is possible to work at making visible these representational resources through talk between tutor-researcher and student-writers is discussed in chapter 8.

NOTES

[1] Bakhtin (1986) stresses throughout that in talking of **speech** genres, he is referring to both spoken and written utterances. For example, *Special emphasis should be placed on the extreme heterogeneity of speech genres (oral and written): 61* and *Everything we have said here also pertains to written and read speech*: 69.

Chapter 3

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY AND KNOWLEDGE MAKING

3.1 Introduction

My aim in this chapter is to outline the evolving methodology in this project and the nature of the claims for knowledge I am making in this thesis. The chapter is organised into the following seven sections. Section 3.2 is a summary of who the participants are in this project, how we came to be involved and our most obvious interests. Section 3.3, is an outline of the methods which initially guided my carrying out of the project. In 3.4, I describe the evolving centrality of dialogue and, in 3.5, how we practically engaged in dialogue in this project. Section 3.6, is a summary of the quantity of data collected. In 3.7, I discuss the nature of the claims I am making for knowledge in this thesis. Finally, in section 3.8, I outline the ways in which I am using instances of data-experience across the chapters in this thesis.

3.2 The participants and our interests in the research project

3.2.1 The participants

As already discussed in chapter 1, my interests in exploring meaning making in academic writing were grounded in my experience as a student from a working class background and as a teacher/tutor/lecturer working with students from 'non-traditional' backgrounds. The decision to engage in formal research was about wanting to understand more but also about exploring the possibility for change in approaches to the teaching and learning of, and in, writing in academia.

The conditions that I set out for who would participate in the research were as follows; a) that the student-writers be mature women students,studying on an HE level course; b) that they would be willing to give me copies of drafts/final drafts they were writing as part of the courses they were studying; c) that they would be willing to spend time talking with me about the writing of these/some of these drafts; d) that they would be willing to let me interview them about their previous literacy experiences. In the

following chapter I introduce the ten student-writers who took part in this project in more detail, including their experience of literacy practices through schooling and their desires and concerns about writing in higher education. Here I wish simply to outline how they came to be involved in the project.

The ten women students who took part in this project were all studying on HE courses. When the project began, six of the students were studying a Language Studies Certificate course, which is a course validated by a local university and taught through a local college. The course is one year long and is equivalent to year 1 undergradute level (120 credits). It involves modules on linguistics, sociolinguistics and bilingualism. At the start of the project, I was a part time tutor on this course and I decided to ask all participants, both orally and in written form, if they would be interested in talking with me about their academic writing, on a one to one basis. The written information I gave to them on the project at this stage is in appendix 1. All six of the women taking part in the course decided to meet with me to talk about their writing. The frequency and length of our meetings varied considerably (see table in 3.6.1). At this stage in the project, I had hoped to continue to meet with all six students throughout their degree courses. However, for a range of reasons, only two continued with their HE studies in the following year, although several have since continued (see 4.3 for patterns of their involvement in HE).

In the second year of the project I therefore continued to meet with the two student-writers from the above group who were pursuing studies in HE, but also began to meet with four other women who were in their first year of courses on HE. As can be seen from the summary which I gave to these four student-writers (see appendix 1), I was able to be a lot clearer to them about how I viewed our talking sessions. One of the student-writers who began to meet with me was someone I had previously taught; she heard via one of the other students that I was meeting with people to talk about their writing and expressed an interest in meeting with me. I approached the three other students who were about to complete an Access course through a friend who was teaching them and who had talked to me about their success in Access but their concerns about HE. We met and discussed the possibility of meeting as a group; indeed we met several times as a group to talk through their concerns and spent one meeting,

focusing on one particular and common concern; what do tutors mean by *being critical.* However, after they began their HE courses in three different areas- law, social work and women's studies- they felt it was impractical to meet as a group . They also, like all the student-writers in the project, wanted to focus on specific details within their texts which were obviously relevant to their individual meaning making.

3.2.2 Our interests

My interests were threefold. Firstly, and predominantly, my aim was to explore the experience of meaning making of students from social groups previously excluded from HE and for whom going to university had not been considered an obvious post school route. My interest in the student-writers' meaning making was guided by such broad questions as follows: why do they write as they do? how do they feel about what they write- do they dis/like what they write, does the text seem to reflect their preferred meanings? How do they come to learn the conventions surrounding academic writing? To what extent do such conventions enable and/or constrain the meanings they wish to make?

Given that I wanted to focus on details of meaning making within texts, I knew I could only work with a small number of students and would hence take a case study approach (see Reinharz 1992 chapter 9; Cohen and Manion 1994 chapter 5). I decided to work with women in order to focus on their (our) experience as a particular social group who, have historically been made invisible in much research, with men's experience being taken as the norm (see for discussion Stanley and Wise 1990; Robinson 1993), whilst at the same time attempting to explore the specificity of their individual experience (for critique of focus on women as homogeneous group, see Carby 1987: Parmar 1989: Fuss ed. 1992). In relation to the context of higher education, a recurring theme across the literature is the extent to which women feel their previous life experiences are devalued and their personal life knowledge deemed irrelevant (see Edwards 1990; Wisker, Brennan and Zeitlyn 1990). Karach explored this *dislocation* in relation to knowledge making with some reference to language and academic writing (1992). By focusing explicitly on women, I hoped to be able to contribute to an understanding of their (our) experience as meaning makers in HE.

Secondly, as already discussed (see 1.3), I wanted to engage with what seemed to be a deficit approach towards the writing of students. My approach here connects with notions of action research in education, where the focus is on exploring a particular 'problem' in a particular educational setting with a view to acting on that problem (see Elliott 1991; Griffiths and Davies 1993). I felt that by focusing on the student-writers as meaning makers in HE, I would be able to contribute in some way to the naming, and hence, possibly the resolution of the 'problem'.

Thirdly, having taken the decision to devote some time to exploring meaning making in writing and the obvious need to work with student-writers in order to carry out such a project, I was clear from the outset that I wanted to work in a way which would be of some use to those who decided to spend time with me, most obviously for their writing in the courses they were following in HE. My pedagogical perspective involved two specific questions: how, through talk, could we engage in the teaching and learning (of) dominant academic conventions?; and, how, through talk, could we enable the student-writer to take greater control over her meaning making? This project therefore involved pedagogy, as well as research, with a number of tensions which I outline in more detail below.

This third interest of mine connected with the predominant interest of all of the student-writers deciding to meet up with me; although they had different specific interests, they all wanted to know *how to do it right* . For some student-writers I was their tutor assessor for at least some of the time of our meetings. What they expected from me was support and guidance in achieving the assignments set for the course. My more exploratory interests had to take second place on some occasions, when the student-writer's priority was, for example, to work out tutors' expectations around a particular essay question. However, on many occasions the student-writer brought what can be thought as her research issues to our talk: for example, the question of one student, Sara, who raised the question of whether there are significant differences in meaning making if the student-writer is bilingual (see 6.4.7 for discussion).

In order to attempt to respond to our, at times, quite distinct and, at times, overlapping interests, working at developing different types of dialogue was essential. I assumed that engaging in more traditional tutor directed talk would enable the student-writer to learn (about) the conventions for student writing in academia and enable them perhaps to be more successful in their academic writing. Through such talk, I would gain some insight into their experiences in writing (see chapters 7 and 8 for discussion of this talk). However, in order to explore and contest, rather than simply follow conventions, it was important to work at a more collaborative and exploratory dialogue. This second is far more difficult to achieve in a hierarchical institution such as HE; I discuss how we worked at this below (see 3.4 and 3.5).

3.2.3 Problems in naming the participants

As indicated by Sara's question above about bilingual writers, the participation of all of us in this pedagogical-research project research has been, in broad terms, both as researchers and learners. I am most obviously the researcher when I ask questions about why the student-writer writes as she does; the student-writer is most obviously the learner when she asks me how to follow specific conventions, such as referencing, and I explain. But as indicated by Sara's question on sociolinguistic identity, the student-writer has sometimes taken on the researcher role with me most definitely as the learner, as I listen and learn why particular dimensions of experience are significant to an individual's meaning making in academic writing. Giving a fixed name to ourselves as participants in the writing of this thesis thus presents difficulties.

However, I have taken the decision to name the research participants, other than myself, in the project as *student-writers*. I have taken this decision for three reasons. Firstly and primarily, to indicate the nature of the dominant framing of our relationship for the purposes of the project; although we have shifted in our roles as teacher, learner, researcher, I think our institutionally defined roles have, in the discussions on which most of the thesis is based here, remained dominant. This is principally due to one explicit aim of our talk- to teach and learn (of) dominant conventions: as such, we are bound to institutional practices. My intention is not to ignore the many other aspects to the student-writers' lives, or the ways in which we have developed relationships outside

of this research project but to indicate the prominent relationship between us in our relationship around the research process and the writing of this thesis.

The second reason is to respect the right to privacy of the student-writers involved, as I discuss below (see 3.2.4).

The third reason relates to the *textual staging* (Lather 1991:91) of knowledge in this thesis. By referring to the participants, other than myself, as *student-writers* I am choosing to emphasize the commonality of both their positioning and their experience as student writers in the institution of HE. However, whilst focusing on their commonality, I have also aimed to explore aspects of their individual experience. Whenever I am talking about a specific student-writer, I use her fictitious name.

I use three wordings to refer to myself in this thesis in order to distinguish between my different positions in both carrying out the research and in writing this thesis. These are tutor-assessor, where I wish to emphasize that I was also responsible for assessing the student-writer's writing at the time of our discussions; tutor-researcher, where I wish to emphasize that I was not responsible for assessing the student's writing; and thirdly *knowledgeable insider* (after Harris 1992) where I wish to emphasize the way in which I think I was (am) viewed by all the student-writers for most of the time. This last indicates somebody who has been through the higher education system and hence knows about the conventions and practices generally, if not about the specific practices of certain disciplines.

3.2.4 Confidentiality

I stated from the outset, and at many points over the time of meeting with the student-writers in this project, that their personal identity would be kept confidential at all times. Some student-writers stated that they felt this was not important and insisted that I could use their real names in the writing of this thesis and in any possible publications. However, I took the decision to use pseudonyms in all cases in order to ensure the confidentiality promised on the outset. Most of the student-writers, seven, have chosen their own pseudonyms; the remaining three I chose.

I have also worked at maintaining confidentiality of a more fundamental nature in writing this thesis. Whilst I have drawn on what I have come to know about the writers as individuals to explore their meaning making, I have also consciously ignored aspects of their experience which they have either said they did not want included or which I have felt that they did not want included. Whilst this might exclude 'interesting' aspects from an outsider-researcher perspective, it is central to our attempts to work at developing a dialogic relationship around the research (see 3.4 and 3.5 for discussion of dialogue).

3.3 Methods used in this study: starting points

When I began this project, I considered the following as possible useful methodological tools: linguistic analyses of drafts of texts (see for example Ivanic 1993, 1998 where she uses Halliday's grammar as a tool) ; the discourse based interview (see Odell, Goswami and Herington 1983); composing aloud protocols (see for prominent examples of this method in exploring writing, Emig 1971 : Perl 1979: Flower and Hayes 1977, 1981); literacy history interviews (see for example Barton and Padmore 1991; Ivanic 1993, 1998). I was not sure how these different methods for collecting, what I am calling here, *data-experience* would interconnect around our shared and divergent purposes for meeting to talk about writing. My aim was to consider using methods which had been used in previous writing research and which, in combination, might enable me to understand more about meaning making, whilst at the same time enable the student-writers to learn (of) dominant conventions.

All but one of these methods have been used: the method of *composing aloud* was not something the student-writers wished to do, although one student decided to use a form of this method, that is, talk aloud as she was writing in order to focus her mind on her ideas. An extract of this tape is incorporated into a discussion of her writing experience (see 6.3.1). The other methods initially proposed -literacy history interviews, text analysis alongside a form of the discourse based interview- were used, as I outline below.

3.3.1 Literacy history interviews

I carried out semi-structured interviews with the ten student-writers about students' past and present experience of literacy both in the home and in formal institutions of education: these can be located within the research practice of *literacy history interviews.* The interview schedule I drew up was loosely based around Hurst's schedule (1988) but I incorporated questions which would enable us to consider the bilingual/biliterate contexts in which several of the student-writers grew up and currently live. A copy of the interview questions is in appendix 2. The aim of these interviews was both to learn about the student-writers' previous and current literacy experiences, as a step towards coming to understand the nature of the discourses with which the student writer was both more comfortable and familiar and it was also a way of opening up our talk, to move away from our institutional roles as student and tutor.

3.3.2 The discourse based interview

The principal methodological tool used in this project is that of tape recorded discussions around students' texts. I initially drew on the research practice of the *discourse based interview* to guide my thinking and practice of talking with students about specific aspects of their texts (see Odell, Goswami and Herrington 1983). They developed the method as a way of attempting to get access to the tacit knowledge people bring to their work related writing. Their specific focus was business letters. The method involves the researcher identifying specific aspects of a text and asking the writer why they have used these features. The aim is not to uncover mental processes

> *but to identify the kinds of knowledge and expectations that informants bring to writing tasks and to discover the perceptions informants have about the conceptual demands* (228)

Their study involved collecting samples of writing from individuals, looking for variations between texts in an attempt to identify alternatives within each writer's repertoire. They looked for example at the range of ways in which people referred to clients in their writing, by the way in which they signed their names and the phrasing of requests and commands (233). Having identified the range of alternatives, they presented these to the writer and asked why s/he might prefer to choose one of the

wordings, tape recording the session. Their aim was thus to focus the writer's attention on the way in which s/he used different linguistic features in order to encourage her/him to articulate the reason for them and to allow the researcher to gain access to this implicit knowledge. Odell, Goswami and Herrington selected the areas for discussion on the grounds that the writers would not be able to identify points where such knowledge was significant because the knowledge they were bringing to the task was implicit (229).

Although I found the work of Odell, Goswami and Herrington a useful starting point for beginning to engage in this research, in actual practice I have drawn predominantly on their method of talk about texts in a general, rather than a specific way. Thus, although in the initial stages I considered the possibility of pre-selecting a particular dimension and/or discoursal features for discussion, for example, the representation of agency across texts, I decided it was impossible to 'fix' our gaze, given my commitment to pedagogical-collaboration. In this more open-ended framework for talk and given that individual students and I spent up to 8 hours talking about ideas for essays, drafts, final drafts, and problems surrounding the production of an essay, the notion of *dialogue*, rather than discourse based interview, became more central as I outline below in 3.4.

3.3.3 Analysis of texts

I initially had the intention of carrying out substantial linguistic analyses of the student-writers' texts, as a separate activity from focusing on specific features of texts in our talk. Indeed, I have pursued an analysis of grammatical subjects across the complete set of texts of one student-writer, a discussion of which is not included in this thesis. However, my predominant focus on texts has been on texts juxtaposed with talk, as the most useful way of exploring meaning making within the confines of our agreed aims and the practical constraints of time and energy.

3.4 The centrality of dialogue

As the research project got underway, with student-writers meeting to talk with me about their writing, the notion of dialogue became more central as a way of framing the

research process in two ways; firstly, it is a more adequate, although problematic, description of the process in which students and I engage; and secondly, it is the means by which we have worked towards opening up and problematizing the research agenda, primarily constructed by me. However, as I outline below, the dialogue itself has also become a principal focus of study.

3.4.1 Dialogue as process

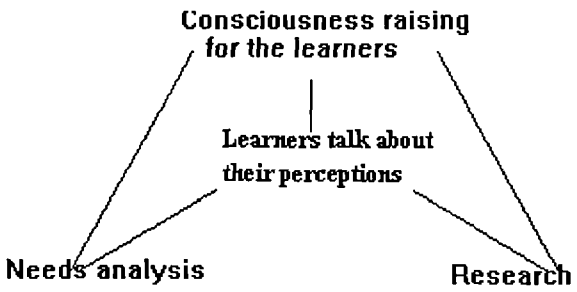
With regard to process, *dialogue* is a useful way of describing our text focused discussions for the following reason: a student and I may for example talk about one aspect of the text on one occasion which is then picked up and pursued by one of us in a later discussion, so that the whole 8 hours spent with one student can be viewed as one extended although interrupted dialogue. The literacy history interview also centres on the notion of dialogue: the literacy history interviews were not only a way of me gaining factual information about students' past and present educational experience but, just as importantly, they provided the opportunity for students to talk about some of their concerns and feelings about being in higher education, which were then raised in other more text focused sessions. These text focused sessions provided a way of focusing systematically on my interests as tutor-researcher as well as opening up the possibilities of what we might talk about. Although there was clearly an unequal power relationship, the critical timing of their involvement in the course -the students returning to education after a long break or for some beginning formal education with new hopes and dreams- and the opportunity for one to one extended contact through the text focused discussions, facilitated the possibility of many informal discussions about subjects important to them and myself at the time, such as schooling, work, family, husbands, marriage, pregnancies, racism and sexism (for critical moments, see Handel 1987; see also discussion in Rockhill 1987, 1993 on literacy and education as critical life experiences in women's lives). I saw, and see, the development of a relationship where we can share our understandings about the world as being crucial in coming to an understanding of how writers view academic writing and as thus leading to more open and detailed discussions in the more text focused sessions.

3.4.2 Dialogue as pursuing shared and different interests: 'needs analysis' and collaborative problem posing

In working towards dialogue, my understanding and practice has been greatly (in)formed by writings on *critical language awareness* (see for example Clark and others 1991; Fairclough ed. 1992b) and more broadly, by notions of *critical pedagogy* (see Freire 1996, orig.1972; 1985). There is obviously a problem in talking about *critical language awareness* and *critical pedagogy* as if they existed as things: they are not things, fixed in time and space for us to 'do', but rather notions of theory and practice recounted in texts by numerous writers for us- if we so choose- to work critically with. Here I focus on Clark and Ivanic's approach towards problem posing (see chapter 8 for further discussion).

Clark and Ivanic's diagram below illustrates their approach to research and pedagogy, linking needs analysis, consciousness raising and research:

Needs analysis, consciousness-raising and research



Clark and Ivanic 1991:183

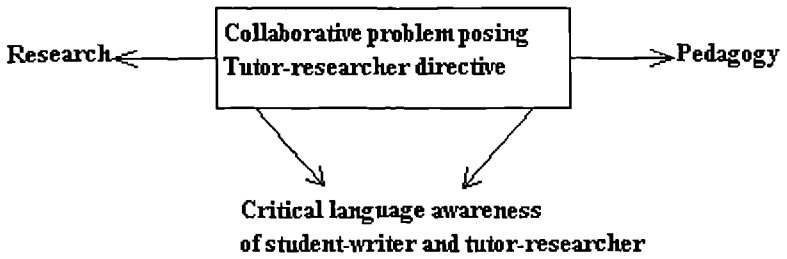
I have found this diagrammatic representation of critical language awareness/research useful. However, it is also limited in relation to my specific research context, in two ways. Firstly, in this diagram, both the needs analysis and consciousness-raising seem to be something that is done by the researcher for/to the learners. Ivanic has more recently critiqued this representation of the processes of critical language awareness and has argued for a move away from 'needs analysis' approach of critical language awareness

towards 'problem posing' (BAAL conference September 1996). This echoes Fairclough's call for critical language awareness of *a sensitive, non-dogmatic and non-directive sort* (1995:231). Secondly, in the diagram the tensions surrounding teaching dominant conventions and critically exploring them are hidden, although Clark has pointed to the existence of such tensions in her pedagogy (see Clark 1992:135). Examples she gives are as follows:

> *recognising the right of the Afro-Caribbean student to refuse to conform to what she sees as straitjacketing practices and the fact that her lecturers find her writing unacceptable; the tension between the ethnocentricity of demanding western-style structuring of an argument and the right of the student to include moral lessons in his writing on nuclear weapons (*1992:135).

In describing the relationships between the positions of tutor-researcher and student-writers in this study, I want to do the following: a) emphasize the tensions between 'needs analysis' and problem posing; and, b) question the assumption that it is only the student-writer whose consciousness is raised. I have outlined these dimensions in the diagram below.

Pedagogical research as needs analysis and problem posing



I return to the question of the awareness that student-writers bring to their writing in 8.5.1.

3.4.3 Dialogue as focus

As well as being the methodological means by which I have attempted to explore the student-writers experience of making meaning in academic writing, the dialogue itself is

a principal focus of study in this thesis. At the outset of the project, I had not intended to focus explicitly on our talk, viewing it as having methodological and pedagogical functions in the project. However, I decided it was important to do so for two interconnected reasons: a) the student-writers' repeatedly expressed dissatisfaction with the lack of opportunity for talk, alongside a desire for face to face talk with tutors about their writing; and b) my increasing interest in the mediating potential of tutor-student talk for teaching/learning essayist literacy as well as for facilitating greater individual student-writer control over meaning making. Taking the decision to focus on our talk as texts involved me taking on, for part C of this thesis, a significantly different role as interpreter than for the writing of part B, as I outline below in 3.8.

3.5 Conducting the research

3.5.1 Meeting to talk

It was agreed from the outset that student-writers would arrange to meet me as often as, and when, they felt appropriate, as their meeting with me was voluntary. However, I did pursue several student-writers on several occasions for the following reasons; firstly, to reassure a student-writer that she was not taking up too much of my time; secondly, in order to arrange specific times to meet when we had only made provisional arrangements; thirdly, in one case, because I was concerned about a student-writer's overall well-being, as well as her academic success.

3.5.2 Opening up the talking space

Given the intricately bound pedagogical and research aims and also the possibility of failing to satisfy either of our, at times quite distinct and at times convergent, interests - with the obvious threat to the research project itself as well as to maintaining relationships- it was important to find ways of practically engaging in both dimensions. How could we get on with the *business as usual* (Ellsworth:1994) of HE whilst opening up our talking space for engaging in exploration?

As the powerful participant with some students-I have also been the tutor-assessor, but with all I have been the *knowledgeable insider* (Harris 1992: 379)- I saw it as my

responsibility to attempt to move us away from the monologue space of telling. The most obvious way of doing this is to ask more open questions in order to move me as tutor-researcher away from my role as talker to listener. Examples are below:

Example 1

T: Do you think it's harder for you than others.Do you think it's hard for everybody?
M: I don't know. Maybe other people will experience it as well, but say, I don't want to use anybody as an example, but say for instance, somebody in our class, like G----- can speak his first language very well, that's the impression I've been given, so maybe he can speak English very well as well. He can write it very well, maybe, that's the impression I get, I might be wrong. But because I can't speak either language very well, I probably, that's probably why I find it so difficult to write standard English. Because I've got like a mixture of dialects, haven't I, the Yorkshire dialect and I've got no standard in a sense, so when I use standard English I find it very difficult to get ideas down properly, I know I can do it and if I hear something that's ungrammatical in English, I can pick it out. But to produce it, get it down in a quick time, takes a very long time. It takes a long time, I have to think about it as well. At one time I used to have problems with the past and present tense. I didn't see it as important because in Creole they don't stress tense. So I used to have a problem when I wrote in English, I'd write <u>wasn't</u> there and <u>is</u> in the middle of a paragraph when I was talking about the same subject when I should use the same tense all the way through. But I don't have that problem so much now. I've conquered that. But it's like each time I start a course or I do some kind of written work I conquer something.(me1disf:376; see 3.6.2 for explanation of data references)

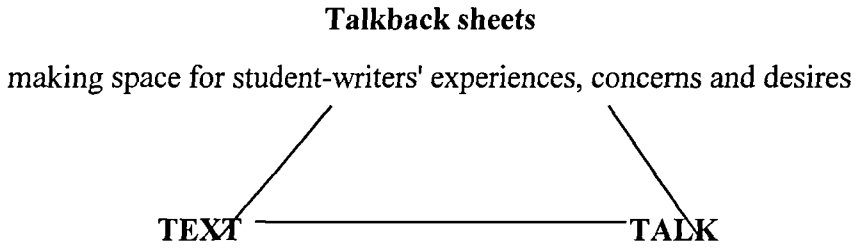
Example 2

T: Do you think the English you use is different from academic English?
K: Definitely. Fancy words for a start, erm...very, I don't like using the word. I don't see why not. I tend to write from a personal point of view. I never see academic writing as personal. It's cold. That's how I feel.
T: Do you feel under pressure to make your writing cold?
K: I don't know, I haven't been here long enough (6 weeks into the course). (KLH:510)

The above question/answers move us a little away from the institutional space of telling. But what is important about these questions and answers is that they are not one-off exchanges between us but become part of shared strands of meaning across our talk. In order to facilitate a more exploratory space in our talk, I made what I initially called 'feedback' sheets which were based on me listening to our taped discussions and identifying from them what seemed to be important concerns but which we had not had addressed. I was not consciously, at the time, using the voice of behaviourism, but, once

aware, decided to consciously call them *talkback* sheets in recognition of my attempt to construct a different kind of talking space (see Bamberger and Schon 1991 for comments on 'feedback').

Constructing an agenda drawn from our conversations was an attempt to consciously listen to what the student-writer was saying and bring her concerns and interests to the centre of our discussions.



3.5.3 The talkback sheets

The talkback sheets moved us away from an assessment perspective on how to do it 'right' according to dominant conventions, which I call 'spaces for telling' towards 'spaces for exploring' (see 3.5.4 below), where we could focus our talk more specifically on the student-writers' concerns and interests in their academic writing.

The ways in which the talkback sheets differ from tutor-assessment feedback can be illustrated by comparing the first talkback sheet I wrote for Sara with the first tutor-assessment feedback sheet I wrote, as tutor-assessor, for her first essay. A copy of her final draft of this essay is in appendix 5. The assessment feedback sheet involved a set of criteria which we had agreed as standard for assessing students' assignments for the Language Studies course.

Example of assessment feedback sneet

EVALUATING ASSIGNMENTS

STUDENT NAME

ASSIGNMENT TITLE language and gender

			TUTOR COMMENTS
INTRODUCTION			
1. Interpretation of question and introduction.	Clearly understands question and gives outline of the content of essay.	(10)	✓ Good - although I think your first two paragraphs = introduction I'd like us to discuss subheadings again.
MAIN PART OF ESSAY			
2. Understanding of subject.	Shows clear understanding of subject area.	(20)	A good attempt. You project draws heavily on Spender and Cameron focusing on the nature of language rather than linguistic behaviour although you do explore this more the second part.
3. Critical approach.	Shows evidence of critical reflection on theory/sources/ personal experience.	(10)	A good first attempt. I think you could have focused on whether language can be neutral and considered your experience as pupil and teacher in more detail.
4. Clarity of ideas /logical argument.	Develops a logical argument. Clear links between ideas expressed in the essay.	(10)	See notes. Some paragraphs/paragraph The second section could be lighter
5. Relevant examples/evidence.	Uses relevant examples from sources and/or observation, experience.	(10)	Good used examples from texts. More examples from experience would have enhanced your essay.
6. Appropriate use of linguistic terms.	Uses linguistic terms relevant to subject.	(10)	Well done. ✓
CONCLUSION			
7. Conclusion.	Draws together the various points made. Highlights key points/conclusions from essay.	(10)	I think we need to discuss this your conclusion could have more clearly summarised the main points made in the whole essay
REFERENCES			
8. References.	References of all sources used in essay given in appropriate detail.	(10)	To discuss. But a good first attempt.
9.	OTHER ASPECTS TO BE CONSIDERED	(10)	

	TUTOR COMMENT
SPELLING-all words correctly spelt.	✓
GRAMMAR AND SYNTAX-no errors of grammar and syntax.	
STYLE-formal style, i.e. no colloquialisms, abbreviations, restricted use of 'I' (writing in first person).	See notes. In some parts you've made 'notes' I think rather than writing in complete sentences.
LENGTH-appropriate length	✓
LEGIBILITY-very clear and easy to read.	✓
PRESENTATION-well presented with use of headings, diagrams where appropriate.	✓ Well done with the wpc.

Example of talkback notes

POINTS ARISING FROM OUR DISCUSSIONS OF DRAFTS FOR ESSAY FOR MODULE 1 sb/tl 15/3/95

1. Using new/different/alternative words. Hierarchy was one word you decided you wanted to use in this essay. In the first draft it looked strange because of the word it was with but in the final draft you used it successfully. You said it was a word you would only use in certain formal situations. Would you use it again and are there any other words like this?
In one instance you used a word institution to refer to things which weren't institutions. Do you feel as if you understand this?
Are you using any new words for this essay?

2. Use of inverted commas. You used them in two ways in your drafts-to quote and to highlight. How will you use them in future?

3. Writing exactly what you mean to say/talk in your writing. There were several examples in both drafts 1 and 2 where when you talked about what you wanted to say, you explained yourself clearly but your explanations were not in your writing. Sometimes there were gaps between what you intended to be understood and what was written down. How can you tackle this in the next essay?

4. Critically reading draft. You said that one way to help avoid some of the jumps would be to get someone else to read your drafts. Are you going to do this time?

5. Paragraphing. In your final draft you split a couple of sections which really would have been better understood if you'd put them in one paragraph. What can you do about this?

6. Where you position yourself in your writing. You said that you preferred to write in the third person, they in order to be neutral about what you were writing. Will you do this in your next essay and where will you fit yourself, your personal experience in?

7. Sentence structure/complete sentence. There was one example of a complex sentence which you found difficult to analyse and correct. This may be something to look out for.

8. Introducing/explaining quotes. We discussed the need for you to introduce any quotes that you use and also to make it clear to the reader why such a quote might be relevant. Do you think you know how to do this for this essay?

9. Linking/cohesion. There were two examples where you used this to refer back to an idea but where it wasn't exactly clear what you were referring to. Perhaps you could check the way you use it in this essay.

10. Referencing conventions. We talked about these quite a lot. Do you feel confident about these now?

11. Grammar. There was one example of you missing out the subject of a sentence. Do you think this was a slip or do you need to look out for this?

It is important to note that I had not pre-planned the use of talkback sheets in the project and I was not working with any explicit model from which to construct the sheets. Rather, I intuitively felt that such sheets would serve as a concrete reference point from which to consider our previous talk and from which to continue our talk for the future. The list is in no particular order.

There are significant differences between the sheets, as exemplified in Sara's above, and as I summarise below.

Differences between assessment and talkback sheets

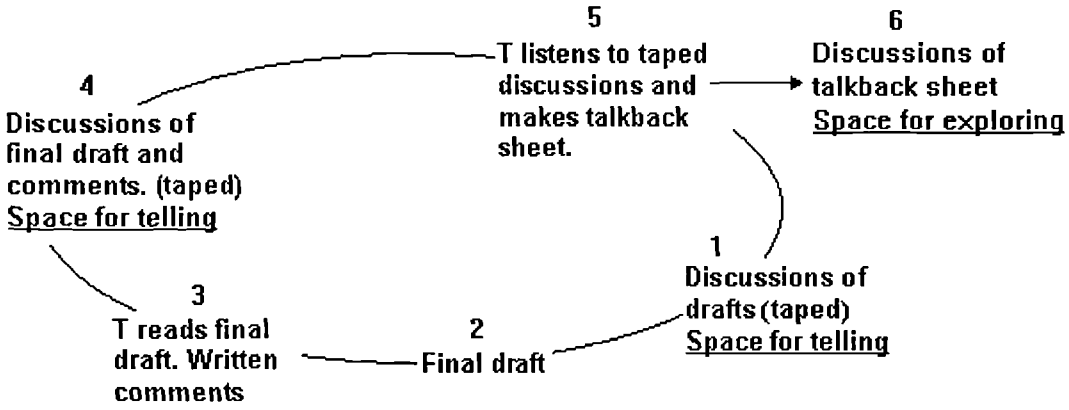
	Assessment feedback sheet ↓	**Talkback notes sheet** ↓
Focus	Text as finished product drawing on tutor's implicit understanding of conventions	The making of the text. What student-writer said about aspects of text
Discoursal features	Evaluative language: *examples-good, well done, very good.* Directives (direct and indirect): *examples- I'd like us, you could have, see notes, more examples would have enhanced, we need to discuss, to discuss.*	Questions about future actions: examples- *would you use it again? how will you use them (commas) in future?* Exploratory questions: *examples- do you feel confident? do you feel that you understand this? are you using any new words in this essay? where will you fit yourself, your personal experience in?*

Although there are overlaps between the sheets- there is a focus on the text as product in both in my reference to paragraphs, sentence structure, cohesion, grammar and referencing- it is possible to see significant differences in predominant focus and discoursal features which both reflect and constitute my attempt to move away from a tutor directed talking space.

3.5.4 The talk cycle

The diagram below illustrates how we organised our meetings to talk around the individual student's writing of a particular text.

Talking about one piece of writing



Thus at 1, we met to either talk about a draft or an idea. For example the student-writer might talk about how she's thinking of approaching the writing of the essay. This stage might be repeated several times, up to four times in one instance in this project, or happen only once, depending on the individual student-writer's decision to meet or not with me. At stage 2, the student-writer gave me a final draft on which I made comments as tutor-assessor, (see assessment sheet above in 3.5.3). Where I was not the tutor-assessor, I waited to discuss with the student-writer the relevant tutor's comments, where relevant. At stage 4 we discussed the assessment feedback. Stage 5 involved me listening to all our tape recorded talk and making talkback sheets, based on my attempt to foreground things student-writers had said which we hadn't had time to consider before and a more general attempt to open up our talk for exploration. The emphasis in stages 1-4 was therefore predominantly on getting on with *business-as-usual* (Ellsworth 1994), whereas the aim of stages 5 and 6 was to engage in more exploratory talk.

3.6 Data collection, organisation and transcription

3.6.1 Summary of data collection: talk and written texts

Below (see following page) is a summary of the amount of data collected, in terms of the number of set assignments discussed and the time spent on discussing drafts towards that assignment. The time given in the table refers only to time spent on discussions about texts that students were writing at the time of our meetings. It does not include time spent in discussing texts from previous courses, informal discussions about writing, either face to face of by telephone, or literacy history interviews. It does not include time continuing to be spent talking with Mary in her third year of study.

The total data collected can be summarized as follows:

Summary of data collection

Total drafts (including final drafts) collected for analysis	Total taped discussions for analysis	Total time of taped discussions
71	81	3355 mins/ approx. 60 hours

I collected copies of all the drafts we discussed, as well as materials provided by tutors and departments in relation to the students' writing, such as essay questions, guidelines on the writing of coursework, background notes relating to the essay content. Some student-writers also gave me copies of essays we did not discuss as well as substantial notes made in preparation for writing their essays.

Spoken and written texts collected in this project

		Student 1 Amira	Student 2 Reba	Student 3 Sara	Student 4 Siria	Student 5 Mary	Student 6 Nadia
	set assignment	number of taped discussions around texts					
Phase 1	1	2	2	3	4	3	3
Oct-Jun	2	3	2	3	2	6	2
1994-95	3	4	1	3	3	4	4
Total time in minutes spent in (taped) discussion		327	170	426	263	407	230

		Student 5 Mary	Student 6 Nadia		Student 7 Bridget	Student 8 Diane	Student 9 Kate	Student 10 Tara
	set assignment	number of taped discussions		set assignment	number of taped discussions			
Phase 2	4	3	2	1	2	2	3	2
Sept-Mar	5	4	1	2	1	3	2	2
1995-96				3	1			
Total time in minutes spent in (taped) discussion		555	195		190	257	140	195

[ ] students involved in phases 1 and 2 of project.

3.6.2 Transcription and organisation of data

During the talk cycles with individual student-writers, my principal aim was to engage in some exploratory talk before the student-writer moved on to her next piece of assigned writing. This meant that the way in which I initially transcribed our talk was governed primarily by time constraints: I had to make a good enough record of our talk in order to be able to focus on potential areas for exploration which we could then discuss, but I did not have sufficient time to engage in detailed transcriptions. Thus, initially I made a combination of broad transcriptions of large sections of our talk as well as detailed notes, as exemplified in appendix 3. At a later stage, when selecting particular extracts from our talk for further analysis and inclusion in this thesis, I made more detailed, although still broad, transcriptions of extracts of our talk, using the following categories. These are the conventions used throughout the thesis.

Conventions used for transcribing talk in this thesis

. , ?	Conventions of punctuation used to indicate in writing my understanding of the sense of the spoken words (see Halliday 1989:90)
T	initial of person speaking
underlining	word stressed
[	overlaps/interruptions
...	long pause (longer than 2 seconds)
(sounds unsure)	transcriber's comments for additional description
*	unclear speech
---	gap in data transcribed

At the time of making notes and transcriptions, I always read and numbered the student-writer's relevant draft, in order to cross reference specific instances of talk on tape with the correspondingly relevant section of the written text. This process can be

illustrated by looking at the notes in appendix 3, alongside the corresponding drafts for one student-writer's essay in appendix 4.

References are given at the end of extracts from written and spoken data, to indicate their source within the general data collection, as illustrated in the table below.

References to extracts from data given in thesis

Be1d2:61-74	= Bridget, essay 1, draft 2, lines 69-74.
BLH196	= Bridget, literacy history, tape counter number 196.
Be1disd1:200	=Bridget, essay 1, discussion of draft 1, tape counter number 200.
Be1disf:10	=Bridget, essay 1, discussion of feedback/talkback sheet, tape counter number 10.
	Fonts used within thesis
italics	for talk extracts
courier new	for extracts from students' written texts

3.7 Knowledge making within this study

3.7.1 Participation and knowledge making

Research practice in the fields of linguistics and sociolingusitics, as within the social sciences more generally, can historically be located within the positivist tradition, where the emphasis is on developing methods for observing reality 'as it is'. The belief in the possibility of seeing and recording the real world led, within sociolinguistics, to an overriding concern with the *observer's paradox* (Labov 1972); that is, the question of how researchers can observe reality without somehow tainting that reality by the very act of observation. A prominent method used in order to reduce the potential impact of observation in writing research has been the use of think aloud protocols (for example, Flower and Hayes 1977).

A significant challenge to the notion that the researcher-observer should be absent from the object of study has resulted from a shift in some studies of language towards

contextual, as well as textual, analyses. In the search for, and of, context, ethnographic methods have been adopted which acknowledge the advantages of the researcher engaging in participant observation. Emerging from anthropology, the function of participant observation is to be immersed in the object of study- the community, practice, institution- in order to gain understanding of why people do what they do (see for discussion Harvey :1992). A significant advantage of this approach is the possibility of *thick description* (Geertz after Ryle 1973), of focusing on details of behaviour, practice and possible interpretations. Numerous studies exploring language and literacy practices have been built around participant observation (for general overview of ethnographic approach in studying language in formal schooling, see Hammersley 1994; for examples of ethnographic studies of literacy see Heath 1981; Street 1984; Barton 1994: for examples of studies of writing in HE using ethnographic methods see Ivanic 1993, 1998; Prior 1994).

Within many of the earlier studies involving participant-observation, the positivist framing of the relation between the researcher and object remains unchallenged: participation is viewed as advantageous in the process of coming to see and understand the object of study, but the focus is still on the researcher observing reality and as knowledge being the result of such observation (see for discussion Harvey 1992). This relation has been challenged, as researchers question both the desirability and possibility of knowledge making premised on dominant notions of objectivity. Thus Cameron and others argue that researchers' subjectivities inevitably influence the research and knowledge making process and that this

should not be seen as a regrettable disturbance but as one element in the human interactions that comprise our object of study (Cameron and others 1992:5)

This is acknowledged in some recent work on the study of writing in HE in England (for example, Ivanic 1993, 1998) and represents a strong strand in composition studies in the US where there is much critical reflexive writing by researchers/practitioners in the field of writing (for examples, see Lu 1987, 1990; Cushman 1996; Royster 1996). Such writers point to knowledge as constructed rather than found and thus connect with the work of writers on the social construction

of knowledge (see Berger and Luckmann 1967), the work of feminist researchers on the importance of personal connectedness in the research process and recognition of personally constructed nature of knowledge (see for example Stanley and Wise 1990: Reinharz 1992 258-267) and the emphasis on the co-constructedness of meaning in work by writers from a post-modern psychology perspective, such as Kvale (1996). A significant dimension to such work is the explicit acknowledgement within their texts of the context specific and provisional nature of the knowledge constructed in the research process and the knowledge as textually staged by the writer-researcher (for example of textually staging a number of truths, see Lather chapter 7).

3.7.2 Participation and knowledge making in this study

In this study, the participants- the student-writers and I- have worked at producing what I am calling the *data-experience* which has become the object of study. The main source of the data-experience is talk about texts which we have generated at specific moments in time, about specific instances of meaning making in texts. The data-experience we have produced is therefore highly context specific; we have met to discuss texts that students were writing for an institution of HE thus a preoccupation, albeit not always explicit, with institutional practices is evident in our talk. The talk has taken place between adults who, by virtue of their (our) positioning within the institution, have focused on them/our selves as students or tutor. By virtue of my position as *knowledgeable-insider* (Harris 1992), and although I have worked at opening up the research talking space, I have directed much of the talk: by asking/raising certain questions I have provided the opportunity for certain dimensions to be expressed and, no doubt, by failing to ask or to respond to certain questions and comments I have closed other possibilities down. Within this institutional space for talk, some student-writers have more actively seized the agenda for talk than others, due to a number of reasons, some of which seem obvious: compare for example the view that such talk is cheating (see Reba in 9.2) with the view that talk is enjoyable and useful (see Mary in 9.3), and the consequent implications of such views for what we do in talk, and hence can come to know in a study such as this.

In relation to knowledge as text, I am clearly the constructor of the thesis presented here. However, my position is not fixed throughout this thesis but can rather be viewed along a continuum of closeness to an observer/analyist position and a more collaborative position as I indicate here.

My position as interpreter/analyst

closer to collaborative knowledge making	closer to observer/analyst
←	→
emphasis on student-writers' accounts	emphasis on researcher's analysis

I indicate how these positions map on to the use of data-experience in my construction of chapters in 3.8.

3.7.3 Questions of validity

Within the dominant dichotomized framework of qualitative versus quantitative research methods, the notions of internal and external validity are called upon to authorize accounts of phenomena under investigation. Within this framework, there are two dimensions which enhance the internal validity of this study. The first is my attempt to make available to you the reader all aspects of the research project in this thesis and which I am doing in the following ways: by stating my personal beliefs and commitments; by outlining the procedures and processes surrounding the collection of data-experience; by describing (see 3.8 below) why I have decided to focus on particular areas of their experience in meaning making; by, in the following chapters, showing my analysis of the data-experience; and, by making clear the nature of the arguments based on my analyses and interpretation of the data-experience. The second dimension to internal validity and which applies to part B of this study, is the involvement of the student-writers in reading and discussing my written analyses and interpretations of their experience. The nature of such *member checks* (Guba and Lincoln 1981) has varied across individuals and specific moments in time: thus for example, on one occasion after reading part of my writing, one student-writer has simply said 'yes, that's how it is', whilst another has agreed but also elaborated in detail why she agrees with the

written interpretation, adding further comments based on her experience as well as being critical of some of the ways in which I have written my understanding.

The claim, within the dominant research framework, to the external validity of this study - the extent to which the understandings generated from this study might be generalizable and applicable to other contexts- is limited. As already stated, this is a small study exploring the particular experience of a group of student-writers at a particular moment in time. External validity therefore lies in the extent to which insights from this particular research site are considered to be useful and relevant to understanding the experience of similar students in similar learning situations in HE.

However, it is important to acknowledge critiques of the notion of *validity* which have emerged in relation to the questioning of the possibility of generalizable truths within any research study, as briefly referred to above (see 3.7.1). Writers, particularly within feminist and postmodernist frames, problematize easy dichotomies- qualitative/quantitative, internal/external, empirical/theoretical, analyis/interpretation, subjective/objective- and have opened up the debate around the nature of validity criteria, depending on the purpose of the research project. One response has been to construct alternative frameworks of validity. This, Lather offers a number of validity criteria which she sees as essential for engaging in praxis oriented research (see Lather 1986, 1991) and Kvale offers a framework which links validity criteria with each stage of the research processes- from research design to the writing of the research (Kvale 1996:237). Kvale moreover, points to the discoursal nature of validity. Drawing on Cherryholmes (1988), he argues that validity is not autonomous from context and what is accepted as valid is dependent on the particular community of researchers receiving the study (1988:240). In this way, validity is not about attempting to judge *correspondence with an objective reality*, but about constructing what count as *defensible knowledge claims* (241) within a particular community.

Based on my understanding of the discussions outlined above, I would argue that I have worked, within the writing of this thesis, at validity as openness, as I summarize below:

Validity as openness

working at opening up....

- the processes of knowledge making
- the beliefs and commitments informing the researcher-author's involvement in the research and writing of the research
- the theories which are informing the analysis and interpretation
- the analyses carried out on the data-experience
- the reasons for focusing on particular dimensions of the data-experience
- the arguments presented on the basis of understandings drawn from the data-experience and theory.
- the ways in which arguments presented can be located within particular debates around student writing in HE

3.8 Constructing a *serviceable map*

By acknowledging the specificity of the context of this research and hence its partiality, I am not arguing for a relativist stance towards the making and presentation of knowledge. The potential for relativism in acknowledging partiality and provisonality is mediated by an acknowledgement of the researcher's personal beliefs and commitments which are closely bound to what she- in this instance, I- see as the purpose of this thesis. What do I want this thesis to do? My aim is that this thesis should constitute a *serviceable map* (Fairclough, 1996) or a *usable truth* (Bizzell, 1990: 665): that is, by exploring the experience of a specific group of student-writers, to construct a map of the workings of the institution of HE in specific relation to student meaning making in academic writing.

I have constructed this map in the following way. My first aim was to present my understanding of the student-writers' experience of meaning making in academic writing. I took the decision when I began to write the chapters to focus on commonality across their experience whilst at the same time acknowledging individual differences within that commonality. On the basis of my working with the data-experience, that is, listening, making notes, transcribing, making talkback sheets, exploring ideas with individual student-writers, I identified strong themes across their experience which I identified as follows:

- regulation, and desire around meaning making
- the mystery surrounding what the student-writers are expected to do in their writing in HE
- desire for a different type of talking/learning relationship around making meaning and learning in general and engaging in talk with me about their writing. This last led me to focus on our talk, as I outline below.

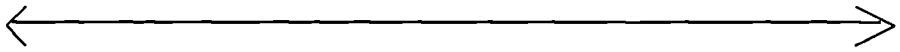
I then selected specific instances from the data in order to explore these themes.

My second aim was to focus on actual instances of our talk in order to explore the function of different aspects of our talk surrounding the students' writing. In selecting specific instances of talk, I focused on our two central interests: the student-writers' desire to learn the conventions of academic writing and my interest to explore the potential of student-tutor talk to facilitate greater individual control over meaning making.

The two principal aims involved significantly different positions for me as constructor of knowledge, as I referred to above in 3.7.2 above and as I outline here in relation to the data-experience used in different chapters.

The use of data-experience in constructing chapters

My position as interpreter/analyst



closer to collaborative knowledge making	closer to observer/analyst
emphasis on student-writers' accounts	*emphasis on researcher's analysis-drawing on discourse categories developed by researchers on institutional/school talk*
Part B (principally)* of thesis	Part C (principally)* of thesis
Aim: to present significant dimensions to the student-writers' experience of meaning making in HE as currently configured	Aim: to explore the mediating potential of student/tutor talk for the teaching/learning of essayist literacy and for facilitating individual control over meaning making.
In chapter 4, I use data-experience from both formal interviews and more informal discussions to write brief accounts of all the student-writers' experience of formal education, literacy and feelings about language in the project. In all cases, the student-writers have read these accounts and suggested elaborations and clarifications of detail which I have subsequently included. **In chapter 5,** I draw on specific instances of data-experience to focus on a dominant theme across the student-writers' experiences: the mystery surrounding academic writing conventions. I illustrate this practice of mystery by focusing in detail on one particular dimension to academic writing- the meaning of the essay question. **In chapter 6,** I use some data-experience from all ten writers involved in the project to explore their experience of meaning making, focusing in particular on regulation and desire. I explore the ways in which regulation through dominant conventions seems to converge and/or diverge with their individual desires for meaning making. **In chapter 9,** I use the comments made by student-writers about student/tutor talk to present their perspectives on such talk.	**In chapter 7,** I draw on specific instances of data-experience from the six student-writers with whom I was also a tutor-assessor in order to explore the following: how what we did in talk enabled them to engage in a particular dimension of essayist literacy- essayist unity. **In chapter 8,** I draw on specific instances of data-experience from several student-writers to explore the potential of talk to enable greater control over meaning making by doing the following: a) foregrounding the student-writer's preferred meanings; and b) working at making language more visible in the meaning making process. .

*all except chapter 9

In organising the chapters in the above way, I hope to have constructed a *serviceable map* of the student-writers' experience of making meaning in writing in HE as currently configured, as well as signalling the ways in which their experience might be transformed through significant changes in institutional practices around meaning making.

PART B: MAKING MEANING IN ACADEMIA

MAKING MEANING IN ACADEMIA

INTRODUCTION TO PART B

In part B, I set out to explore the student-writers' experience of making meaning in academia as currently configured. This involves drawing on extracts from their written texts and our talk around such texts, in order to discuss major themes which have emerged across our talk.

I begin this section, in chapter 4, by presenting accounts of individual student-writer life stories in specific relation to formal education, language and literacy. This is not intended as a background chapter. I argue that coming to know something of their life and language experiences is central to understanding their experience of meaning making in higher education.

The focus for chapter 5 is a discussion of a major theme emerging across talk with all the student-writers and which can be summarised as, 'what do they really want?'. In order to illustrate the difficulties the student-writers face in attempting to work out the dominant conventions surrounding student academic writing, I trace through specific instances of working at making sense of the 'essay question'. On the basis of the data-experience in this project, I argue that an institutional *practice of mystery* prevails which is enacted through the dominant type of addressivity surrounding student meaning making in writing. this practice is ideologically inscribed in that it limits the nature of their participation as *student-outsiders* in HE.

Although the student-writers are unfamiliar with the dominant conventions for meaning making, they are clear that there are such conventions and that these regulate the meanings that they can make. In chapter 6, I focus on specific instances of such regulation, drawing on Clark's three questions which are useful for exploring Ivanic's three interconnected aspects of authoring in academia (see chapter 2.7.3). I also explore the ways in which

individual desires for meaning making converge with, and diverge from dominant conventions.

Chapter 4

THE MEANING MAKERS

4.1 Introduction

This chapter is based on individual literacy history interviews (see 3 3.1) as well as on informal conversations with the student-writers over a period of between one and three years. The brief textual representation of their life experience here is not intended to be comprehensive (see 3.7 and 3.8 for discussion of knowledge making and partiality in this thesis) but rather to provide some insight into who the student meaning makers are in this study.

It is not a background chapter but is central to any attempt to understand specific acts of meaning making. In attempting to explore the nature of meaning making in student academic writing I have argued that we need to focus on, at least, two major dimensions: the representational resources of the meaning makers themselves and those the institutional context in which they are making meaning (see chapter 2). I therefore start from the premise that, in order to learn about the meaning making of the student-writers in this project, it is important to have a sense of who they are and the *representational resources* (Kress 1996:18) they are potentially drawing on. I am not suggesting that it is possible to link in any straightforward way all instances of meaning making with aspects of a student-writer's life and language experiences. However, coming to know something of the student-writers' lives has been central to my understanding and writing this thesis in the following ways.

- In general, my understanding of the writers' lives, prominent aspects of which are in the following accounts, helped me- as researcher/writer - to work towards making sense of feelings and decisions surrounding specific moments of individual meaning making in writing.
- Prominent themes across the accounts of their experience have convinced me of the relevance of constructing the thesis in a particular way: for example, that it is

important to focus on the commonality of their experience as a particular, although heterogeneous, group within higher education.

- Some instances of wording/meaning can be linked to life and language experience in quite straightforward ways, as is indicated in the discussion in chapter 6.

All the student-writers have read the drafts of their stories as written by me here: mostly they accepted the drafts as true accounts but we also made some changes, by adding comments which they felt explained more fully their experience.

4.2 The writers: brief overview

Writer	Social class back ground	First generation at university?	Languages used on regular basis	Age	Qualification/ school	Qualifications post-school	Course/s studying at time of discussions
Amira	WC	✓	Arabic, English	21	2 GCSEs Maths, English	BTEC National diploma-social work.	Language Studies (year 1 undergraduate)
Bridget	WC	✓	English	47	3 O levels- English language, English Literature, Maths	*RSA typing and shorthand: Access (1 year)* to higher education.	*Social work (year 1 undergraduate)*
Diane	WC	✓	English, Jamaican Creole	32		GCSE English language, Child Psychology, Law, Home economics, sociology. University Certificate in Language studies.	Communication Studies (year 1 undergraduate)
Kate	WC	Father studied at university as mature student.	English	48	6 O levels,- Maths, geography, History, English language, French, Biology.	*Qualified general nurse (SRN)/ sick children nurse (RSCH) 1 year Access (Social Sciences) to HE*	*Women's Studies (year 1 undergraduate).*
Mary	WC	Mother studied at university as mature student.	English, Jamaican Creole	21	2 GCSEs- English language, Arts.	GCSE English literature, A level Psychology, SYOC Maths (GCSE)	Language Studies (year 1 undergraduate)
Nadia	WC	✓	Arabic, English	20		BTEC First Aid, Health and Social Work	Language Studies (year 1 undergraduate) also GCSE Maths and English language.
Reba	WC	✓	Sylheti-Bengali, English	20	5 GCSEs- Humanities, Science, Art, English, Bengali		Language Studies (undergraduate)
Sara	WC	Both parents studied to degree level in Pakistan.	Urdu, English	25	6 O levels- Chemistry, Biology, English language, Maths, Urdu, Art.	BTEC National diploma in business and finance	Language Studies (undergraduate)
Siria	WC	✓	Sylheti/Bengali, English	24	3 GCSEs- Science, Home economics, Bengali	RSA typing (II) Advanced Play Workers Course SYOCF (3), NVQ 3 Social Care.	Language Studies (year 1 undergraduate).
Tara	WC	✓	English	36		'Step Forward' 3 month Access course: 1 year Access to HE. course	Law (year 1 undergraduate)

4.3. Pattern of the student-writers' participation in HE over a three year period

Student	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3
Amira	Language Studies	Working as English instructor in community centre/has baby.	Joins a Combined Studies degree course. Has 1 unit accredited.
Bridget	Social work	Continues into year 2 of Social work	Continues into year 3 of Social Work
Diane	Language Studies	Has baby. Spends two years looking after children full-time.	Joins year 2 of Communication Studies degree.*
Kate	Women's Studies	Decides against continuing degree course. Domestic responsibilities. Begins a GCSE Medieval studies course.	Continues with domestic responsibilities. Begins foundation course (part time) in Law.
Mary	Language Studies	Joins Combined Studies degree course. 1 unit accredited.	Goes to university in another town in order to study Psychosocial Studies. Joins year 2.
Nadia	Language Studies	Begins degree in Education Studies.	Decides to begin another degree course, Social Work.
Reba	Language Studies	Works as bilingual instructor in primary school.	Continues as bilingual instructor.
Sara	Language Studies	Decides against continuing studies in HE.	Has baby, domestic responsibilities. Begins Islamic Studies correspondence course.
Siria	Language Studies	Works as bilingual instructor full time. Youth work.	Continues work in school and youth work.
Tara	Law	Continues Law	?

* This is her Year 4

4.4 The student-writers

Throughout these accounts, I use the present tense to indicate information, (for example, age) and comments (feelings about language/s) which were correct at the time of the literacy history interviews. The literacy history interviews from which these accounts are mainly drawn took place during the first year of our meeting together.

4.4.1 Amira

4.4.1.1 Language, learning and schooling

Amira is a 21 year old woman from a Yemeni background. She is married and has one young child. She was brought up in a bilingual household where Arabic and English were spoken on a daily basis and where much codeswitching went on. She feels equally comfortable when talking Arabic and English, but feels that she is more competent in reading and writing in English than in Arabic. She feels positive about being bilingual which she sees as an advantage.

She remembers from an early age being told stories both in Arabic and English. Many letters arrived in Arabic, the only English ones being bills. She went to a white monolingual primary school. She loved primary school and remembers doing well, receiving many certificates for her success in different subject areas. She learned to read and write in English at state school. She also attended Arabic classes for two years but feels she didn't learn much. Her mother taught her how to read and write in Arabic at home. She would like to improve her written Arabic but currently does not have the time.

Her success at school changed when she moved to the *posh* white secondary school. Although in her third year (Y9) it was estimated that she would pass all her GCSEs with grade B, she only passed Maths and English.

At primary school they were always encouraging you. But at secondary, I don't think they were bothered. There were too many pupils anyway.(LH: 178)

Although at third year (Y9) it was estimated that she was heading for Bs in every subject, she passed only Maths and English.

I never used to go to school, I was a nut! I used to go to my friend's house which was up the road. And the teachers, I don't think they cared, because everybody was wagging it, so they never used to check. I mean, they knew I was never in a lesson. I think the school should have taken more care. At 15 or 16, you don't realize what you're doing. I think they should have rung my parents up. At least that would have made me go to school. But they didn't do anything. (LH:194)

Of her future at that time

A: I wasn't thinking about doing anything. I was thinking about getting married (laughs).
T: That was what you wanted to do?
A: I don't know about 'wanted to do', but I knew for a fact that in our culture, we were going to get married sooner or later. I didn't know <u>*when*</u> *but I knew sooner or later and I didn't even need a certificate.*
T: And do you think that had an effect on your studies then?
A: Probably yeah. I was an idiot, because I needed them (qualifications).
T: But what's made you change your mind now, then?
A: Because I need it, I <u>*need*</u> *to have a job, I* <u>*need*</u> *to...and my husband, he* <u>*wants*</u> *me to study, he doesn't want me to sit at home. I mean, I might enjoy sitting at home* (laughs). *I don't mind. But he wants me to study. He says there's no point in staying at home and wasting your time. Because he regrets that he dropped out of school.* (LH: side 2:20)

On leaving school she *just passed* her BTEC in social work; she was still spending a lot of time *messing about.* She then got married in Yemen where she planned to live but, due to illness returned to England. She decided to return to studies and on advice from the community centre where she now worked, joined the level 1 HE course which leads to a University Certificate in Language Studies, as well as offering the opportunity to continue to degree level. However, Amira was unclear as to where such a course might lead her:

I didn't see it as taking me anywhere. I didn't know nothing about the course. I just wanted to do a certificate so I wasn't wasting my time. I kept saying to A (co-ordinator of centre) *find me a course to do, anything.* (LH:261)

4.4.1.2 Language, writing and higher education

Amira expressed concern about having to write *more academic English* which she felt was at a *higher level* than the English she would normally use. Her decision to deal with this, by seeking out more formal words from books she is reading relevant to the area, as well as using a thesaurus and dictionary, was a focus for our talk. Her principal concern, however, was to work out what the tutor expected.

Texts discussed over one year

Text 1	Text 2	Text 3
Language studies 1500-2000 words. a)Drawing on your reading, explain some of the ways in which research has shown linguistic behaviour to be gender related. b) Drawing on your experience in education, discuss how relevant you think an understanding of gender and language is to teaching.	Language studies 1500-2000 words. What does codeswitching tell you about a bilingual's linguistic competence?	Language studies research project 5000. Patterns of code-switching in Arabic English bilingual communities.

4.4.2 Bridget

4.4.2.1 Language, learning and schooling

Bridget is a 47 year old white woman from a working class background. She lives with her husband and daughter who is 17 years old. Before beginning her course leading to a B.A. in Social Work Studies, she had successfully completed an Access course.

Bridget remembers little about her primary schooling except that her older brother encouraged her to read and write and, unlike their parents, thought highly of studying. Bridget unexpectedly failed the 11 plus and, although initially disappointed, was

pleased to be going to the brand new secondary modern school. She enjoyed English and was interested in learning in general. However, continuing education after 16 was never an option, and university was well out of sight:

It never came into it. For a start, my parents couldn't afford it. And also, girls just weren't pushed to go into university. And if you went to secondary modern it wasn't mentioned. No possibility at all. (LH:87)

On leaving school at sixteen with 3 O levels, Bridget went to secretarial college for a year and then began work in a chartered accountant's office. She had been pleased to get this job, considering it to be a *decent job.* After marrying, she and her husband ran a small business successfully. During this time she had a daughter and as well as having the main responsibilities for house and children, did the administrative work for the business. After twelve years, they abandoned the business when her husband became ill. This left Bridget to make a decision about looking for paid work elsewhere. She did not want to start at the bottom with people telling her what to do after running a business for so long, so she decided to go to college. Although she had an idea about studying social work from the moment she thought of returning to study, she only considered this a realistic proposition towards the end of the Access course:

The time came to fill in these UCAS forms and I thought, what am I doing here?...And then I thought, well nothing to lose, why not? (LH:133)

To large extent, university was still a distant place:

I think because before university always seemed so far off, you always thought that the standard was way above your head and you could never get to that standard. (LH: 196)

Although uncertain of her capabilities, Bridget, like others, talks of herself as being *hooked on learning* (for example, see Kate below).

the more you do, the more you want to do. (LH: 146)

4.4.2.2 Language, writing and higher education

Bridget felt reasonably confident after successfully completing the Access course that she knew how to structure an academic essay, and had learned the conventions of referencing. However, she felt that her writing was not *academic,* even though tutors on the Access course had reassured the students that using language they felt comfortable with was acceptable in the institution.

They always said to us, 'just try and use simple language. Don't try and use words you don't understand'. But I always thought that the way I wrote was not what they expected, not the academic standard. (LH:181)

Although in her first year in HE Bridget had a sense that her written language was too simple, she also felt that the tutors were more interested in the content of her written work than her use of *big words.*

She had two main concerns at the beginning of and during her first year: how to work out what tutors are really looking for in the essays/written; and, what is meant by being 'critical'. The first, as for many students, was her concern, the second became one of her concerns because of tutors' comments.

Texts discussed over one year

Text 1	**Text 2**	**Text 3**
Law 2000 words. Discuss the view that the law on marriage and family life has developed historically in ways which accurately reflect changing attitudes in society at large.	Sociology 1500 words Compare and contrast consensus and conflict models of society.	Professional development. 1500 words. Case study given . Students case studies from perspectives of sociology, social policy, psychology.

4.4.3 Diane

4.4.3.1 Language, learning and schooling

Diane is a Black, working class woman of 32 years of age, living with her three children aged 2, 5 and 13. She describes herself as bilingual in English and Jamaican Creole, although until recently thought of the language she spoke at home as *broken English* , which is what she was told by both parents and her school teachers.

Although Diane remembers enjoying primary school, things were very different at secondary school where she felt a gulf grow between her and the teachers. She increasingly lost interest:

I can remember writing stories and I'd think oh that's really good that. But they (teachers) *never thought it was good. I never really understood what was wrong with it. But I was bad at school anyway. I never paid attention. I was just rebellious for some reason.*(LH:162)

Her mother died when she was twelve which she feels contributed to her general sense of being lost;

I don't know where I was to be honest. I weren't even thinking of having babies, I didn't think about having babies or getting married, anything like that. I thought about meeting pop stars and things like that...fantasies about meeting Michael Jackson.(laughs) (LH side 2: 8)

She, along with a small group of girl friends, missed lots of lessons; when they did attend, they spent time gambling at the back of classrooms. It was in her final year at secondary school that Diane suddenly realised that school was coming to an end and that she should think about gaining some qualifications. But it was too late. She left school, without any qualifications.

On leaving school she did a YTS (Youth Training Scheme) in catering, which she hated. After this she joined PATH (Positive Action Training Scheme aimed at young Black people) which re-awakened an interest in learning. While on placement in a central

information service, one of her tasks was to bring some of their information up to date, which involved listing interest groups in the local area and their addresses:

I thought to myself, Gosh, I really don't know a lot! There's lots of things I don't know, even in updating their system. I mean, I never recognized it before, but I do now. Even in updating their system like, I had to phone round different places and find out information. I never knew those places existed. I thought, when have all these things been happening? Things like, like ombudsman for this, like even a women's choir group. I thought all these things are going off...I thought God, I didn't know these things were about. I thought, I'm not living. (LH :290).

Diane left the PATH scheme because she was pregnant. She decided to look after her child full time until he was five years old- school age- but was also determined to continue studying. She went to adult education classes to study for GCSE English. She failed this at the first attempt but, after pursuing the reasons why she failed- the tutor told her it was because of her grammar and punctuation- sat the exam again. She passed her English language, as well as psychology, sociology, home economics and law. She later decided to study the level 1 course leading to the University Certificate in Language Studies, both because of her interest in language in general and the opportunity if offered for going on to complete a teaching degree.

At school the idea of study and university were distant and, in her second year in higher education, Diane still felt an outsider to university. She thus appreciated lecturers who attempted to bridge the gap between her and the institution. She identified two ways which make her feel more comfortable: when lecturers acknowledge cultural and ethnic diversity, particularly when they do so in ways which are specific to her identity, for example Rastafarianism; when lecturers acknowledge the *real world,* the world outside the university, for example, by commenting on something they have seen on television the night before. This helps her to feel more at ease as a Black woman in HE and to feel more able to accept what she sees as being on offer: the opportunity to learn.

4.4.3.2 Language, writing and higher education

From her adult education course, Diane learned that she had interesting ideas in her writing but that she wasn't using standard English grammar and punctuation. Although

she had recollections of this dimly from school, she only began to make sense of it during her adult education classes. She still feels she must be careful with her grammar and punctuation.

She feels that the language used in higher education is only a bit different from the English she would generally use and feels that the tutors generally encourage students to write using language they feel comfortable with. However, she has concerns about the way some tutors respond to her in face to face situations, failing to listen to what she is saying because of being preoccupied with her presence as a Black Rastafarian woman:

I think...I don't know. I think that because they think I'm going to speak, to say something different, they don't understand me, do you know what I mean? (laughs). *Honestly, before I finish saying something sometimes, they say pardon, could you explain that again? And I think Did I just say that? What did I say?. I think they go a bit brain dead until they actually hear me start speaking and then they've missed the first part so I've got to say it again. I think they think I'm going to come out with something in Patois. I don't know.* (LH side 2:31)

She says she too *mishandles* communication with tutors because of her expectations that at university things must necessarily be more complicated than they might appear:

like sometimes, I don't take things as simple as they are. Because I think, well, this is a university and it's all hyper-glorified (laughs)...*They could say it in simple words but of course they've got to say it in a certain way. I'm enjoying it though. Like I always think it's above my head, more complicated than what it is. It just goes in wrong sometimes and I think oh this and this and this. And it's not. It's quite simple.* (LH side 2:61)

The main focus of our talk was trying to establish what tutors were looking for in her essays.

Texts discussed over one year

Text 1	Text 2
Communication Studies 2000 words The analysis of interpersonal communication illustrates the pattern of power in society at large. Discuss with reference to either gender or ethnic identity	Communication Studies 2000 words It is not enough to show that stereotypes exist in the media; we need also to show their causes and effects. Discuss with reference to media portrayal of ONE of the following; industrial relations, women, black people, deviance.

4.4.4 Kate

4.4.4.1 Language, learning and schooling

Kate is a 48 year old white woman with working class roots. When I met her she was about to embark on a B.A. in Women's Studies, after successfully completing a one year access to higher education course. She is a mother of three children- aged between 16 and 22 - and lives with her husband.

She had trained and worked as a nurse after leaving school but she left her job after her second child was born. When her third child was born, her father became ill with Parkinson's disease and Kate spent twelve years helping her mother to care for him, as well as holding the main responsibilities for her home and her children. Towards the end of her father's illness, Kate, feeling a need of an escape, decided to go to a day class. She chose to study a GCSE in music appreciation which enabled her to share in one of her daughters' love for music. This first taste of learning after many years of caring for those around her was a significant experience:

After that (music course) *I was hooked. I knew these Access courses were available. I wanted to carry on somehow. I hadn't a clue what I wanted to do. I knew I wanted to study, I knew I wanted to do more. But I hadn't a clue. And I still haven't really, haven't really made up my mind.* (LH: 339)

Of immense importance to her during the Access course was the module on Women's Studies and which led her to choose to study Women's Studies at university. Of her experience of studying Women's Studies to date, she says

It's answered an awful lot of questions. All my life...an awful lot of questions it's answered, Women's Studies. It's been really good. I was completely as green as grass, naive. It was like, suddenly having your eyes opened, honestly. Just amazing. And all the guilt I've felt, that's gone. A tremendous amount of guilt of not being happy, you know, of wondering why are you like this. That's all gone. It's wonderful. (LH:423)

However, although Kate was *hooked* on learning, and chose an area of study Women's Studies which was of great personal significance to her, she was less sure about studying in an HE institution, feeling that she did not fit in mainly because of her age. She also lacked confidence in her ability: she described her achievement of 6 O levels at schools as *nothing special* . She suggested that this seemed to reflect her overly critical father which had left with her a sense and a fear of failure in academic tasks. Her father had been successful at university as a mature student after working for many years as a coal miner, and eventually became professor in mining engineering. He had worked extremely hard for such success and his expectations of, and for, his children were very high.

When she began the women's studies course, then, Kate was hopeful and enthusiastic about the potential learning experience, but unsure of her ability and anxious about failure. There was little outside support from friends and husband for her new venture. When a tutor made the error of failing to record the mark for Kate's first assignment on the exam sheet (she had been given 64 and was very pleased) Kate was recorded as having failed an assessment. She only found this out when the head of department asked why she had not completed the assignment and whether she was planning on leaving the course. Kate felt she could no longer continue with the course. No apology was given to her and the tutor who made the mistake made no attempt to contact her to discuss the error. This made Kate feel that she was not being taken seriously and she decided to leave the course. She was extremely upset and disappointed at the time.

Kate is still committed to learning but this stage feels she wants to be able to take more control over her learning by choosing specific courses to study. Currently she is studying GCSE medieval history in an evening class. She is also responsible for the home and her children.

4.4.4.2 Language, writing and higher education

Although Kate lacked confidence in her ability in general, she had always felt confident in her use of English and felt that she used standard English in writing well. Although difficult, she preferred writing in general to talking, feeling more comfortable with this mode of communication. Her concerns about writing in academic context were to do with clarifying some specific conventions, for example, referencing. A more significant concern to her was the academic practice of writing impersonally.

I tend to write from a personal point of view, I never see academic writing as personal. It's cold. (LH: 508)

The question of how and when she might write more personally in her academic writing was a major focus of our discussion over the year that we met.

Texts discussed over one year

Text 1	Text 2
Women's Studies 2000 words 'Women need to be put back into the study of politics. However, politics as conventionally defined, cannot help but exclude women'. Discuss.	Women's Studies 2000 word project Women's work or jobs for the boys too! (group selected research project

4.4.5 Mary

4.4.5.1 Language, learning, and schooling

Mary is a 21 year old Black working class student. During the first year of our talking about her writing, she was studying a Language Studies course and also working as a part time support teacher in a primary school. She currently lives with her partner in London, where she is studying.

She speaks English and Jamaican Creole. She speaks English on a day to day basis but feels more competent and confident in her Creole which she uses with other speakers of Creole who she feels close to. She feels she is a more competent reader and writer in English than in Creole.

She was brought up in a household where predominantly Creole was spoken- by mother, grandparents, uncles and aunts. She feels very positive about this experience and continues to read and write poetry in Creole. Her mother also taught her to read in English at home and Mary remembers feeling very bored for the first two years at school:

I think school slowed me down. Because they weren't pushing me. The level of...look, what I knew before I went into school, it wasn't developed or advanced. It was like they kept me at a certain pace with some other kids who didn't know how to read or write. (LH:74)

She remembers enjoying school between the ages of 7-11 when she felt she gained confidence and was successful. At secondary school things changed:

I remember being quite good at English at school, in the junior school, but as I got to secondary, that's when things went right to rock bottom. I were put in the low set for everything---so I thought, forget it. I'm going to come here and mess about basically. Because I think it's like, once I took an exam and it was like a Maths class and when you wanted help, they never used to explain to you, they just used to, 'get on I've told you' sort of thing. And you know, they never used to give you that extra little bit of time because I was never brilliant at Maths, I just fell behind from then. I was frightened of the teacher anyway and I didn't trust him. I thought he's going to bite my head off. I

*were really reluctant to ask for help. I just thought...a lot of the teachers were very unapproachable.(*LH:150)

She left school with two GCSE A-C passes in English language and art. She went to FE college to re-sit her exams but did little: there was too much freedom and she was unable to settle to studying. She was also concerned about finding paid work in order to contribute financially at home. The following year she began two A level courses- English language and psychology. She failed English but passed psychology. She felt she had received mixed messages from tutors about her writing: in psychology her writing was acceptable to the tutor, in English it was not. The English tutor told Mary that she had *an odd odd way* of expressing herself, and that her writing was *hard to fathom.* Mary had no real sense of what the tutor was unhappy with or what she should be trying to do to improve.

After her two year experience at FE college, she began to think about the possibility of going to university.

T: So, what do you think made you think that then?
M: Er, well I'd matured a little bit. I wasn't interested at all at 16. I matured a little bit and I thought well, I've got a long line ahead of me, I suppose. And I thought, well I've got to sort myself out...not many black people go to university in Britain (laughs). *Anyway, and I thought oh gosh, what's it going to be like? I just don't think it was the place for me, definitely not.*
T: But then at 19 you thought well it could be a place for me.
M: Yeah it could be a place for me. I used, I always thought I was really stupid. I thought I can't do this, I can't do that, I can't, can't can't. But then I thought well my mum can do it.(LH:340)

When we first started meeting, Mary's mum was in her final year of a degree in communication studies. She had done an access course in her mid thirties and was the first in their extended family to go to university.

4.4.5.2 Language, writing and higher education

When we first met, Mary was anxious for a range of reasons about writing at university. She was worried about having to use standard English: although Creole *keeps her alive* she had a feeling that her standard English might have been better if she had not been

brought up using two non-standard languages, Creole and Yorkshire English. Moreover, the English A level tutor's obscure criticisms of her writing were strong in her mind and had left her with a general concern about her grammar, although she did not know what exactly this meant.

She had a general sense of not being able to express herself in her writing, and said she had *deep concerns* about writing at university.

I can write pretty reasonable, but I have to really, really think. It's like something that's, disembodied. It's not even me, it's like a totally different dimension altogether (laughs). *You know, it's not natural, it doesn't come out naturally at all. It's not natural, not at all and that's why it takes me so long.* (LH: side 2:20)

She feels that writing at university is particularly difficult because of who she is: a Black working class student. Of a white middle class student whose writing she had read, she says

He doesn't have to make a switch. It's him you see. Whereas when I'm writing I don't know who it is (laughs). *It's not me. And that's why I think it's awful, I think it's awful you know. It's not me at all. It's like I have to go into a different person. I have to change my frame of mind and you know, my way of thinking and everything. It's just like a stranger, it's like I've got two bodies in my head, and two personalities and there's conflict.*(LH: side 2:54)

Mary and I continued to meet for three years o discuss both her writing and, sometimes, my own writing.

Texts discussed over two years

Text 1	Text 2	Text 3	Text 4	Text 5
Language Studies 1500-2000 words. Basil Bernstein and linguistic codes. a) Explain Bernstein's concepts of 'restricted' and 'elaborated' codes and outline some of the criticisms made of these concepts by other writers. b) Drawing on your experience in education, discuss how useful or otherwise you consider Bernstein's notion of two linguistic codes to be for generating understanding about the relationship between language and schooling.	Language Studies 2000 words What evidence is there to support the view that bilingualism has a significant effect (positive or negative) on cognitive development?	Language Studies project 5000 words The dependence of code switching upon situation and context.	Sociology 2000 words Does the term 'underclass' adequately describe the social position of ethnic minorities in Britain?	Sociology 2000 words Is there an underclass in Britain?

4.4.6 Nadia

4.4.6.1 Language, learning and schooling

Nadia is a twenty year old Arabic English speaker from a Yemeni background, who has lived in England all her life. She currently shares a house with four people in London where she is studying.

Nadia was brought up in an Arabic speaking environment, both at home and in the wider community. She also attended Arabic literacy classes from the age of 10 to 16, when not liking the strict regime, she stopped attending classes.

She feels that she speaks neither standard English or standard Arabic well and this is a direct consequence of her learning two languages as a young child:

Because I remember when I were at school and at home, we used to be at home learning Arabic, the alphabet, and I used to be at school and they used to teach English grammar, and I kind of got them mixed up. And I think from that that's how I think my English and Arabic has come to so bad a level. And you probably think I'm just criticizing, but I think that because I've been taught two languages at the same time I think that has affected me, the way I write, the way I speak and the way I pronounce and spell things.(LH: 40)

Although she feels it is good to be able to speak two languages, she also feels she would have been more competent in English and been more successful at school if English had been her only language. She found school both primary and secondary, difficult and never dared to ask questions about what she didn't understand in lessons. At fourteen years of age she was put in a group of children with reading difficulties but felt that the lessons did not help her to improve:

Right until now I think it's awfully hard. It's really, really...I think it's affecting me now and plus the previous years. I think it's awfully hard. I used to cry, you know spelling tests, I used to cry because I couldn't spell. And they were only simple words. (LH:122)

She never considered university an option. On leaving school she went to college to study for a BTEC in First Aid, Health and Social work but had a serious road accident six months into the course and did not complete it. However, she returned to college and did a BTEC first in social work which she really enjoyed. At 18 she had an arranged marriage which ended in violence after several weeks. She spent four years sorting out a divorce.

She decided to start a higher education course whilst working as a bilingual support teacher in a primary school. Although she had not thought of herself as capable of going to university during her school and college years, she had begun to change her mind after she got married:

After I got married, I knew that I didn't want to be studying for the next 30 years and not getting anywhere. I thought I don't want to go through every job, I've got to pick something now, this is the time. And I thought I've got to do it for myself and for the kids, so they can think mums done this, so it gives them a bit of encouragement.(LH side 2:10)

When we first starting talking about her writing she was studying Language Studies and also studying for GCSE Maths and English.

4.4.6.2 Language, writing and higher education

Nadia was worried in general about her ability to express herself clearly in English and very concerned about the language she would be expected to use for higher education.

N: *I think it's totally different.*
T: *In what way?*
N: *The words. My English and that degree English is totally different*
T: *What do you mean about words?*
N: *Actual words meaning. Like one big word may sound, may mean something similar to something else... I think my English has got to be a thousand times better than what it is now to be at university.*
T: *Does it worry you?*
N: *Yeah, I think it's a big problem actually. I think I'm going to have to change the way I put words together to form a sentence... definitely. I've been thinking about that, about how am I going to do that. Go to the lessons, do my best go for extra help in English.(*LH side 2:60)

The question of whether she should use her own words for writing in her academic essays was a major issue for us in our discussions.

Texts discussed over two years

Text 1	Text 2	Text 3	Text 4	Text 5
Language Studies 1500 words. How might a child get rid of errors without being corrected by others?	Language Studies 1500-2000 words. To what extent does the state education system successfully support the bilingualism of minority language speakers? Draw on your experience.	Language Studies project 5000 words. The advantages and disadvantages for individuals being bilingual.	Education 1500 words. Critically examine an anti-racist approach towards education.	Education 1500 words. Working class children are underachieving in schools. How much of this may be attributed to perceived language deficiencies?

4.4.7 Reba

4.4.7.1 Language, learning and schooling

Reba is twenty years of age and from a Bangladeshi family. She is bilingual in Sylheti-Bengali and English. She describes Sylheti-Bengali as her first language: she spoke Bengali at home most of the time although from an early age spoke *bits and bobs* of English with her older brothers and sisters. She has lived in England all her life and has been through the English school system. She would like to be as competent in Bengali as she is in English, but feels she has an English accent when she speaks Bengali. She sees it as *no big thing* to be bilingual.

Whose words? Telling it like it is?

Why am I using italics here? Okay the italics are to indicate that these are actual words spoken by particular student-writers. In this case, by Reba. But all of this is closely bound up with what Reba has said.

No it's not. Reba wouldn't say

'I have lived in England all my life and have been through the English school system'.
or

'I would like to be as competent in Bengali as I am in English'
or

'At the community school I thought of myself as a good reader but a poor writer'.

All this is me, trying to present what counts as relevant information in a factual, distancing -academic-way..

But surely the information is correct. I took ages writing this in a way which attempted to present something about who each one of them is without slipping into easy categories? And I looked at and discussed each account with them.

Okay. I think the information is correct in the sense that there are no obvious untruths. But in attempting to write simply, to avoid categories (which I can't) I've killed off the individual students. To present who they are more dynamically, I'd have to write this in a different way- a narrative with lots of description and humour. Where's the humour gone? We spent a lot of time laughing in the interviews.

But. If I write in this way- and I've chosen what seems to be the safe way to write this

chapter and this thesis-the only way open to me, to actually bring in their voices is to include direct quotes now and again in an attempt to bring them alive. I'm not convinced it's the best way though...

When Reba started school she attended a nursery where most children were speakers of Bengali. She can't remember much about infant school but she feels the attitudes of teachers and the small number of white monolingual teachers were okay. She does remember however being called names, such as 'Paki' at junior school, insults she says she still hears at school in her work in a multilingual primary school.

The first language she learned to read in was Arabic in order to read the Koran, which she can read but cannot translate. She can't remember learning to read and write in English but knows she learned at school. She also learned to read Bengali at Bengali community school. At the community school she thought of herself as a good reader but a poor writer.

She feels she did average at school, gaining 6 GCSEs. She started to study for A levels in psychology, sociology and English but had to leave because of family circumstances. When I asked her if she had felt confident in her ability to do the A level course

R: It' s like this course. I never try my best.
T: And why don't you try your best?
R: I...er.
T: Is there a reason?
R: If I'm doing all right then
T: [So what's all right? Is passing enough for you? You know for a course.
R: Well, if you're not...if you're just average...
T: And why, like with <u>this</u> one you said you could have got a distinction. And you <u>knew</u> that, so, why didn't you do it then?
R: Cause I didn't have the time. (LH:133)

Reba had to balance study, work- she worked in an office- and home responsibilities At home, it was difficult to find both time and physical space for studying. Another important reason she gave for not putting in what she considered to be enough time to work on her studies was the uncertainty of her future:

T: Is there anything that you can think of that would have made you put more time into writing the essays for the course?
R: If I knew I was going somewhere with it. I don't know.
T: You mean, like, at the end of the course?
R: Yeah. Heading to something else. Like a degree or something.
T: And that wasn't part of your plan?
R: It was (sighs)*...at the beginning.*(LH:245)

Reba did not tell me about her reasons for not continuing with her studies.

4.4.7.2 Language, writing and higher education

Reba felt that the main difference between the English she used on a day to day basis and the English she felt she was expected in academic essays was that in the latter she was not supposed to use informal expressions.

Reba and I spent a comparatively small amount of time discussing her writing (see 3.6.1). Although she said, she was happy to do so, she was obviously uneasy about it and from our discussions, formal and informal, it emerged that she felt such talk was cheating.

Texts discussed over one year

Text 1	Text 2	Text 3
Language Studies 1500-2000 words. a)Drawing on your reading, explain some of the ways in which research has shown linguistic behaviour to be gender related. b) Drawing on your experience in education, discuss how relevant you think an understanding of gender and language is to teaching.	Language Studies 1500-2000 words. To what extent do you think the state education system successfully supports the bilingualism of minority language speakers.	Language Studies project 5,000 words. A study to assess the development of second language acquisition

4. 4. 8 Sara

4.4.8.1 Language, learning and schooling

Sara is a Pakistani woman of twenty five years of age, born and brought up in England. She is married and lives with her husband and three children. She is a fluent Urdu and English speaker and uses both languages on a daily basis: Urdu to her mother who lives close by and also to her husband and children with whom she also codeswitches a lot between the two languages. She speaks English to her sister. She uses both Urdu and English in the bilingual community in which she lives. She feels positive about being able to speak two languages.

She regards Urdu as her first language having been brought up by Urdu speaking parents in England and feels competent in Urdu and English in both speaking and reading and writing. She feels that her reading and writing in English however is better. Before going to school, both parents taught her and her sister-a year younger than she is to read the English and Urdu alphabets. Her mother was *the storyteller* at home, telling stories in Urdu regularly and her father read Urdu stories from books. When she started nursery school she knew only a little English and felt that the teachers thought of her as stupid rather than a learner of English. She remembers feeling unhappy about the prohibition of Urdu at school:

I do remember a teacher saying 'Excuse me, can you speak in English please?'. Why can't I speak my own language? It was playtime, I felt that the teacher felt maybe we were talking about them and saying bad things about them (LH :120)

However, in general, she enjoyed primary school and loved reading. At home, her parents continued to encourage practice of both languages: she and her sister copied a page of English and a page of Urdu every day. She always wanted to do well and always did her homework. Her parents never had to say 'Go and do it', she just did. She always wanted to do well at school and was mortified when she was put in the bottom set for Maths. She did not tell her parents and determined to move to the top set:

S: I didn't tell them cause I felt ashamed, set 4, I wasn't going to tell my parents that (laughs).
T: So why do you think you were put in set 4?
S:Erm...I don't know really, it was quite confusing, I've got no idea. I was confused about that. I thought I was quite capable and yet I was put in set 4. But gradually I mean I worked really, really hard. Did my work and made sure I ...and worked my way to the top set.
T: That's determination for you!
S: (laughs) *I couldn't stand, you know, them saying 'She's stupid, thick'. I thought no I'm not. I'm better than that.* (LH:110)

Sara did well also at secondary school, and achieved 6 O levels in a school where the average pupil achieved 2. She was successful particularly in the sciences and was encouraged both by the science teachers and her parents, both of whom had degrees from Pakistan, to continue towards A levels and university. But she left school and went on a YTS (Youth Training Scheme)-as did most pupils from the school at the time-in hairdressing. I asked her how this had happened

*In the middle,(*of secondary school*) I just lost my mind, if you like. I don't know. I just saw the glamour business, you know, about beauty therapy and all that and I was good with my hands, I liked making things, making people up as well. But then, I actually went into the hairdressing business* (laughs) (LH:242)

On reflection she felt that she should have continued:

But then, I just felt, no I can't chemistry is hard, no I can't do that. There were a lot of boys did feel that that, as if, if I did science I wouldn't be able to go all the way. Even though I got the highest mark, B, which is more than all the boys got.(LH:200)

Although university was presented to her by both school and parents as a real possibility- unlike most student writers in this study- for her it still was a distant possibility:

S: I think I thought, yeah I can do that, and others thought, yeah she can do that. But the thought of going to university, I thought, am I capable of going there, do I deserve going there even?
T: Why wouldn't you deserve to go there?
S: I don't know...I just think because I'm...because I'm not English I suppose, because I'm a foreigner, you know. I feel as if I'm not on the same level as an English person. (LH:311)

While on the YTS course realised she had more qualifications than anybody else and that she could do *better than this*. She did a BTEC diploma in business and finance, achieving a distinction. At this point she felt she had to make a decision between marrying her fiancé who lived in Pakistan and a career. She chose to get married and moved to Pakistan for two years where she had her two children. When they returned to England she did voluntary work in play groups working with young bilingual children. During this period she decided she wanted a career. She began working full time as a bilingual support teacher in a primary school and decided to study the Language Studies course as a first step towards becoming a qualified teacher.

Although Sara throughout the year of the Language Studies had been highly motivated wanting distinctions rather than passes for her coursework and had expressed on many occasions that she must continue her studies this time, she decided not to. When we talked a year later about her reasons, she still felt them to be valid. These were as follows: financial- the grant was small and given her husband's precarious work situations, she felt she couldn't risk it; peace of mind- she felt that over the year of the course she had given little time and emotional energy to her children and her husband. She had felt *very close to the edge* at times and had visited the doctor who had advised against tranquillisers. Over the summer she had decided that she wanted peace of mind rather than the constant worry of work-study-family, she wanted to be in a position to create more peace for all of them; Islam- she wanted time and mental energy to pursue Islam which she felt was a wonderful religion and had nothing to do with the *backward molvis* of the local area. Moreover, she did experience a feeling of disappointment with higher education. She had enjoyed the Language Studies course but it had not fulfilled her in the way that she had hoped and expected.

I've realised that I want to find out about myself, about Islam...courses don't let you do that, you have to learn what other people think There's no space to think about what you want. (From notes made after informal discussion 11/9/95)

4.4.8.2 Language, writing and higher education

Sara had thought of herself as a good writer at school but because of 8 years without studying, she felt that she would need time to build up her confidence. She did not feel

that the English she had to use was very different apart from having to use *these really big words* which she looked forward to doing as she saw this as part of her learning overall.

A more significant dimension was the issue of her identity and writing, that is who she could be (not be) in her writing in higher education. We continued to keep in touch after she finished studying, and, two years after her decision not to continue with her studies at university, she felt that not being able to be who she was in her writing had contributed significantly to her decision to leave. She was about to begin studying part time for an A level in Urdu and an A level in Islamic Studies, both organised by the Muslim Parliament of Great Britain.

Texts discussed over year

Text1	Text2	Text 3
Language Studies 1500-2000 words. a)Drawing on your reading, explain some of the ways in which research has shown linguistic behaviour to be gender related. b) Drawing on your experience in education, discuss how relevant you think an understanding of gender and language is to teaching.	Language Studies 1500-2000. Discuss the ways in which different linguistic environments affect the development of bilingualism in pre-school (under 5 years) children.	Language Studies project 5000. Attitudes towards bilingualism in a monolingual state.

4.4.9. Siria

4.4.9.1 Language, learning and schooling

Siria is a Sylheti-Bengali and English speaker from a Bengali family. She has lived in England since she was two. She currently lives with her husband.

Her first language is Sylheti but she feels she can talk standard Bengali well if she speaks slowly. She reads and writes in Bengali quite well. She has also studied Arabic from the age of six to fifteen, both at home and in classes, for religious purposes. She can also understand and communicate in Urdu, which she studied to GCSE level.

Siria came to England when she was two and a half years old. Sylheti was, and continued to be, the language of the home and her local community. Her father taught her the Bengali alphabet at home and she also attended Bengali classes for three evenings a week from the age of 7-14 years.

She remembers vividly the experience of beginning school without knowing any English:

I remember not speaking English at all. I was just terrified. Cause, I mean, it's not too bad now cause there's quite a mix of Pakistani and Bengali children. But on the first day when I went there was a majority of English children, and there was two Asian children that spoke Panjabi, so I couldn't really communicate with nobody. So it was just a terrible feeling and the worst thing was, my dad said Right I'm going now. (laughs). *He didn't really explain to me that he would come back. He just said, I'm going. And I had all this, cause in Bangladesh they used to get the cane. Caning was still around, so I thought I'm going to get killed here. I don't know a word. What am I going to do? It was just terrifying.* (LH:144)

Although she hated it for a while, the children were friendly and Siria managed to work out what she was supposed to be doing by following them around the school.

By the time I was eight, there was a vast amount of reading and writing going on. And I didn't really enjoy so much of it because there was so much time involved, reading and writing three languages. It was quite intense. (LH side 2:10)

Siria remembers really enjoying primary school: she liked learning English, the teachers were less strict than in the community classes and she felt school was generally more *carefree*. She felt she got a lot more praise at school: in her Bengali classes she was worried all the time about whether she would get into trouble. She felt that she was *doing quite well* at primary school, but this changed at secondary school:

I'd say I didn't really enjoy school (secondary). *I used to hate going to secondary school. I think it was the atmosphere, I didn't think it was a nice atmosphere, whereas in primary school, I think the children...it was a lot more supportive. Whereas in secondary, it was cold, not very welcoming, the children used to be very sarcastic. They weren't exactly friendly. Because of all that, I never used to ask for extra help if I didn't understand anything. I just used to keep quiet, never put my hand up and say I don't understand, in case somebody said, oh dummy. A lot of children get that at school.*(LH side 2:100)

She did not think of herself as being successful, and at school where most pupils thought of going to YTS schemes on leaving, never thought of university as an option.

There wasn't really much encouragement and school was such a negative...I always felt as if university was something well out of reach. But now I'm sort of thinking, well, things can't be too difficult! Okay, I haven't done so well in the past. That doesn't mean to say I can't do well in the future. And going to higher education might encourage my confidence and knowledge.(LH side 2:211)

After leaving school she began a BTEC in social work, but she could not complete the course because she rejected parents' plans for an arranged marriage and, after much stress and heartsearching, decided to leave home and to start her life alone. Having taken such a major decision in her life, she felt more confident about pursuing her interests in education and able to confront difficulties she might encounter.

4.4.9.2 Language, writing and higher education

Although Siria feels that the English she is expected to use is very different from the English she uses on a day to day basis, she feels that she will be able to learn how to write in an academic way. She was more concerned initially with the difficulty she feels she always finds in transferring ideas to paper:

I'd say, as a writer I can write quite well, but I think the only problem I'd tell you with my writing is sometimes I have a very good idea and I think, right, this is what I'm going to write about and I've already got it mapped in my head. But when I actually come to writing, I can never get the same phrase or the same definition what I want to talk about. So the great idea that I have in my head turns out a mess on paper.(LH:114)

Texts discussed over one year

Text 1	Text 2	Text 3
Language Studies 1500-2000 words. 'Knowledge about language' and education. a) *Knowledge about language/language study* is an integral part of National Curriculum English. Explain what is meant by *knowledge about language*, based on your reading of official documents (such as the Bullock and Kingman Reports and National Curriculum English documents) and the work of several educationalists-linguists. b) using your personal experience as student and worker in educational settings, discuss the type of understanding about language that teachers and/or pupils need to develop. Give specific examples relating to language and learning, for example, talk in the classroom.	Language Studies 1500-2000 words. Discuss the ways in which different linguistic environments affect the development of bilingualism in pre-school (under 5 years) children.	Language Studies 5000 words project. Exploring the linguistic competence of a bilingual child.

4.4.10 Tara

4.4.10.1 Language, learning and schooling

Tara is a thirty six year old, white working class woman, originally from a mining village in Wales. She had just successfully completed an Access course when I met her and she began a law degree course a few months later. She also worked in a bar in the evenings. She lives with her partner and has a twelve year old son.

Although Tara had been successful at primary school and in the early years of secondary school- always in the top group- at fourteen years of age she lost interest and started

missing lessons. Although several teachers encouraged her to try and sit some of her GCE/CSE examinations, she refused and left school at fifteen without qualifications. She went to work in a factory.

Being successful in formal education or continuing education post sixteen was not what was expected of her or her brothers by her parents:

I mean, even exams...I wasn't expected to take any exams even. At home, none of my brothers passed their exams and it wasn't expected of me. I was never pushed or encouraged to do it. I thought, well, all right, I can just do the same as everybody else. And get a job. (LH:330)

After leaving school, Tara worked in a local factory and shortly after got married. She had a son and continued to work, but, along with some girl friends from the factory who were bored with the routine work, decided to sign up for GCE evening classes. Tara began studying for three GCSEs: English language, computer studies and law. However, she did not complete these courses, a main reason being her separation from her husband which left her with the practical constraints resulting from being a full-time carer for her child. She could not afford a baby-sitter and had no means of transport to the college. She returned to her studies some years later after moving to Sheffield where she initially worked in a shop. Her partner, who was studying at university encouraged her to start Step Forward course. Spurred on by positive comments from tutors on this course, Tara began an access to higher education course.

Throughout the course she was trying to work out whether she had the ability to study at university;

When I started the Access course, I wanted to study at university, but I wanted to see how well I was doing at first. It wasn't until I was half way through that I thought I could do it. (LH:410)

She was now in a position to pick up her long standing interest in law, which, although she has had no links with, she was deeply enthusiastic about:

It's a really interesting subject. I could read about law all the time, like. Everything we do is linked to law. If I read the papers, the most interesting bits are to do with law. I can link a lot of what we do to law. (LH: 415)

During the first year of her law degree course we met to discuss several drafts of two written pieces of work. She successfully completed her first year and continued into the second year of law.

4.4.10.2 Language, writing and higher education

English is Tara's language, although her father often spoke Irish-Gaelic to her and her brothers until school age. She also learnt Welsh as a separate subject at school. She says she would not describe herself as a competent speaker of English:

I don't know how to phrase it.Mine is working class English. I speak like a working class person would, not like a middle or an upper class person. I speak lower down the spectrum rather than the top. And I can tell. (LH:100)

Of middle class friends she says:

They're more fluent at speaking than I am,er, I don't say the content, but they speak fluently than me...I'm trying to explain. I've got middle class friends and I wouldn't say their content, their knowledge is any different to mine, but they speak differently to me. And it does give that extra bit, especially if you're at university. (LH: 120)

Tara felt that people looked at her negatively when she spoke in law lectures and that having a Welsh working class accent was problematic for law, where she feels you need to be able to command attention and convince people of your views in standard English. Although she had no plans to consciously lose her accent, she felt that by being at university her Welsh accent would lessen: she felt positive about this if it was going to enable her to continue with her ambition in law. Most students of law were from middle class backgrounds and if she had to speak more like them in order to be successful, then she was willing to do so.

When we first met to discuss Tara' s writing, her concerns centred on her *sentence structure* and *grammar.* Tutors had made comments which told her there was a problem

but she had no sense of what the problem was. So we spent much of our time initially in looking at her sentence structure; the second principal focus of our talk was attempting to work out what tutors wanted in response to essay questions.

Texts discussed over one year

Text 1	**Text 2**
Law 2000 words (Background information on Ms Snook's business situation given) a) Advise Ms Snook about alternative forms of business organisation available to her explaining the legal implications and the advantages and disadvantages as they apply to her situation. b) Ms Snooks anticipated expansion will necessitate considerable amounts of funding. Advise on possible sources of finance and examine whether particular forms of business organisations will act as a constraint on finance availability. Which form of business would you advise her to accept? 2000 words	Law 2000 words Detailed information given about two men who are arrested by the police-one for obstruction and one on suspicion of drug dealing. Advise Jean-Claude and 'Big Frank'. 2000 words

4.5 Conclusion

In this chapter I have attempted to give the reader some insight into the life experiences of the student-writers involved in this project, in order to focus on who they are as meaning makers in higher education.

In talking of their experiences, it is important to stress both commonality and difference and to avoid essentializing any aspect of their experience (see Orner 1992). The students in this project constitute a group in that they are 'non-traditional students' in higher education in England; that is, they come from groups who have traditionally been excluded from HE in a number of different and interconnected ways. These relate to educational experience, social class, 'race' and ethnicity, linguistic background, religious beliefs and gender. The significance attached to each of these experiences at moments of meaning making, however, differs across individuals at different moments in time as I will discuss in more detail in chapter 6.

None of the student-writers have had a smooth route through the education system; none went from school to university at eighteen; most were unsuccessful at secondary school and even the three who were successful in that they had 6 GCSEs/O levels did not think of university as a realistic option; they have all worked in paid employment and all but one have had, and continue to have substantial family responsibilities to parents and/or children. Their pathway through higher education continues not to be smooth as is indicated in 4.3.

All the student-writers in this project describe themselves as being from working class backgrounds and seven of the ten are the first in their families to go to university, (parent/s of two of the three students who went to university did so as mature students). Seven of the student-writers are Black students and have both individually and in some group discussions pointed to their common experience of racism. Their experience as Black minority students involves a diversity of experience, dimensions of which are more significant at specific moments in time: some students, for example wish to emphasize their religious beliefs above a notion of political 'Blackness' at particular times, or focus on themselves as belonging to a particular ethnic group, such

as Pakistani or Yemeni. This is also true of their feelings about being bilingual, in terms of how competent they feel as speakers of specific languages and also in relation to how they feel about what it means to be bilingual in British society. Concerns expressed by two of the bilingual students about what they feel to be the negative effect of their being brought up bilingually in two non-standard languages, are echoed in the comments of two of the white student-writers who feel that the language they use is not good enough for academia.

Only one woman focused specifically on gender as a significant issue for her in writing in academia. However, the issue of gender in their lives was significant in terms of providing care at home, having studies interrupted because they were the substantial domestic responsibilities -Sara, Reba, Kate, Diane- having studies interrupted because of difficulties surrounding marriage -Nadia, Siria, Tara.

All the student-writers, except one, were keen to engage in study and learning. Kate, Mary, Siria. Tara and Bridget, expressed the view that they needed learning, as either an escape from difficult life circumstances or as an acknowledgement that there must be more to life than what they were doing. Two students specifically wanted to study in order to gain qualifications- Sara and Amira. One student's initial decision- Nadia's- to move into HE was linked to her future as a mother and wanting to contribute towards the learning of her children, and one - Bridget- wanted to study in HE because of changed family business circumstances.

In coming into higher education, all the student-writers share one overriding concern when they begin their writing: what do *they* really want? This question recurs across our talk, as I explore in chapter 5. But they also have individual and different concerns, some of which an individual articulates from our first meeting: for example, Kate's concern about the coldness of academic writing. Other concerns emerge through our talk, as the writer engages in her academic writing: for example, Sara's unease about having to pretend to be someone she is not in academic writing. I will explore these questions in chapter 6.

Chapter 5

STUDENT 'CONFUSION' AND THE INSTITUTIONAL PRACTICE OF MYSTERY

5.1 Introduction

The aim of this chapter is to focus on a dominant theme emerging from talk with all the student-writers in this project: that is, confusion about the nature of the academic conventions they are expected to make meaning within. This focus is important because it foregrounds a significant dimension to their experience as students writing in academia, as well as making visible dominant institutional practices surrounding student academic writing.

I argue that their confusion is so all pervasive a dimension of their experience, as a group of 'non-traditional' students in higher education, that it signals the need to look beyond a notion of individual confusion towards an *institutional practice of mystery.* This practice of mystery is ideologically inscribed in that it works against those least familiar with the conventions surrounding academic writing, limiting their participation in HE as currently configured.

I illustrate how this practice of mystery works by using extracts from spoken and written texts to trace attempts by several student-writers to make sense of the 'essay question'. The examples show that the practice of mystery is not made up of a discrete list of actions but is enacted in different ways, at the levels of the contexts of situation and culture of higher education. A significant way in which this practice of mystery is enacted is through the dominant type of *addressivity* (Bakhtin:1986: see also 2.5.2) in tutor student relations, where the denial of real participants works against the student-writers' learning of dominant conventions as well as their desire for a different kind of relationship around meaning making in academia.

I begin this chapter in 5.2, by outlining the ways in which the distance between tutors' and students' understandings of the conventions has been problematized in research and

practice. In 5.3, I illustrate the student-writers' unfamiliarity with dominant conventions and hence the confusion they experience about what is required by tutors. In the main section of this chapter, 5.4, I trace specific attempts by student-writers to work out the conventions surrounding the 'essay question', in order to illustrate how the pervasiveness of such confusion signals an institutional practice of mystery. In 5.5, I foreground the student-writers' desire for dialogue with tutors and, in 5.6, I focus on the dominant type of addressivity in HE within which student-writer meaning making takes place.

5.2 Ways in which the gap between tutors' and students' understandings of the conventions has been problematized in research and practice

The distance between tutors' and students' understandings and interpretations of the conventions underlying student academic writing is a common theme across much of the studies on student writing in academia. By *convention*, I mean the rules underlying the prototypical textual practices surrounding student academic writing (see Clark and Ivanic 1997: 12: see 2 3.2 and 6.2). The criticism has repeatedly been made that the conventions student-writers are expected to work within remain implicit rather than explicit (see Hounsell 1984, 1987; Taylor 1988; Prosser and Webb 1994; Flower 1994; Lea 1995; Andrews 1995; Scott 1996). These afore mentioned writers problematize the institutional assumption that the conventions surrounding academic writing are part of students' 'common-sense'. For example, Andrews (1995) in his exploration of how ground rules about essay writing are conveyed to HE students in induction programmes and guides to the writing of essays, points to the assumption that the essay *is an unproblematic form (139)*; that tutors tend to take for granted that students know what is required. From the student perspective, whilst it is clear that they know there are rules, what the rules are often remains a mystery to be solved. Thus, for example, Flower talks of one mature student's approach to academic writing as follows:

He sees his writing assignments in English and History as specialized and mysterious but ultimately as rule-governed kinds of discourse- it is his job to figure out the rules of the game. (Flower 1994:5)

5.2.1 Response to the gap: language as transparent means of communication[1]

That student-writers in British universities need to be taught academic writing conventions, particularly those who have not entered HE by the traditional A level route, is currently being acknowledged. This is evident in the current practice of providing students with written guidelines on how to write an essay, as part of a *study skills* approach to the teaching of writing (for published examples, see Gibbs and Habeshaw 1989; Race and Brown 1993; Brown and Knight 1994; Drew and Bingham 1997). In these approaches, the distance between tutors' expectations and student-writers' understanding of such expectations is problematized as a mismatch which can be resolved if tutors state explicitly to student-writers in written or spoken words what is required. This can be illustrated by considering the example below of advice on how to approach the essay question. I include it not only because I think it is typical of advice given in study skills manuals but also because it reflects one prominent approach underlying tutors' approaches to student writing in the university (this is supported by the recent work of Lea and Street 1998).

Step 1 of 7 steps towards essay planning is presented as follows:

1. Interpret the question. This step overwhelmingly determines what follows; it is also likely to be the greatest source of difficulty. ***Assuming that the question itself is clear, and reflects the instructor's intentions****, the student needs to be satisfied as to* ***the meaning of the question and any unclear words checked out.*** My emphasis . (Biggs 1988:194)

The wordings I've put in bold print illustrate the transparent and autonomous notions of language and literacy underpinning mucn advice (see Reddy 1979 and Wertsch 1991 for conduit metaphor of language). The advice in the extract above presupposes the following: that meaning resides in the wording of the question; that meaning is there for the student-writer to discover; that, should any difficulty arise, students will be able to consult with their tutors. The experience of the student-writers in this project challenges these assumptions, as I show in 5.4.

Limitations to an approach which suggests that the gap between students' and tutors' understandings can be resolved through a straightforward transfer of information, are apparent from research exploring actual student and tutor practices. Firstly, there may be discrepancies between tutors' stated and actual expectations about student writing, as pointed out by Clanchy (1985).When the researchers in Clanchy's project sought to clarify tutors' expectations, the latter talked of *originality* and *excellence.* Yet on analysis of actual responses to student writing, the researchers identified other criteria. The only way for the researchers to judge how tutors actually assessed students' writing was

to ignore what they (tutors) ***claimed*** *they wanted and, by collecting and classifying what comments they actually made on hundreds of first year essays, gradually distil the key criteria on which they graded* (Clanchy 1985:3)

The criteria identified by the researchers were as follows: the essay should clearly focus on the set topic dealing with its central concerns; the essay should be the result of wide reading; it should offer reasoned argument; it should be completely presented. Two points can be made which are relevant to the discussion here. Firstly, the above criteria were unearthed by the researchers rather than stated to student-writers. Secondly, these criteria still leave a lot of information unsaid, for example, the use of Standard English, the acceptability or not of specific wordings (see also Norton 1990 for idiosyncratic nature of tutors' actual, rather than articulated, assessment practices; see also chapter 7 for discussion of argument in relation to unity within academic writing).

Hounsell has suggested that the distance between student-writers and tutors may be the result of different frames of reference (1984). On examining students' perceptions of what an essay is, he found that there were a range of perspectives which differed both across and within the subject areas of history and psychology. In history some students conceived essay writing as a matter of argument, others as arrangement of facts and ideas; in psychology, some students focused on cogency, others relevance, and ordered presentation of material. He also pointed to the perceived value of personal view/experience which was usually seen as 'value added' rather than integral to the writing. In general, it seemed as if it was difficult if not impossible for students to find out from their tutors what their essays should be. Hounsell points to the broken cycle of communication between tutor and student:

where students' conceptions of essay-writing are qualitatively different from those of their tutors, communication cannot readily take place because the premises underlying the two disparate conceptions are not shared or mutually understood. (1987: 114)

Hounsell argues that this is because the presuppositions involved in communication are not shared. He gives the example of a student's understanding of argument, quoting the student as saying

Well, from the comments on the essay, I gathered the tutor wanted me to argue, about something, but I mean, by presenting the material as the research had demonstrated, it was a mild form of argument. I wasn't going to get aggressive, in an essay.(115)

Clanchy's and Hounsell's work serves to problematize the nature of the distance between students' and tutors' understanding of the conventions surrounding student academic writing, suggesting that there is a need to move beyond notions of teaching and learning of conventions as if they were atomised skills, and focus on actual practices in, and for, which the writing is taking place. However, their work still tends to be framed within an approach which views language as transparent, rather than central in constituting the nature of dominant academic writing practices within HE.

5.2.2 Response to the gap: genre and discourse community

One way of conceptualising the gap between students' and tutors' understandings about academic writing conventions and which acknowledges a more complex notion of the socio-discursive context of the university, is to call on notions of *genre* and *discourse community.* In this conceptual framework, student-writers are not just seen to be attempting to work out a set of formal rules relating to the construction of a text but to be learning ways of meaning considsered to be appropriate to a particular discourse community. Probably the most familiar model of linking *genre* and *discourse community* in academic writing is that developed by Swales (1990). To summarize, he talks of *genre*, text types, being developed by members of specific discourse communities to suit their communicative purposes. For Swales, it is the rationale underlying the communicative purpose which gives rise to conventions which determine what and how people will talk and/or write (Swales: 53, see Swales example

of stamp collecting community). His work links with one strand of the Australian genre tradition where an important underlying purpose in identifying features specific to different acacdemic disciplines is to facilitate the explicit teaching of such genres to those unfamiliar with them (see for example Christie 1987; Martin, Christie and Rothery 1987; Kress 1987; Martin 1993).

If we accept a unified view of discourse community, student-writers, by definition, are outside that community. Their texts can at best be viewed as approximations to the established genre, and they as *apprentices* to be socialized into the academy's ways of meaning making. (For example of use of this notion this approach see Walvoord and McCarthy 1990:21; see also discussion in Flower 1994:117-122. Berkenkotter and Huckin, 1995, draw on Lave and Wenger's notion of *legitimate peripheral participation*, 1991, to explore postgraduate student writing apprenticeship).

However, there are important limitations to normative approaches to genre, criticisms of which have been highlighted (see for example, Cooper 1989; Harris 1989; Ivanic 1993, 1998). Of direct relevance to the discussion of the experience of student-writers here is the assumed apparent direct and transparent relationship between communicative purposes and construction of texts, with little attention being paid to tensions and different power relations surrounding instances of meaning making. Yet such an approach raises many questions. Who decides what is the underlying rationale of a discourse community? When are members 'established'-after Phd, after 6 publications, one publication? And, if student-writers by definition are always to be outside that community, how should their writing be read/judged.? And, how useful is the notion of apprenticeship to describe both the nature of their actual participation in HE and their purposes in learning ?

Here I wish to specifically problematize the notion of apprenticeship in relation to purpose. Firstly and perhaps most obviously, most student-writers writing within academia will never be established members of the discourse community, in the sense of successful, published academics. This has always been the case but is even more the case now, given the changing patterns of involvement in formal education allowing adult students to gain credits in one course and then transfer to another, with some

taking breaks for a range of reasons, including childcare responsibilities (see 4.3 for overview of pattern of involvement in HE of the student-writers in this project). Students may want to use their learning in many other contexts. As Elbow has stated *life is long and college is short. Very few of our students will ever have to write academic discourse after college* (1991:136). Does this mean then that they can have no say in determining what the underlying rationale of their texts should be?

Given the complex life-learning situations in which many students now find themselves, it might be more useful, to talk in terms of a discourse *society*, as Prior has argued, which more accurately reflects the dynamism, power differentials, range of interests and conflicts, as well as the consensus implied by *discourse community* (see Prior 1994). In this context, the notion of apprenticeship, if it is to be used at all, needs to be viewed as something more complex and dynamic than a unitary pathway towards the learning of a given area of knowledge and/or a predetermined set of specific skills. Only in this way will the notion of apprenticeship reflect the more complex living learning and meaning making contexts in which student-writers move.

5.2.3 Response to the gap: literacy practices

A challenge to normative conceptions of genre and homogeneous notions of discourse communities, raising questions about who and how individuals can and do engage in text production, is found in writings drawing on the notion of literacy practices. As discussed in chapter 2, the notion of literacy practices acknowledges that texts are embedded within socio-cultural practices and the existence of tensions and diversity surrounding such practices.

Of particular importance to the discussion here is the notion of *essayist literacy*. What is important about the practice of essayist literacy, with its particular configuration of conventions is that although it represents one way, rather than the only way of making meaning, it is the privileged practice within formal institutions of learning (see 6.2.1 for further discussion of *essayist literacy*). That one literacy practice is privileged above others is of major significance when attempting to explore the meaning making experience of student-writers in HE. Numerous studies point to the ways in which the

privileging of one literacy ensures continuity between home and formal institutions of learning for some learners, notably those from white middle class backgrounds, whilst significantly contributing to discontinuity for others, that is, learners from working class and minority ethnic backgrounds (for substantial work on links between social class and literacy practices within the home and school, see Wells 1985, 1986; see also Heath 1983 for continuity/discontinuity between home and school in literacy practices in working class and middle class communities in North America).

Gee has argued that, on the whole, privileged practices are not taught to those who do not already know them, with the result that formal institutions continue to privilege those who are already privileged within society (see Gee 1990, 1996). In a similar vein, Delpit (1988) has criticised progressive educators for failing to teach Black students how to successfully manage dominant conventions; and Flower (1994:122-147) has critiqued so-called 'immersion' approaches to the teaching of writing, which support those who she calls *insider*s, most

My aim in section 5.4 is to trace how this process of marginalization and exclusion happens, by focusing on specific attempts by the student-writers in this project to work out the conventions surrounding the 'essay-type' question. The scare quotes around 'essay-type' are for two interrelated reasons. Firstly, 'essay' was used in most instances to describe the texts the students were being asked to write, even though the nature of these texts varied. This supports Swales' general comment on the nature of institutional communicative events; that is, that the naming of such events (he refers to lectures and tutorials) tends to indicate institutional rather than descriptive labels (Swales 1990:55)[2]. Secondly, the scare quotes serve as a reminder that, whilst the writing the students in this project were asked to do falls into one broadly recognisable category to those of us who are already familiar with academic writing, the conventions governing this type of mystery often remained a mystery to the student-writers themselves. Before I trace through examples which illustrate how such mystery is maintained, I first turn to questions raised by the student-writers in their talk with me which indicate their unfamiliarity with dominant academic writing conventions.

5.3 Exploring the experience of confusion of student-writers in this study

5.3.1 Students trying to work out *what they want*

One important way of understanding more about the nature the of the distance between tutors' and students' understandings, and, in particular, to discover which conventions student-writers do not know, is to listen to students' questions as they attempt to engage in writing.

Here, based on the discussions with the ten student-writers in this project, I list the most explicit questions that they asked me during their first year of an HE course in their attempts to work out academic writing conventions.

What do they want?

STUDENTS TRYING TO WORK OUT ACADEMIC WRITING CONVENTIONS

QUESTIONS of student-writers in their first year of an HE course (see 5.4 for critique of framework here).

Questions ***Student-writer asks question = ?***

	A	B	D	K	M	N	R	Sa	Si	T
The essay/assignment question										
what does it mean	?	?	?		?	?		?	?	?
what do they really want (footnote)	*?	?	?		*?	*?	*?	*?	*?	?
what does particular wording mean- examples, advise, argue, critical, discuss	?	?			?	?		?	?	?
what's the difference between a report and an essay		?								
Content and the use of sources										
does this answer the question	?	?	?	?	?			?		?
what is relevant/irrelevant			?				?	?	?	
what is counted as evidence	?		?					?		
when (and when not) to cite authorities	?		?	?	?	?	?	?	?	
what type of evidence is acceptable	?		?							
what is plagiarism			?		?	?		?		?
how much literature to bring in			?	?				?		
how to bring in examples from own research					?			?		
how to support own opinion			?		?	?				
which bits of own experience/understanding research are relevant			?		?	?		?		
how to reference	?	?	?	?	?	?	?	?	?	?
why are references important	?									
how to use direct quotes	?								?	
when to use personal experience as evidence	?							?		
does personal experience count	?									

*** I think that the question 'what do they really want?' was a driving force behind their decision to meet with me as tutor-assessor-researcher.**

What do they want?

STUDENTS TRYING TO WORK OUT ACADEMIC WRITING CONVENTIONS

QUESTIONS of student-writers in their first year of an HE course (see 5.4 for critique of framework here).

Questions ***Student-writer asks question = ?***

	A	B	D	K	M	N	R	Sa	Si	T
Presentation										
can subheadings be used		?	?		?			?		
can lists be used		?								
Global structure										
how much to write on each section								?	?	
what should be in an introduction	?	?	?	?	?	?	?	?	?	?
what should be in a conclusion		?	?	?		?				
where to put description, analyis				?				?		
how to organise content into argument	?			?						
how long can text be	?		?							
Punctuation										
what is standard punctuation? when to use, comma, semi colon		?		?	?		?		?	?
Language and wordings										
which words/ings can(not) be used	?	?	?	?	?	?	?	?	?	?
what is Standard English							?		?	?
Clarifying voices in the text										
how to separate the voices	?				?	?	?		?	
how to make own voice clear	?									
Being explicit in academic writing										
what does being explicit mean	?				?	?	?	?	?	
how to make text obviously relevant								?		
Being assessed										
what are assessment criteria				?				?		
how to get a distinction	?									
are marks lost for grammar mistakes		?								
is this degree standard		?								
are long words necessary for high marks	?									

Several points can be made on the basis of these questions by the student-writers. Firstly, and most obviously, the student-writers don't know the rules of the game. The conventions surrounding academic writing are not part of their 'common sense'. Secondly, it is important to note the situated nature of their questioning. What I mean by this is that, how and when each student raised the questions in the table above, and what she was trying to get at with her questions, varied according to many factors: her previous and current professional and personal experience, her sense of what was a priority at any particular time in her writing and her confidence in raising questions with me about what she felt she really ought to already know. Thirdly, it is important to note the situated nature of the possibility of making sense of any answers to these questions. Even in areas where there are common concerns amongst students, clarifying the nature of the conventions is not a straightforward task, as individual student-writers come to make sense of what the conventions might mean in different ways, at different times. This can be illustrated by focusing on one tutor directive (spoken and written) which student-writers found problematic; *be explicit.*

5.3.2 *Be explicit*

Below I point to specific instances of my attempts to clarify the directive to *be explicit,* in my talk with one student, Amira, over the writing of three texts. These specific instances challenge any presumed straightforward notion of explicitness, pointing instead to a number of particular meanings within the context of student academic writing.

Specific instances of exploring 'being explicit' with one student-writer, Amira

make clear link between claim and supporting evidence (a)	avoid vague wordings -*etc., lots of.*(b)	check that it is clear what *this, these* refer back/forward to (c)
make clear why a particular section was included (d)	**'BE EXPLICIT'**	say why using particular examples (e)
make links between sections (f)		say why using exclamation mark (g)
show that you understand key terms(i)	show how you are using contested terms (j)	link content with essay question (k)

It is clear from this example that explicitness is not a unitary text phenomenon (see Nystrand and Wiemelt 1991; see also Gee 1990:60). Each one of the above attempted clarifications of the directive, *be explicit*, raises further questions and demands further clarification. For example, (a) raises the questions of what is a claim and what is supporting evidence? These questions, in turn, raise further questions about what **count** as claim and evidence, in this context. The clarifications (i) and (j) raise questions about what are the key /contested terms in this context. The extent to which each one of the attempted clarifications above raises more questions, hence demanding further clarification, depends on the existing familiarity of the individual student-writer with academic conventions.

Being explicit in student academic writing involves learning how to construct meanings through a range of interrelated conventions, resulting from the particular socio-discursive context of essayist literacy in HE . In the following section, 5.4, I illustrate the ways in which the institutional practice of mystery works against the student-writers coming to learn (about) these conventions.(See chapter 7, for exploration of expliciness in relation to essayist unity).

5.4 The enactment of the institutional practice of mystery

Mary (angry): *Some of these rules are made up for no reason whatsoever. That's why* (laughs) *that's why it's difficult to learn, you see, because sometimes there's no reason why.*(me2disfd:52)

I want to return for a moment to consider the table in 5.3.1. In attempting to organize the student-writers' questions in a way which is meaningful for the reader, I am aware that I have superimposed a framework of coherence constructed out of current dominant frameworks for thinking about writing in HE. Such a framework is useful to the extent that it enables those of us who are familar with the conventions to quickly see areas that are unfamilar to the student-writers, but it does not come close to reflecting the student-writers' experience of attempting to make sense of the conventions surrounding their writing. In the first year at least (and for some longer) the questions of any one student-writer might more validly be presented as a series of repetitive, unconnected and unbounded questions, reflecting their confusion about many mysteries, illustrated in Mary's comment above.

In this section, I want to look more critically at the real confusion experienced by the student-writers in this project in their attempts to make sense of tutors' demands and the conventions therein, by focusing on one important and opaque aspect, the meaning and demands of the 'essay question' (see 5.2.3 above for discussion of 'essay-type' question). With all ten, much of our talk centred on the meaning of the essay/assignment question .

5.4.1 *It turned out she liked it*

The general sense of confusion about what a successful response to an essay question might look like, can be exemplified by Bridget' s comments. For Bridget, a first year social work student (see 4.4.2 for introduction to Bridget) her confusion was a continuation of her experience at Access level. In our first meeting I asked her to bring along an essay from her Access course that she had considered to be successful, as a first step towards clarifying what she might want us to talk about. When I asked her why she considered it successful, she said she had got a better mark for it than for her other essays. However, she had little sense of what made it better:

it was better in terms of marks. It was one of those essays I wrote and I didn't really know whether I was writing ***what she wanted****. So I just sort of did it to the best of my ability. And it turned out* ***she liked it****.* My emphasis (Bedis: 231)

Bridget seems to suggest it was mostly a matter of the individual tutor's taste (indicated in the bold print) that the essay was successful and has little sense of the specific ways she has fulfilled criteria, and hence how she might do so in future. The mystery surrounding what *they* really want is still with her in her first year at university where she focuses predominantly on the wording of the essay questions in her attempts to work out what *they're really asking.* Relying mainly on the wording of the essay question, however, is not illuminating for her:

The more I read the question, the less sure I am. (Be1disd1:112)

5.4.2 *She didn't like it one bit*

The perception that success and failure depend greatly on individual tutors' quirks, can be further illustrated by Nadia's experience, where her misfortune contrasts with Bridget's unaccountable success above. Nadia was frustrated by her tutor's dismissal of a part of the content of her essay. In her second year of HE but her first year of Education Studies, she writes on the following question:

Working class children are underachieving in schools. How much of this may be attributed to perceived language deficiencies?

When working on a draft for this essay, Nadia talked of focusing on monolingual working class children but also thought she would focus on the experience of bilingual children. She was pleased that she would be able to draw on what she had learned from a previous course, Language Studies course. However, the response from her tutor was not what she expected:

Opening section of Nadia's final draft	Tutor written comment
Throughout this essay I will be focussing on the types of underachievers. Firstly the working class bilinguals and the misleading intelligence tests, of which bilingual children are expected to do. Secondly the working class monolinguals which are underachieving. Thirdly I will seek information on how much of this may be attributed to perceived language deficiencies. (Ne5fd:1-6)[3]	Your beginning section moves away from essay title. Need to organise your thoughts more carefully and adhere to the essay title more clearly.

Nadia sought verbal feedback in a seminar in order to clarify why the tutor felt she hadn't focussed on the essay title:

She didn't like it one bit...She said not all bilingual kids are working class. And I turned round and said not all bilingual kids are middle class. She said the question wasn't about bilingual kids. (Ne4/5dis:3)

Nadia sees this as an individual quirk of the tutor, rather than a dimension to meaning making within the context of culture of HE where particular meanings are privileged. In this case, there is an expectation that she will take monolingual as the norm and focus on monolingual, rather than monolingual and bilingual, working class children. Nadia sees the tutor's comments simply as personal opinion, albeit with institutional power, as is indicated in her comment below:

She's nice, but what she wants, she gets. You can't argue with her.(Ne4/5dis:15)

5.4.3 *Who do I 'advise'?*

In some instances, as in Bridget's case above, the student-writer attempts to discover the expectations of the tutor in the wording of the question. On some occasions, the student-writer identified a particular word as the source of her problems in trying to understand what was required. For example, Tara, a first year law student focussed on the word *advise*, used in two essay questions and this became the main focus of our talk over the writing of these texts. Below are the two *advise* questions we discussed in full.

Question one

Justine Snook runs a small catering service from her home, providing hot lunches for the management of three firms in Sheffield. She has two employees-a driver and an assistant cook.
She would like to bid for catering contracts at more firms and possibly expand into catering for private dinner parties, but could not do all this from her home; and she is worried about how she would manage the operation. One of her worries is that she has no experience beyond institutional catering.

a) Advise Ms Snook about alternative forms of business organisation available to her explaining the legal implications and the advantages and disdavantages as they apply to her situation.
b) Ms Snooks anticipated expansion will necessitate considerable amounts of funding. Advise on possible sources of finance and examine whether particular forms of business organisations will act as a constraint on finance availability.
Which form of business would you advise her to accept? 2000 words

Question 2

Shortly after 3 a.m. PC Williams is on foot patrol in a part of town where there are many pubs and clubs frequented by young people as part of Steelville's city council's policy of creating a '24 hour city for the 21st century'. He notices a young man, Jean-Claude, leave one such club. As he leaves Jean-Claude tosses a cigarette box into the street. PC Williams calls out the (as in original) Jean-Claude to stop and pick up the litter. Jean-Claude makes a rude gesture to the officer and continues to walk away. Williams shouts to Jean-Claude again, telling him to stop and demanding his name and information about where he lives. Without stopping, Jean-Claude gives his name but says he is a temporary visitor from France with no local address.
Williams catches up with Jean-Claude, takes hold of his arm, and tells him he is under arrest. Jean-Claude immediately struggles, and in an attempt to free himself, begins to strike at Williams. A passer-by, 'Big Frank' attempts to assist Williams. He aims a punch at Jean-Claude. He misses, and instead, his fist lands on William's (as in original) nose. Williams loses his grip on Jean-Claude, who runs away. Williams takes 'Big Frank' to the police station, where he is charged with wilful obstruction. Jean-Claude, meanwhile has been gently recaptured and is gently taken to the police station.

At the station Jean-Claude's pockets, and his bag, are searched and a substantial quantity of prohibited drugs are found. The custody officer, Howard, tells him that he is to be detained for questioning on suspicion that he is a dealer in such drugs and that he will be able to provide information as regards his suppliers. He is told that in the circumstances it is not appropriate to allow him to communicate with a lawyer; nor that his mum should be informed of the fact of his detention.
Jean-Claude is questioned at length. On the following day, exhausted, he admits numerous offences in connection with prohibited drugs.
Advise Jean-Claude and 'Big Frank'.

No specific guidelines were given in relation to these essay questions: they were not, for example, presented as part of an explicit role simulation within professional practice but located only within the acdemic context of the course (for discussion of the impact of such role simulation on writing, see Freedman, Adam and Smart 1994).

The main obstacle Tara faced in trying to frame her essay was to decide who her writing was meant to address: the *advise* directive seemed to suggest that her writing should be directed at the fictitious client, yet Tara knew that the real addressee was the tutor. For the writing of her second essay, she pursued this with her tutor, seeking explicit guidance. Here she recounts her attempts to clarify how she is to interpret *advise*:

I've asked loads of questions but they said, 'you advise him' (Jean-Claude*) and I said, 'yeah, but do I speak to <u>him</u> so I'm giving <u>him</u> the advice, or...?' He said, 'Well, if you do that then you won't get all the acts done.' So, he just couldn't be bothered I assume.* (Te2disd1:52)

She knew she had to show as much legal knowledge as she could for the benefit of the tutor-assessor, yet the directive to *advise* the client still worried her. This was particularly true of the second essay where she was concerned that the knowledge she knew she had to show the tutor, would not, in a real life situation, be shared with the client Jean-Claude. In our discussion, she pointed to the dilemma she faced in attempting to follow the tutor's directiion to *advise Jean-Claude:*

If I was directing this to him personally, it'd be pointless me saying this and this and this, cause he wouldn't understand it. So I have to maybe, in the...is it the third person maybe? Not to him directly, not advising him directly but pointing out <u>how</u> I would advise him. Not advising him personally. Should I put that maybe in the introduction? (Te2disd1:447)

In her introductions to both her essays she tried to accomodate this double readership by trying to accomodate the two presumed addressees: the tutor as actual addressee- and Ms Snook as the ficititious addressee.

Introduction to essay 1	**Introduction to essay 2**
In order to advise Ms Snook about expanding her small catering service, this essay will discuss what are the alternative forms of business available to her. It will also show what are the legal implications and the advantages and the disadvantages that expansion may incur. Furthermore this essay will examine what sources of finance are available to Ms Snook and whether these alternative forms of buisiness organisation, could act as a constraint financially. Lastly, after looking at all the alternatives and financial information given, I will advise Ms Snook on what form of business organisation would best suit her needs at this present time.	In order to advise Jean Claude in relation to his arrest, search and detention and Big Frank's charge of wilful obstruction, certain relevant statutory powers related to the Police and Crmninal Evidence Act 1984 (P.A.C.E.) and subsequent case law. Lastly, I will attempt to substantiate whether their arrests were lawful and what will be the possible outcome for both parties involved.

In both introductions Tara stays close to the real context of writing for a tutor-assessor whose aim will be to assess her knowledge of relevant legal statutes. She does this, in the first introduction, by repeating much of the wording of the set question, and in the second text by referring to a relevant Act. If the addressees were the ficititious clients, she might be expected to do neither of these. She also refers to the clients in the third person rather than the second.

But Tara also works at addressing the ficititious clients, particularly in the first text. For whilst in both introductions she indicates textually that she is advising the clients, Ms Snook and Jean Claude, in the first, she refers to Ms Snook three times, and ends by saying *I will advise Ms Snook.* By the time she comes to write the second introduction, she seems to be abandoning the idea of addressing anybody other than the tutor-

assessor. This is particularly apparent within the main body of the text, where her principal aim seems to be to demonstrate relevant knowledge:

> If it appears later that PC Williams had originally suspected Jean Claude of carrying prohibited drugs but arrested him for other reasons, which did not have a power of arrest, then the decision based on Christie v Leachinsky (21947) AC 573 would apply ' where if a reason for arrest was given that was inadequate in law (e.g. because the offence mentioned does not carry a power of arrest), the fact that the arrester had other suspicions which would have justified him in detaining the suspect does not validate the arrest' (John Sprack; 1995p, 380). (Te2fd:48-54)

In attempting to make sense of the essay questions and how she is expected to respond to them, Tara draws together both verbal and written comments made about the essay question. In the first essay, for instance, as well as trying to make sense of the written directive *advise,* Tara was also trying to understand the tutor's verbal instructions who had called for *not too many facts and to argue it.* Tara states

> *I'm only there to advise her anyway. I'm not there to say anything else. I mean, there's a lot of information I could put down, but, like I said, when I look at it, I can't really* <u>*argue*</u> *it in any way.(*Te1disd1:368)

There are significant problems surrounding the wordings *advise* and *argue* which, in Tara's mind, conflict. She knows she has to display all the relevant knowledge for the benefit of the tutor-addresseee. But in trying to accommodate the client-addressee, Tara assumes she has to provide a range of perspectives, in order to advise, rather than **tell** her one preferred option, which is what *argue* suggests to her. This is further complicated by the presumed need for Tara as writer to be absent from her text, as indicated in the written guidelines on writing for her course:

> Write in the impersonal third person. There are few things so irritating as the constant intrusion of the author <u>via</u> the (unnecessary) first person 'I think..'.

The function of the adjective *unnecessary* is ambiguous here- does it refer to all uses of *I* or is it signalling that some uses are in fact justified? Tara, based on verbal comments by tutors in seminars, understands it to mean that all uses of *I* are prohibited. Yet such a

prohibition seems to contradict the tutor's statement in the feedback comments on the final draft of Tara's second *advise* essay:

Some good discussion of some of the issues involved. However, some evidence of what you thought the likely outcome would have been would have been useful.

This seems to contradict Tara's understanding of the directive not to use the first person, which she understands as not to include her opinion. Overall, the combination of directives, **advise-argue-write in the impersonal third person**, and the directive, after completing the essay, **what you thought---would have been useful** are confusing to say the least, and make it difficult for Tara to respond in a coherent way to the essay question. She achieves passes in the low 50s for both essays.

5.4.4 *Trick questions*

Trying to establish what tutors expected in answer to the 'essay question' was a central concern in discussions with all student-writers. In the second of the two essays Diane and I talked about, she moved beyond the wording of the essay question in her attempt to make sense of the question and focussed on the teaching context: she waited for the relevant lecture, related to the essay question, in order to help her make sense of the question. Yet it caused greater confusion as her comments below indicate:

2000 word essay for Communication Studies	**Diane's comments after lecture**
'It is not enough to show that stereotypes exist in the media; we need also to show their causes and effects.' Discuss with reference to media portrayal of ONE of the following; industrial relations, women, black people, deviance.	*D: Since we've had the lecture, he's just totally put me off.* *T: Why?* *D: Because they, like, give you these questions and they're like bloody trick questions.* *T: So what's trick about this one?* *D: He doesn't want...first of all* ***he doesn't want to know that really stereotypes in the media exist.They already know that. What they want to know is the causes and effects.*** My emphasis (De2disd2:23)

Although it seems that all the lecturer has done is to repeat the wording of the written question, his verbal gloss actually changes the focus of the question. In the written question, the directive *discuss*, placed as it is outside the inverted commas, makes **both**

of the preceding clauses its object, suggesting to Diane that she should discuss both. She had thus begun by discussing the first clause, by attempting to briefly define what is meant by stereotype and to provide examples from the media. However, when she heard the lecturer's comment, reported above (see bold print), she became confused. In his verbal gloss on the question, the lecturer tells the students that he only wants the second clause/proposition- *we need also to show their causes and effects*- to be discussed; the first- *it is not enough to show that stereotypes exist* - is not to be discussed but taken as given.

Diane points to the confusion she feels in the essay question and makes her new interpretation of what the question requires- based on the sense she has made after the lecturer's comment- clear to the seminar tutor:

I even said to the woman in the seminar, and I said, you know when you give these questions out, it's like you're trying to trick students, like, that doesn't look how, it doesn't say, I don't mean talk about what stereotype is, just talk about the causes and effects. (De2disd2:262)

There is no further clarification from the seminar tutor so, throughout her writing of the essay, Diane continues to try to make sense of both the essay question as written and the lecturer's verbal comments. In attempting to do so, she returns time and time again to the written text, but with the words spoken by the lecturer always in mind:

(D reads) *'We need also to show their causes'. It's this what gets me. Causes and effects.* (De2disd1:153)

In this context of a set essay question, the *we need* functions as an indirect command to the student to tell her what to write; here then if Diane focusses only on this clause and reads it as a command, her lecturer's comment to write about *causes and effects* is coherent. However, this understanding of the task continues to contradict what the written question indicates; that the student-writer should discuss both propositions within the question. So Diane is left with an overriding concern that whatever she does she cannot meet the expectations of the lecturer. In this instance, she decides to try to respond to the essay question as glossed by the lecturer and to focus on the causes and effects, without considering in any detail notions of stereotypes and their existence in

the media. At this point, it should be noted, Diane assumes that it is the lecturer who will be marking her essay.

However, it is the seminar tutor who reads and marks her essay. From the written feedback on the essay, Diane discovers that she might have been more successful, in terms of marks, had she worked with her original understanding.

Essay question	**Tutor comment on final draft of essay (made by seminar tutor)**
'It is not enough to show that stereotypes exist in the media; we need also to show their causes and effects'. Discuss with reference to media portrayal of ONE of the following: industrial relations, women, black people, deviance.	What I'd like you to consider further is the notion of stereotype. Can it (stereotype) adequately illustrate how and why unequal power relations are reproduced or does it merely demonstrate they exist? You need to address and critically evaluate the concept itself in order to fully answer the question.

There are several points to make here. Firstly, the two tutors involved in the teaching and assessing of the course - the lecturer and the seminar tutor- seem to have either different views about the nature of the task or, at the least, have significantly different ways of communicating their view as to the nature of the task. Whatever the nature of their difference, it is the student-writer who is left guessing. Diane felt that the lecturer had specifically emphasized that he did not want a discussion about whether stereotypes exist and had specifically requested that the students not spend time in defining stereotypes; the second tutor, the seminar tutor, who in this case is the tutor-marker, disagrees.

Secondly, it is only from the second tutor's feedback on the completed essay that a key, but implicit, demand of the essay question becomes clear: *Can it (stereotype) adequately illustrate how and why unequal power relations are reproduced or does it merely demonstrate they exist?* These references to power relations and social reproduction are absent in the original question.

Diane receives a mark in the low 50s. What does Diane take away from this experience? Although she had been awarded a distinction for a previous essay, which was also a *discuss* essay question, she feels that this experience demonstrates that she does not know how to write such essays:

And I'm not doing anything that says 'discuss'. I'm going to do things that say 'describe' next time. (De2disd3:10)

Here she moves away from the necessary practice she was beginning to develop, that of making links between wordings, meanings and expectations in this socio-discursive context and fixes her attention on the wording of the question, the assumption being that the wording/ meaning will remain constant. But of course this is not the case. An obvious example is that even when the wording in an essay question at HE level directs the student-writer to describe, the expectation is that she will engage in some type of analysis rather than description.

5.5 Student-writers' desire for dialogue

That the student-writers in this project want dialogue with their tutors is clear: this is reflected in their decision to spend time with me, as tutor-researcher, to talk about their writing as well as in comments they make (see rest of this section and also chapter 9). Their desire for dialogue contrasts with the frustration and disappointment they often feel about the type of relationship they have with tutors. An extreme example of the distance between student and tutor is Tara's account of the abuse a lecturer had hurled at a lecture hall full of 100 students. She recounted how one lecturer had shouted at the students because, he said, one student had dared to leave an anonymous note under his door seeking clarification on the structure of the assignment. After berating the students for being cowards for not speaking to him directly about their questions- although, according to Tara, some had done- Tara said the lecturer gave them these guidelines:

He goes on the board then and said, erm, 'This is how you do it, introduction, main body, conclusion, that's it. Go off and do it now.' So we all said to ourselves 'thanks very much, like, you're a bloody big help'. (Te2disd1 side 2:255)

This is an extreme example of the assumption that the essay is an unproblematic form, that is, that the conventions surrounding student writing are 'common sense', and also of the lack of dialogic space between students and tutor.

More common examples of the type of monologic space that exists are those already discussed above, where student-writers not only found it difficult to make sense of the demands, but were frustrated by the little opportunity to explore such difficulties with the tutors. The encounter between Nadia and her tutor, reported below by Nadia in talk with me, the type of talking-learning relationship the student-writers feel they have with tutors, in contrast to what they would like (in bold):

*N: I'm not really taking them (*the verbal and written comments made by the tutor*) into account.*
T: Ignoring her? Why?
N: Ignoring her basically. ***If I could go and talk to her about it*** *then maybe I'd take them into consideration, but I'm glad I actually changed from her to somebody else.*
My emphasis (Ne4/5disf:179)

In this instance, Nadia, having been given the essay question, attempts to make sense of it without ever re-negotiating her understanding with the tutor. She writes the essay and receives feedback, but sees such feedback as idiosyncratic, rather than helping her to learn more about the nature of the task and event in which she has engaged. So, although one obvious way for student-writers to make sense of what they are trying to do is to ask their tutors, the student-writers in this project generally felt that this is often neither possible nor, if it does happen, useful. In general, they felt extremely frustrated by the type of talking space they encountered. This was even the case in an area of study where oppositional practices are encouraged. So that Kate, even though she felt generally positive about the course she was studying, Women's Studies, did not dare to ask for clarification of expectations or assessment criteria. The lack of communication was so extreme that she decided she could not study in such an environment and, although passing her course work with marks in the 60s, decided to leave at the end of her first year.[4]

5.6 Addressivity and meaning making within the context of culture of higher education

The confusion that all ten student-writers in this study expressed about the expectations surrounding essay writing, as exemplified in the specific instances discussed in the previous sections, was central to their experience of writing in HE. Moreover, such confusion was not confined to particular tutors, departments, institutions or areas of study. I would therefore argue that it is important to view such confusion not as an individual student phenomenon but as reflecting a dominant practice in HE, which I am calling here, the *institutional practice of mystery.*

As can be seen from the examples discussed in the previous section, this practice is not made up of a discrete list of actions, but is enacted in different ways. In the first two examples (5.4.1, 5.4.2), student-writers do not understand why their essays are successful/unsuccessful and in both instances they perceive success and failure as the consequence of individual tutors' quirks. Thus through such experiences Diane is no clearer as to the criteria for a successful essay and Nadia is no closer to understanding the conventions underlying such criteria; she does not know, when writing the essay or after tutor feedback, that she is not expected to bring 'minority' issues to the centre of her response to an essay question, unless explicitly told to do so. In the third example (5.4.3), it is the unproblematic use of the wording *advise,* resulting from the hybrid contexts of law as profession and as academic discipline, which causes the student-writer difficulties. In the fourth example, (5.4.4), problems are most obviously caused by one tutor's reading and interpretation of the underlying intention of the question being at odds with the interpretation of both the second tutor and the student-writer.

A central dimension to these different and specific experiences of the student-writers in the examples above is the dominant type of *addressivity* within which their meaning making takes place. I find it useful to draw on Bakhtin's notion of addressivity here (1986: see also 2.2.3), rather than talking of student-tutor relationship or writer-reader relationship, because it goes beyond viewing the impact of such relationships as **important** to the meaning making process (as in, for example, Flower 1994) to seeing them as **central** to what the addressor can mean. In this framework, the real or potential

addressee contributes to what can be meant as much as does the addressor. Addressivity is central to Bakhtin's understanding of language and meaning making, linking with his notion of the living utterance as one in which meaning comes into being between participants, rather than being transmitted from one to another (see Holquist 1981:63). At a more abstract level, addressivity refers to the way in which all meaning making involves drawing on the meaning making- the voices in terms of wordings, beliefs, knowledge- of others; thus, in any instance of meaning making, addressor and addressee are to be viewed as being involved in a *chain of speech*[5] *communication* (Bakhtin 1986:91).

The socio-discursive space which is inhabited by student-writers and tutors, as illustrated in this chapter, is predominantly monologic in that it is the tutor's voice which predominates, determining what the task is and how it should be done, without negotiating the nature of the expectations surrounding this task through dialogue with the student-writer. Within this monologic relationship, there is denial of real participants, that is, actual tutors and student-writers with their particular understandings and interests, the elaboration and exploration of which might have done two things: a) enabled the student writers in this project to negotiate some understanding of what was being demanded ; and b) enabled a range of other meanings to be made. I continue to explore aspects of these points in chapters 6, 7 and 8.

In relation to academic writing, it is important to emphasize that such monologism, where there is a denial of actual speaking participants, is not separate from academic writing but is closely bound up with the particular nature of essayist literacy practice itself. I explore further the the nature of the monologic student/tutor relationship and the implications for meaning making in chapters 6, 7 and 8. Here, I wish to illustrate specific connections between the monologic tutor/student relationship around meaning making and the monologism inherent in essayist literacy.

5.6.1 Reifying the essay question

Consider the extract from a transcript below where Mary and I are talking about what the essay question means:

*M: I can't explain it in any other way because when **it** says briefly describe...*My emphasis (Me1disd1:111)

Although I had written the essay question, we both talk here as if the question were disembodied, had a life of its own and had nothing to do with me, Theresa the tutor. We thus both keep it as distant, fixed and agentless. This is a common feature across transcripts of talk between the student-writers and I. What is important about this distancing between the essay question as text, the student-writer and I, is that it is consonant with the notion of the ideal text within the practice of essayist literacy: a text which is autonomous and where *all meaning resides* (see 2.4 and 6.2.1). We are thus working with the notion of the autonomous text in our talk, as we work towards putting the notion of the autonomous text into writing.

5.6.2 Reifying the reader

Again, instead of acknowledging me as the actual reader, I talk as if the reader were some non-existent other body: throughout the transcripts both I and the student-writers reinforce each other's reification of 'the reader' (for discussion, see Nystrand 1990). For example, I tell the student-writers, as in this example with Siria, that she needs to remind **'the reader'** about what she's doing in each section and why. In this instance Siria replies:

*Right, so I've got to pretend---I think what I should have probably done is to pretend, what **you're** telling me now, that **they** haven't read the other bits. And to introduce, 'this is why. Cause I've sort of wrote it **as if you'd understand why**. Like **the reader** reads the first part and **he** knows what's coming in the second part.* My emphasis (Se1disfd:208)

The wordings in bold illustrate the difficulty Siria is having in locating this reader: she had assumed I was the reader- *as if you'd understand why*- but being told by me to remind 'the reader', she struggles to find this reader as indicated by her shifting wordings- from *they*, to *you* to *the reader* to *he*.

My failure to acknowledge my relationship with the student-writer was challenged directly by Reba in relation to the content of her writing. When I asked her why there

was no mention of Reba being bilingual in her essay on bilingualism and state education, she said:

R: You know that, don't you?
T: Yeah but I might know some of this as well.
R: But you know who's writing it though.
T: Right, so because I know who's writing it, am I supposed to think well she's a bilingual, so she knows a bit about what she's talking about and then she's read these books...
R: Yeah.(Re2disfd:230)

That the student-writer may not know and/or may not want to write as if there were no shared space with the tutor-reader, is exemplified in the following example. Here Mary and I are talking about a sociology essay she is writing for her sociology lecturer, on the existence of an underclass in Britain (at this stage I was talking with her as tutor-researcher, rather than tutor-assessor). I suggest she should define in her text Marx's position on the nature of an underclass. She disagrees, angrily:

M: Oh come on, Marx, Marx, that's all you hear.
T: But if that's all you hear, maybe that's what they want to see as well. (Me5disd1:16)

She feels that because Marx is referred to constantly throught her course she can assume a shared basis of knowledge with the tutor and hence is misunderstanding the nature of the dominant type of addressivity in the student-writer/tutor-assessor relationship. This is exemplified in another instance, where she lessens the significance of a tutor's comment on evidence and correct referencing. She knows that she has drawn from the same source text as her tutor and thus assumes a shared knowledge, which of course the tutor does not.

Mary's text	Tutor's comment on text	Mary's comment on tutor's comment
The distribution of West Indians, Asians and Whites in the labour market is shown in table 5.2 (see page 7*)---The distribution of black and white workers in occupation one and two is equal. Only 5% of West Indians are employers, managers or proferssionals compared to 13% of Asians and 19% whites.(Me4fd:54ff)	These figures are not in tables 5.1 or 5.2.	*M: He knows what I'm talking about cause he (tutor) uses that book for one of our lectures. I know that what I've done is not drastically wrong. Alright, I know there's no supervisors in table 5 but it's the same, same.* (Me4disf:91)

* relevant reference given in preceeding paragraph of Mary's text

This is not simply an instance of a student-writer not knowing the convention of the reified reader in essayist literacy but of her being angry about this practice. She is resisting the practice of writing without actual readers in the same way that several of the student-writers resist the practice of writing as if there were no actual writers, as I discuss in the following chapter.

5.7 Conclusion

In arguing in this chapter that there is an institutional practice of mystery, I am claiming the following: firstly, that the specific instances discussed here, whilst drawn from a small number of individual student-writers' experiences, reflect a dominant practice within HE; secondly, that this practice, which I have called *an institutional practice of mystery,* is of particular significance for those students least familiar with dominant conventions. At stake is the nature of their participation in HE.

Whilst the view prevails that the essays/student academic texts are unproblematic forms, the construction of which should be part of students' 'common sense' knowledge, experience from this and other studies indicates that student academic texts are expected

to be constructed in and through conventions which are often not visible to either tutor or student. The tutor may know them implicitly having been socialized into them through years of formal schooling (and in many cases through socio-discursive practices in their home and communities) but the student, particularly the student-outsider does not, as is reflected in the recurring questions they asked in this project. In order to be able to make sense of this practice, student-writers need, at the least, to be able to ask questions about specific conventions at specific moments of meaning making in their academic writing (see chapter 7 for discussion of the talk between student-writer and tutor).

The great confusion which student-writers experience alongside the lack of teaching of conventions is so all pervasive a dimension of the experience of the student-writers in this project, that it is useful to name this the *practice of mystery.* This practice is enacted through the monologic relationship which exists bewteen student and tutor, where there is little space for actual students and tutors and, which is consonant with the fictionalization of participants in essay text literacy. I would suggest that this works towards the exclusion of student-writers from HE as currently configured, particularly those who, as in this study, are from social groups traditionally excluded from higher education, in three ways.

Firstly, exclusion occurs because what is assumed to be 'common sense' is in fact only one privileged literacy practice; as such student outsiders cannot know the conventions embedded in such a practice unless these are taught (the question of how these can be taught is discussed further in chapter 7).

Secondly, the denial of actual participants in essayist literacy, although a dominant feature to this practice and one with which student-writers thus need to become familiar, unnecessarily complicates their learning of essayist lteracy, at this stage of their writing in HE. Writing for someone they feel is attempting to understand what they are trying to say, and why, is likely to be more successful, as is illustrated in chapters 7 and 8. The effect in the short term- this project has followed student-writers through 1-3 years of their HE experience- is as follows: student-writers spend inordinate amounts of time attempting to sort out the nature of their tutors' expectations, which could be more

usefully spent on other activities with indications that they may achieve unnecessarily low marks ; some may even decide to leave the institution (this was the case with two students, Kate and Sara).

Thirdly and more radically, having to write within essayist literacy, whilst enabling particular types of meaning making, excludes others. I will explore this in the following chapter.

NOTES

[1] The three responses in research and practice that I outline in the following sections correspond quite closely to the three models of student writing in higher education recently discussed by Lea and Street 1998.

[2] Whilst recognizing that 'essay' is used to refer to a wide range of text types and hence masks the complex nature of the writing that students are asked to do, I also think there are deep, although often unacknowledged reasons for referring to these texts under one name. That is, as is indicated by my focus on *essayist* literacy in chapter 7, such texts share deep, underlying ways of meaning.

[3] The wordings in extracts from written texts, both of the student-writer and the tutors, are as in the originals.

[4] The material constraints acting on individuals, schools and disciplines obviously plays a major part in the specific communication possible: in this instance Women's Studies as an academic field was being squeezed out of this particular university at the time.

[5] Bakhtin (1986) stresses throughout that in talking of **speech** genres, he is referring to both spoken and written utterances. For example, *Special emphasis should be placed on the extreme heterogeneity of speech genres (oral and written): 61* and *Everything we have said here also pertains to written and read speech*: 69.

Chapter 6

AUTHORING IN ACADEMIA: REGULATION AND DESIRE [1]

6.1 Introduction

In the previous chapter I argued that there is a dominant practice within HE which works towards marginalizing the student-writers by not teaching them the conventions for meaning making. This dominant practice of mystery works towards excluding them from the project of higher education as currently configured.

Exclusion at another level also occurs: that of excluding certain ways of meaning. For although the conventions of *essayist literacy* surrounding student academic writing remain implicit, they are in operation and work towards regulating student meaning making in specific ways. By analyzing extracts from student-writers' texts and their talk about their texts, we can glimpse the ways in which processes of regulation work both in relation to individual meaning making and particular areas of experience.

My aim in this chapter is as follows: firstly, in 6.2, to briefly outline the ways in which the notion of regulation has been explored in relation to academic textual practices and student academic writing; secondly, in 6.3, to explore how regulation occurs by focusing on specific instances of individual meaning making; and, thirdly, in 6.4, to present fragments of stories around meaning making which illustrate the complex ways in which dominant textual practices connect with and diverge from individual student desires.

6.2 Academic conventions regulate

The notion that meaning making is regulated by existing discourses in powerful ways has been explored at both abstract and more text oriented levels. At the more abstract level, as discussed in chapter 2, the work of Foucault is important in emphasizing how individual meaning making relates to dominant discourses within society. His work is important in elucidating the existence of powerful discourses, such as dominant

discourses of medicine, criminality, sexuality and the ways in which they work towards regulating what we as social beings come to know and to be (see for example Foucault 1972, 1973; Sheridan 1980). This work has been drawn on extensively by many working within the social sciences (I have found the following work particularly useful: Weedon 1987 in feminism; Fraser 1991 for interconnections between feminism, critical and post structuralism; and Griffiths 1995 in education) and has also influenced writers whose primary interest is language, such as Kress and Fairclough and whose aim is to explore interrelationships between discourses at the level of culture/society with discourses at the level of texts (see Fairclough 1992a ; Hodge and Kress 1993). A central interest of these writers within critical linguistics is to explore the ideological nature of particular features of discourse. One prominent example from Hodge and Kress is the way in which the discourse feature of nominalization obscures human agency (see Hodge and Kress 1993:20-23). By foregrounding the recurrence of particular textual features- in this case nominalizations- they show how these features contribute not only to the construction of specific texts, but to particular bodies of knowledge and to ways of knowing and being within society.

Of particular interest in this study is the relationship between the orders of discourse of a particular institution, higher education, and the meaning making of individual student-writers. As discussed in chapter 2, orders of discourse are understood as configurations of conventions underlying actual socio-discursive practices, particular to, and constitutive of, the university. Of interest here are the conventions underlying prototypical textual practices surrounding student academic writing. What is important about these textual practices is that they are not autonomous:

The interests, values, beliefs and sets of power relations in the social context as a whole are inscribed in the prototypical ways of doing things that people draw on in their day-to-day uses of language. (Clark and Ivanic 1997: 12)

In the following section, I outline the ways in which the prototypical-dominant conventions for using the semiotic system have been problematized in relation to the regulation of meaning making in academia.

6.2.1 Focus on essayist literacy

Whilst it is important to acknowledge diversity across literacy practices within HE (see comments on Bazerman, Macdonald and Vande Kopple in 6.2.2 below; see also Ivanic 1993, 1998 chapter 10 ; Lea and Street 1998), a central argument in this thesis is that it is both possible and necessary to talk of a dominant literacy practice within the institution, which can usefully be called *essayist literacy*, after Scollon and Scollon (1981; see 2.4). Gee draws on the work of Ronald and Suzanne Scollon for further elucidating *essayist literacy*, focusing in particular on the ways in which this particular way of constructing knowledge is privileged in formal schooling. Throughout his book on Social Linguistics and Literacies (1990,1996), Gee makes reference to this particular form of literacy, the features of which he summarizes as follows: such writing (or talking based on similar practices) is linear, values a particular type of explicitness, has one central point , theme, character, event, at any one time, is in standard English. It is a type of writing which aims to inform rather than entertain. Important relationships to be signalled are those between sentence and sentence, not between speakers nor between sentence and speaker. The reader has to constantly monitor grammatical and lexical information and as such there is a need for the writer to be explicit about logical implications. There is a fictionalization of both writer and reader, the reader being an idealization *a rational mind formed by the rational body of knowledge of which the essay is a part.* The author is a fiction *since the process of writing and editing essayist texts leads to an effacement of individual and idiosyncratic identity* (Gee 1990:63). He exemplifies the nature of this practice -both what it is and the ways in which its privileging is maintained -by contrasting the sharing time stories of two seven year olds; a 7 year old African-American girl and an Anglo-American white girl. The example is drawn from Michaels (1981). One significant reason for the failure, in the school's terms, of the African-American girl's story relates to her purpose in telling it. As Gee states, her purpose is not primarily to make or focus on 'a point' but to engage in making meaning through patterns of language in which she invites the participation of the audience .The Anglo-American child, by contrast, through the careful guidance of the teacher, engages in the learning of meaning making consonant with essayist literacy, by assuming no shared knowledge with the audience and by staying close to one focal point, that is, what the teacher has decided should be the focal point, the making of the

candles. Other talk, such as talk about the colour of the candles- which perhaps would be more obvious given that at the child is holding two candles for the rest of the children to see and which the child begins to engage in- is diverted, as the teacher, with the child's co-operation, constructs one principal focus on the making of the candles. (see Gee 1996:103-121 for full discussion , including the deeper meanings of the texts). Such a practice is ideologically inscribed in that it works in favour of groups who routinely engage in such meaning making and thus have the appropriate linguistic capital (see Bourdieu 1984; 1991), and against groups of people who culturally and communally have access to and engage in practices other than the standard privileged form (see chapter 7 for discussion of tutor/student talk to teach and learn essayist literacy).

The notion of essayist unity is important for exploring the student-writers' experience of meaning making in academic writing in two key respects: a) it foregrounds academic writing as being part of a particular, rather than the only, literacy practice; b) it foregrounds, in general terms, the ways in which prototypical academic writing privileges particular ways of meaning. However, there is a need to tease out the specific ways in which discoursal features contribute to making particular meanings in written texts. A range of studies have been carried out which contribute to this elucidation, as I outline below.

6.2.2 Focus on academic texts and regulation

Commonality across academic discourse has been signalled by, amongst others, Corson (1985) and Halliday (1988, 1989, 1993b). Ivanic draws on these writers to highlight the following common features of academic discourse: *high lexical density, a preponderance of relational and mental process clauses, very few material process clauses, a highly nominal style, the use of carrier nouns and graeco-latin vocabulary, the lack of expressive metaphor, scare quotes and/or attribution to other writers* (Ivanic 1993: 220; see also Ivanic 1998).[2] That these are not formal features separate from meaning, but contributors to the meanings that can be made and hence the construction of knowledge within texts, has been emphasized by writers focusing on specific fields of knowledge. For example, Macdonald (1992) has focused on sentence level analysis in relation to psychology, history and literature and Vande Kopple (1992, 1994) has

focused on grammatical subjects in the area of science (for example of framework for analyzing a range of discursive features of written texts in relation to fields of knowledge, see Bazerman 1981).

Key questions posed by those interested in student academic writing in relation to features of academic discourse are as follows: to what extent are particular features essential for the meanings that researchers/practitioners wish to make (as is suggested for example in Halliday's comments on early science (1993b) and Vande Kopple's analysis of grammatical subjects in science (1994); and, relatedly, to what extent are dominant discursive features ideologically inscribed in that they function to exclude certain ways of knowing and being? These questions have been salient in North American debates and more recently raised to prominence by the work of Clark and Ivanic in England. I will return to Clark and Ivanic below, but here focus on examples of North American studies.

Numerous writers within North America have discussed the ways in which continued use of dominant discoursal features works towards including privileged groups and ways of meaning in society and marginalize others. Some have engaged predominantly in philosophical discussions with little attention to specific textual features (see for example Berlin 1988; Bizzell 1990,1991,1992). Others have focused on links between specific social groups and specific discursive features. One example is the work of Villanueva (1993), where, exploring ethnicity and dominant ways of meaning making , he traces dominant Western ways of making meaning in academia to Plato's ideal of the knowability of the world which, in turn, he links with the privileging of *plain, precise ways of Latin.* Villanueva contrasts this tradition with that of another rhetorical tradition exemplified by Cicero and which he links with the specific ways in which Puertoricans currently use English and Spanish. He gives as an example the device of amplification- the use of increasingly more ornate sentences in order to repeat a point- which is a feature of Puertoricans' use of language (see Villanueva 1993:85).

Feminist critiques of dominant ways of meaning within academia focus on the centrality of logocentrism at the expense of personal connection and affective accounts of experience (Flynn 1988: Nye:1990: Campbell 1992). Other criticisms include the

dominant discursive practice of, what Frey calls, *the adversary method.* By this she means the practice of attacking and criticising other scholars' work in order to advance the author's own position. She foregrounds this as the dominant practice within the journal of the Modern Language Association, based on an analysis of articles published between 1977-1985. This echoes Stanley and Wise's criticism of *the uncharitable academic three-step* prevalent in academic journals (1990:46).

Elbow has also argued against the adversarial method of meaning making, criticized by Frey, Stanley and Wise above. He has called for a distinction to be made between conventions relating to intellectual practices, such as problem solving, and conventions which relate more obviously to stylistic features in dominant academic discourse (1991). A more radical response to the recognition of dominant, hence exclusivist, ways of meaning in academia has been to call for a discursive *contact zone*, where there would be space for meaning making drawing on diverse discourse practices within and outside the academy (see Pratt 1991: Lu: 1994). This call has been adopted more recently by Bizzell in her argument for the construction of *hybrid discourses* (1997) and represents a shift in her thinking on the teaching and learning of academic writing. In earlier work, she had argued that student-writers' control over their meaning making would be facilitated through their learning of dominant academic discourse practices (see Bizzell 1982a). These calls for a discursive contact zone echo Bakhtin's emphasis on dialogue as the ideal in human communicative activity (see 2.5.1).

6.2.3 Focus on texts and their producers

The emphasis in the works mentioned above- both in critical discourse analysis and in the field of composition- is on explorations of meaning construction through, predominantly, text focused discussion. Whilst useful for highlighting connections between discursive features and meaning construction, this approach is problematic to the extent that it tends to privilege the analyst's position over and above that of the producer of the text: that is, the analyst as expert decides which features of text are particularly significant or worth highlighting, without concerning him/herself with the perspective of individual producers of texts at specific moments in time.

However, this expert stance is mitigated in some studies where there is an attempt to problematize textual features, whilst at the same time drawing closely on the perspective of the producer. Thus Lu has explored both her own experience as a Chinese-American in moving through different discourses, signalling the importance of particular wordings in specific acts of meaning making in the home and at school; she points to the words *red* and *love* (see 1987). Lu also draws attention to the importance of exploring the perspective of the producer of an academic student text on the use of particular wordings within that text; she focuses on *can* and *able* (see 1994). A similar approach is adopted in the work of Ivanic, who through discourse based discussions with student-writers has been able to foreground their feelings and perspectives of particular lexicogrammatical features in relation to both their desires in writing and the constraints they experience. Thus, Ivanic and Simpson for example have explored the different types of writer presence in texts by analysing a number of linguistic features, such as personal pronoun and the length of sentences (1992). Ivanic and Roach explore in particular the way in which certain lexical items are privileged within academia and question whether they contribute to meaning making or simply maintaining dominant discourse practices (1990). Clark has also foregrounded student-writers' perspectives on their use of specific discourse features. In her teaching, she has problematized the use of certain dominant features- for example, nominalizations, hedging, modality, use of first person pronoun- with her students in order to make visible dominant ways of meaning and to encourage student-writers to explore possible choices (see Clark and others 1990).

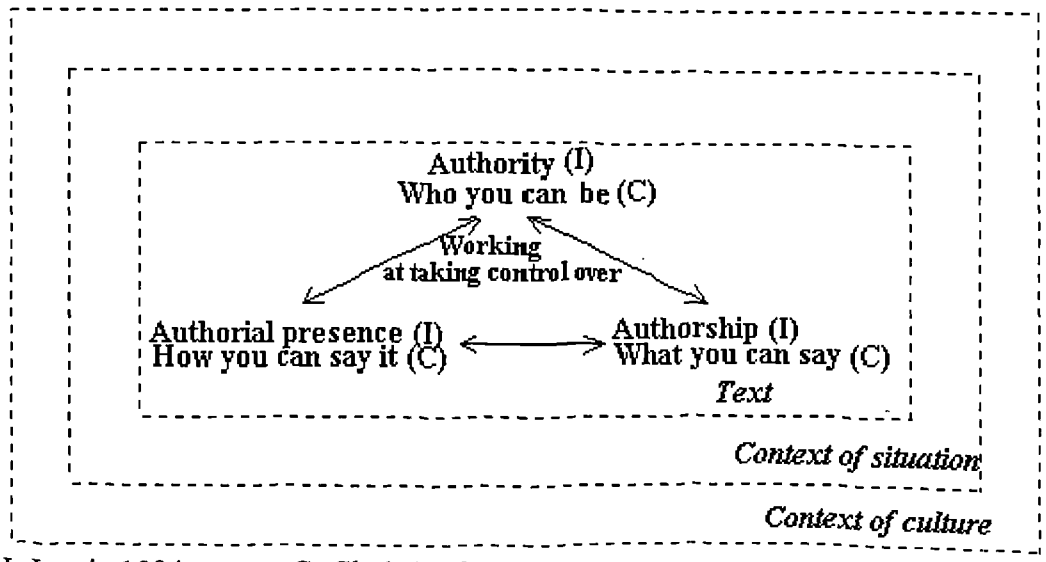
In this study I take the view that it is important to explore the ways in which individuals experience textual features in relation to their meaning making. In this way I hope to avoid presenting dogmatic conclusions about the workings of discourse that Fairclough and Kress warn against (see Fairclough 1995: 231;see Kress 1996:16). I also want to acknowledge the complex intertextuality involved in any specific act of meaning making. That is to say, in acknowledging the privileging of one discourse above another, it is at the same time important to acknowledge that the relationship between actual ways of meaning in the world is complex and cannot be viewed as totally separate (unless focusing on two distinct and predominantly homogeneous cultural groups, as seemed to be the case in the work of the Scollon and Scollon referred to

above). As Gee points out, in most instances of interaction in the world, Discourses- Gee uses Discourses to indicate ways of being, saying and knowing- *are always jostling against each other, there are few pure instances* (1996: 164). Exploring the experience of meaning making of student-writers involves acknowledging the *jostling* of the privileged discourses with marginalized, oppositional discourses, dimensions of both of which may constitute the student's actual habitus and the actual discourses of the institution. *Jostling* is a useful way of thinking about how the student-writers in this thesis work at making meaning, and links with the way in which Bakhtin elucidates the nature of language, as discussed in 2.5.

My aim here is to attempt to glimpse how student-writers come to mean as they do within academia. In doing so, I am conscious both of the questions raised by the writers above on the ways in which academic conventions work towards regulating meaning making and regulation as a strong dimension to the experience of the student-writers in this project, as reflected in their talk with me. Regulation, therefore, is the principal focus in this chapter, although, as I discuss in 6.4, it is also possible to glimpse individual desire around meaning making.

In the following sections, I use Clark's questions and Ivanic's framework on authoring in academia as a heuristic to explore the student-writers' meaning making in academic writing. I reproduce here the diagram I introduced in 2.7.3.

Exploring student-writers' experience of authoring in academia



I=Ivanic 1994 C=Clark 1990

In 6.3 , I focus on specific instances of regulation, drawn from analyses of transcribed discussions with students around their texts. In 6.4. I present fragments of individual stories around meaning making which enable us to glimpse the complex ways in which dominant textual practices connect with and diverge from individual desires.

6.3 How academic conventions regulate

6.3.1 .What you are(not) allowed to say

Extracts from texts	Talk about texts
1. There has been a large increase in couples living together without being married. In 1989, one in ten couples were cohabiting (general Household Survey 1989). There are many reasons for this. Some cannot marry because one partner is not divorced, some do not want the financial responsibilities which come with marriage and others live together as a sort of 'trial' marriage.(Be1:24-27)	1.Bridget in talking about this draft, comments on what she thinks they (tutors) are looking for: *B: They just want to know that we understand what they're trying to teach us. They're not interested in what we think about it* (laughs)*...they want to know that we've understood.* (Be1disfd:256)
2.I can actually say that I did slip through the system and am unable to identify any support system which has been successfully supporting the bilingualism of minority language speakers, such as myself, during those years. (Ne2d1: 218-224)	2. This section disappeared in the final draft. I ask Nadia why. *N: X* (tutor) *says you shouldn't say that.* *T: Why not?* *N: He says you don't want to offend anybody.* *T: So who are you likely to offend?* *N: The education officers or the education...* *T: Who's going to read this?* *N: Just you and X and the moderator.* *T: So who are you going to offend?* *N: The education system.* (Ne2did1:114)

Extracts from texts	**Talk about texts**
3. I am not a monolingual because I speak two distinctive codes (English and Creole) and I'm not recognized as bilingual by certain linguists, psycholinguists, and educationalists. (Me2fd:135-139)	3. *M: I feel there are things you can say and things that you cannot.* *T: Like?* *M:* (Laughs*) like those white people, what I'd like to say would be out of context* Mary said she had found writing about Creole, particularly reading about white views on Creole, really hard going. I asked whether she couldn't include some of her anger in the essay. *M: It's too big. When that feeling comes to you, it's like, you really want to, you know* (lowers voice), *bring it out. But the way you bring it out probably is not nice. Not swearing, I wouldn't swear.--- It's just that when I read certain things---I thought what the heck with these people. And I thought, I'm only caught up in it, following the rubbish. That's what I started to think. I think that even now. What am I going there for? I just don't want the employment centre to be harassing me for a job. I'm not going to work for £45 a week. I'd rather go and do this.*(Me2disf: side 2,45)

In the first of the above extracts Bridget, writing for a social work course, expresses the view that the institutional expectation of her meaning making is knowledge telling. It is not surprising therefore that, in her texts, she works at repeating what she feels her tutors want to hear and to exclude her views and thoughts. I will explore the problems she faces with such an approach in 6.4.1.

However, even when it seems that student-writers are being encouraged to go beyond a transmission model of learning and to be personally present in their writing, their views may be being excluded. Examples 2 and 3 are from a Language Studies course where in written guidelines around the writing of these essays- several of which focus on bilingualism and education- students were encouraged to draw on their personal and educational experience, as students and workers, as well as theory and research. Yet it is clear from their accounts that they feel severely constrained about what they can say about their perspectives on their experience of bilingualism, schooling and racism. How their voices are regulated clearly varies in the examples. Number 2 is an example of

direct tutor control. Nadia had planned to include a comment on her personal experience which had emerged during her talk-aloud session (where she talked aloud on tape alone in order to work at her ideas: see 3.3); but edited this out on direction from a tutor. Such explicit and direct control is probably more unusual than indirect forms of control and, in this instance, highlights the issue of variable tutor status and power within the institution. Here, it is a Black tutor who advises against what he perceives to be rocking the boat, reflecting perhaps his own sense of vulnerability within a white institution.

Example 3 is more representative of the way in which what can be said in the institution is regulated. Example 3 arose out of me asking how Mary felt about what she had written. Whilst her written text does not reflect her frustration and anger around experts' views on Creole, her spoken comments indicate that not being allowed to say what she wants to say raises serious questions for her, about whether she should be involved in a course in an academic institution. Her comments also illustrate the material risks involved in saying what she wants to say and potentially annoying those in power: given that her current life choices are between unemployment and higher education, taking the risk of losing her preferred option is too great.

6.3.2 How you are (not) allowed to say it

Extracts from texts	**Extracts from taped discussions on students' texts**
4. The media reflects what society thinks as a whole, or just reflects the hierarchy ideas. Women are portrayed in the media as being total airheads. (Relfd:118-121)	4. I read, emphasising *airheads*. *R*: (laughs) *Can you not use that?* *T: Well, what do you think?* *R: No you can't.* *T: Why not?* *R: Because it's slang.* *T: It was good to see it in a way, but in terms of an academic essay, it probably wouldn't be looked on too well.* *R: I know.* *T: So, can you think of another word, or words instead of that?* *R: Er, in a derogatory way. But I don't like using these words cause it sounds...* *T: It sounds what?* *R: It sounds as if it's been copied off somewhere...It doesn't sound like my work.* (Reldisfd:90)

Extracts from texts	Talk about texts
5. Although there are various definitions of bilingualism which focus on four areas of linguistic ability, I **can't** really find one that describes the situation for me as a Creole/English speaker---**I'm** not recognized as bilingual. My emphasis (Me2fd:131-137)	5. I ask about use of contracted forms, there's, can't, I'm. Mary says she supposes it's not acceptable to use them. *M: It makes me sick...I don't think it's important at all* (laughs). *But you have to do it? It's like I'm imprisoned, honest to God* (laughs). *That's how I feel. And that's why a lot of people are not interested---I am not. What am I saying? I know what I'm saying, but it's like, what for? Everybody knows what I'm not means. It's like trying to segregate, you know, you've got like a boundary that sets, you know, you apart from other people. Why? What difference does it make as long as you get your message across...You're separating yourself from the reader or audience, whoever you're talking to, whoever. You're separating yourself...why? Why is that? Why do you have to do that in language?* (Me2disfd:137)
6. When Skinner is trying to identify, that by the gradual bilingual up to on operant behaviour, by reinforcing successive approximation on animals which sustained the response. (Ne1fd:125-129)	6. Nadia, talking of the essay in general. *N: I've tried to do it to their standard, yeah* *T: Whose standard?* *N: Well, you know to get a good grade to pass. I've tried to do it, yeah, but I still feel that the assignment isn't good enough. I've tried to change the whole form of writing, like...* *T: Actually changing the words that you use?* *N: Yes I've tried changing your everyday like, the way I talk to friends. If I went for an interview like, I'd change the way I talk.* (Ne1did1f:56)

The examples above focus on wordings in students' texts. Example 4, where I suggest that the lexical item *airhead* might not generally be accepted in academic texts, raises several important issues. The first relates to my role as tutor-researcher attempting to act both as *knowledgeable insider* (Harris 1992), trying to inform students of the implicit and explicit expectations surrounding the production of student academic writing, whilst at the same time attempting to provide a space for them to reflect on what they might want to do. I will return to this in chapters 7 and 8. In example 4, I am clearly telling

Reba that an alternative would be preferred. Other tutors may have different views highlighting the differences in tutor practices that students have to face, already mentioned in chapter 5 . Other important points to make here are as follows; a) the student clearly has a readily available alternative wording, *in a derogatory way* , which could be considered appropriate in formal texts and therefore she does not 'lack' vocabulary, as is often assumed; but, b) this wording makes her feel as if she is copying, as it does not sound like her. Issues surrounding the notion of plagiarism are complex; I pursue some related aspects in 8.4.2 and 8.6.1.2 (for discussions of plagiarism see Scollon 1995; Ashworth, Bannister and Thorne 1997). Of central importance to the student here, and so should also be to tutors in HE, is the reason why her wording is, according to dominant conventions, inappropriate. Why can't she use *airhead*? I return to a discussion of Reba's choice of wordings below (see 6.4.4).

Example 5 highlights another wording issue, where Mary questions the reason why contracted forms cannot be used in student academic writing. Her comments point to the potential force of, what might be considered to be, insignificant and minor conventions to separate and exclude people from academic texts and, indeed, from formal education. As somebody who feels herself to be an outsider to the world of higher education and who thus has mixed feelings about taking part, she is keenly aware of attempts to distance.

Example 6 is an example of numerous sections of text in Nadia's final draft of her first essay. Her feeling that she could not use her words for writing an academic essay was a central theme in our first discussions around her writing. She felt strongly that she could not use her words, which were *common* and *not good enough,* yet at the same time was worried that if she used other words her writing would not make sense. The section of the text shown justifies her concern, where although she has clearly attempted to draw on and use lexical items relevant to the subject area, she has failed to construct a meaningful- for the writer (she could not understand what it meant) or reader- sentence. After discussing this first essay she decided to use her *own words* and to bring in new words when she understood how she could use them.

6.3.3 Who you're (not) allowed to be

Extracts from texts	Talk about texts
7. This is because I am expressing myself in a totally different context, which is in the dimension of education. (Me1fd:298-292)	7. T asks M how she feels about using 'I" in her writing. *M: I think it's great. I think everybody should be allowed to say 'me' 'my'. It feels so, what can I say? When you're writing you should feel at one with yourself, you know all together. But you're sort of like told to come apart. I think it's very false. Do you get what I mean? I think I produce much better writing as well.* (Me1disfd:340)
8. I myself do code-switch and all members of my family are involved naturally in codeswitching. (Ae2fd:233-244)	8. A says it is important to use *I, we, our* and bring personal information in her writing although she feels she can only do it towards the end of her writing. T asks why it was important. *A: Some people don't care, but some people might be able to write better if they could include themselves in everything. Because you're more confident in what you're writing. If you're writing something you believe in, it helps you. If you're writing to please somebody else, then a lot of things are stopped. So you might not put a lot of your ideas into your assignment.* (Ae3disfd:179)
9. This leaves women either having to take on masculine ideals and deny their femininity or it results in them feeling alienated in an unfriendly atmosphere where assumptions, agendas and issues are all male orientated.(Ke1d1:42-45)	9. *I tend to write from a personal point of view* (in writing outside academia). *I never see academic writing as personal. It's cold.* (KLH:508)

Extracts from texts	**Talk about texts**
10. Of her academic writing in general.	10. After discussing her final draft of her second essay, Sa asks T if she had noticed anything specific to bilingual writers. *S: See, when I say I think of myself as English* (when she writes academic essays) *what I mean is that I'm trying to imagine how an English person would be writing, thinking in that sense-trying to programme myself, to make myself think as if I'm an English person writing this out. It just helps me sort of concentrate a bit more, you know, leave my Urdu aside--- if they're (*tutors) *asking specifically for my experiences and what I feel, then that's fine. But if not, then you have to think, you have to put yourself away from that, you know, basically write what they want you to write.* (Se2disf:170)

All the students with whom I was tutor-assessor as well as tutor-researcher were surprised when I told them that they could use the first person, *I,* in their writing. Although Mary above was initially unconvinced that I as tutor had the authority to allow this, she tried using the first person, *I* and *me*, particularly in sections of her text which were about her personal experience and found it to be a positive experience as shown in her comments above (see 7). Telling students to use *I,* when as in this case they have been told and/or have learned that *I* is inappropriate in formal writing is the most obvious way of telling them they have a right to exist in their writing and in the academic institution, as I think Amira. is saying in 8 above, and is particularly important for those who feel they are outsiders. This is not to suggest that such an *I* will be static or unitary. Since the discussions above, Mary has talked about the different *I* that she is aware of in her writing: the *I* close to her sense of individual self, and the *I* which signifies herself as a member of the wider Afro-Caribbean community.

Example 9 above links with the view expressed by most student-writers in this project that they would like to feel personally connected to their texts, made most easily possible through the use of *I*, as indicated in examples 7 and 8, but feel that conventions of academic discourse do not generally allow this. The extract from her text and comments above indicate that although she is able to write successfully in an impersonal way- although the extract is about women it is written in the third person,

they, them and there is no visible connection between *them* and Kate's experience as a woman- she would prefer to write differently. I return to how Kate make meanings in her preferred ways below, in 6.4.6.

Example 10 above points explicitly to socio-ethnic identity and how, in the context of the institution of HE, the student feels that there is no space for her sense of self as a Pakistani, Urdu speaking woman. In inventing the university, (Bartholomae:1985), she finds little space for being who she is: in informal discussions with other students and myself, she felt that in her writing she would, and could, give *them* what they wanted. However, as I discuss below in 6.4.7, this is not as straightforward as students may imagine.

The examples in the tables above provide us with only a glimpse of the process by which meaning making is regulated. It is important to recognize how difficult it is to get at how conventions control the making of meaning because much of the 'editing' is invisible: either because it is done in drafts which tutors/researchers may not see or because meanings are edited out before they even become drafts. So for instance, in example 2, I only knew that editing had taken place because I had copies of several drafts (but not necessarily all the drafts the student had written). In 3, Mary had been talking about how difficult she was finding it to write her essay on bilingualism with specific reference to Creole. Her frustration seemed to centre for a good part of our discussion on the difficulty of dealing with so many books. It was only after about forty minutes talking that she made the comments in 3 above, reflecting a more fundamental concern around being a Black Creole speaker having to read racist accounts of Creole language, linked to being a Black woman in a white institution of learning. Likewise, Sara's experience as a Pakistani-English woman writing in HE, made in example 10, were offered by the student-writer after a year of us meeting to talk about her writing.

The examples provides us with glimpses of individual meaning making and must obviously be treated as such. I will continue to explore individual regulation alongside desire below. But I also think that these individual instances point to the significance of regulation in student academic writing and are suggestive of the particular dimensions of experience which are regulated more generally in HE. The instances above point to

regulation relating to the following specific areas of experience: ethnicity (examples 2, 3, 10) social class (4, 5, 6,) personal experience, connection and involvement with knowledge making (1 ,7 , 8 and 9) and to power relations between reader and writer (2).

I have placed emphasis on the regulation of meanings within the institution because of its prominence as an aspect of student-writer experience. However, I am not suggesting a straightforward or deterministic relationship between the institution as regulatory and the student-writer as regulated. The examples briefly discussed above allow us to begin to explore the complex ways in which regulation works and the significance of the type of addressivity in such regulation. Some of the instances seem to point to regulation at the level of *context of situation* , through the monologic type of tutor/student addressivity. An obvious example is extract 2, where the tutor explicitly directs the student-writer to edit out what he (the tutor) deems to be inappropriate content. Other instances point to regulation at the level of *context of culture* through the workings of a more abstract addressivity (see 2.3 for contexts of situation and culture). For example, in extract 10, Sara is drawing on her voices- as language and experience- in order to respond to/invent the university, in her meaning making (see discussion in 2.7). The extracts also illustrate differences in student-writers' perspectives and feelings about choices and constraints in making meaning in academia: consider Mary's anger in extract 5 with Nadia's apparent acquiescence in extract 6.

In an attempt to get closer to individual difference and the complexities surrounding meaning making in HE, in the next section 6.4. I focus in more detail on how individuals experience this regulation and the ways in which it connects with their desires for meaning making at specific moments in time.

6.4 Fragments of stories about regulation and desire in meaning making in academia

It is important first of all to acknowledge how difficult it is to glimpse the desires of the student-writers for their meaning making, that is to get close to what they would like to

mean rather than simply what they feel they have to mean. I am conscious that any desires they have expressed in their talk with me have been very much bounded by, and to, the real context of HE in which we have been working. The extracts below illustrate the boundedness of their expressed desires.

Example 1: talking with Amira about the use of the first person pronoun in a section in her text on the experience of Arabic speakers in England (her third text). Here we are talking about whether to put *their* or *our* towards the end of our year of meeting:

T: Do you think it kind of changes the feeling of it, if you put 'our'?
A: Yeah, definitely.
T: How?
A: It makes you more personal towards it. It would include you more.
T: Do you like that idea or not?
A: Depends on whether the lecturer penalises it.
T: So it's in terms of how it will be viewed that you have to think about it, as somebody writing an essay to be marked.
A: Yeah.
T: If you had a free choice?
A: I'd use 'our'. I think I would have used it in this. But X (tutor) *says try not to include yourself so much.* (Ae3disfd:171)

Example 2: Mary talks about how one day she would like to write an essay using informal language- contractions and particular lexical items. She would hand it in to the tutor with a note:

I've used informal language. I hope you don't consider it to be inappropriate. It's just that I really like using it. (laughs) (Me4disf:136)

Both examples illustrate that in talking about how they might *want* to mean, the student-writers stay very close to the context of HE as currently configured. This must be borne in mind when exploring the desires expressed by the student-writers below: such bounded desires allow us to merely glimpse their desires for meaning making .

In the rest of this section I present fragments of individual student-writers' stories around meaning making in academic writing.

6.4.1 Bridget

In the first example in 6.3.1 we saw how Barbara aims to make the meanings that she feels tutors want to hear. This is a major concern for all the student-writers in the

project, although as will be seen from the examples discussed below, some express anger and frustration about having to do so. Bridget, at least in discussions with me, never expresses such anger, accepting that her meaning making in writing will be constrained by the dominant conventions within the institution. Her principal concern- and about which she does express frustration and anger- is to establish what is required (see chapter 5). However, she discovers that her notion of knowledge telling may not ensure success, as is indicated by the tutor's comments on her essay:

Extract from tutor comment on essay:

The issues that you choose to focus on are appropriate, but you could have dug a little deeper. There is a tendency to assume that there is a current belief in equality for men and women...(emphasis as in original text).

Bridget here has to confront the apparent contradiction in a transmission model of education which, whilst expecting her to reproduce knowledge, also demands 'original' and 'critical' thinking. The difficulty facing student-writers in their attempts to engage critically with ideas whilst seemingly being asked to be personally absent has been raised in chapter 5 (see 5.4.3).

6.4.2 Nadia

Nadia's overriding concern throughout our discussions is that her own words are *common* and *not good enough* for using in her academic writing (see example 6 in 6.3.2). In contrast, she finds the new words- words she's reading in texts and hearing in class- pleasurable. Of the new words, she states:

*They sound good. I don't know (*laughs) *they bring a little tingle in my ear, yeah. Some words sound really, really nice and I like them.* (Ne1disfd: 269)

She wants new words because they sound nice, but also because, using them, she feels, will get her better marks for her essays and at the same time give her a higher social status. For example, she tells me at one point how she tried out a new word on her friend Reba:

N. I (laughs) *used a word on Reba last night.*
T: What word was that? It wasn't subtract-

N: [No. We were talking about where to meet. I says I'll probably be in Boots. And she says well don't be late because I've got to be at 4 o'clock with Theresa. I says 'I'll take it onto consideration' (laughs*). She says, 'Nadia, the way you talk' and she starts laughing.*
T: So is that a new word, then, consideration?
N: I just made that one up. I just make things up. I don't know, I just pick things and I just use it, words that I like, I'll use them yeah. Reba's noticed it in the lessons as well.
T: What does she say?
*N: She says you try and use words in the lessons. I says' do they sound daft?'. No she says, 'it's as if you're aware of these words, so that's why you're using them. So I just think oh all right. (*Ne1disfd:297)

This reflects the need for an opportunity and space to try out words, and in so doing trying out not just saying but being somebody else, as Nadia's comments below illustrate. Following on from her comments above, in the talkback session I ask her why she might feel daft about using *take into consideration:*

N: cause I just thought I needed somebody else don't know, I can hear what I'm saying but I can't get the other person's point of view. I asked Reba, yeah, someone close to me, someone I know, who's not going to laugh or say ha ha or take the mick...
T: Do you think by using those words it sort of changes you?
N: Yeah.
T: How?
N: (laughs) *I think it puts me up a bit.*
T: In what way up a bit?
*N: You know, like you've got job prospects, I mean I know I'm only a SUMES (*Sheffield Unified Multicultural Education Service*)staff but I think it puts me the same level as a teacher, a degree level, you know, got a degree and entitled to use those words.* (Ne1disfdf:200)

Nadia therefore wants new words because they feel pleasurable, represent a change in social status and also because she feels she needs new words to get better marks. At the same time, she is extremely anxious about her own words . As in example 6 in 6.3.2 above, she writes meaningless text because she is so concerned about not using her words. After looking at sections of the text like example 6 above, she acknowledges the dangers of using only the new words and decides to be more cautious in her use of them. However she continues to avoid her way of saying things which causes the sorts of difficulty in her text illustrated in the example below.

Extract from text	Talk about text
Once this had been repeated several times, the child will instantly know what he or she has done **in order that the adult has said no.** My emphasis (Ne1fd:23)	T asks N what the 'in order that...'means. *N: I'm quite shocked! I don't know what I've wrote.* T re-reads complete sentence. *N: That means that the adult has said no, so the child, cause it's repeated 'no' several times before, the child instantly knows 'no' and knows it's not supposed to do it.* T reads section 'in order to..' *N:Because the adult said 'no'. So the child knows that* (hesitant) *T: Yeah, go on* *N: So the child knows that it's done wrong because the adult has said so.* *T: Does that make sense now?* *N: Yeah it...I'm quite shocked actually* (laughs). T asks where 'in order to' came from *N: Because I think I saw it so many times, when it's first written it sounds brilliant!* (laughs) (Ne3disfd:181)

Nadia's talk illustrates how she has avoided using the more obvious (perhaps *common,* see previous page) *because* in her attempt to sound more formal, more academic and, in so doing, produces confused text. Throughout the two years of our meeting, Nadia continues to take a subtractive rather than an additive view towards her own wordings which, I would strongly suggest, works against her success in academia during this time (I am using the notions subtractive and additive here drawn from bilingual studies, see Lambert 1977 for first use of these terms).

6.4.3 Mary

Mary expresses the view that she wants new words for her meaning making but

I don't want no fancy nonsense. But I do want words, I do want to improve. Course I do. I need it to say what I want to say. Cause what I've got to say needs to be expressed ***better****. And I think at the moment, with the vocabulary that I've got,* ***it's not that bad****. But it doesn't, I miss out a lot of things cause sometimes when you find a better word you can say more things in that one word, whereas when you* ***go down lower the vocabulary****, it means very few sometimes. You know what I mean?* My emphasis (Me2disf:88)

As with Nadia, Mary feels a strong link between wordings and her sense of social identity. But there are significant differences between the two student-writers. Nadia focuses on the higher social status she feels the use of new words gives her and takes a subtractive approach towards her own words. Mary too shares Nadia's perspective that particular wordings have a lower status, but in general, Mary takes an additive approach to choices about wordings. That is to say, she will use new words as well as her words if she feels they enable her meaning making. Moreover, Mary's decisions about using particular words are influenced by how close or distant she feels particular wordings are to her sense of social identity. Below is an instance of Mary deciding to use a new word- *reinterpreted-* which had emerged during our discussion of a section of her text.

Extract from text	**Talk about texts** ***Theresa and Mary talking about a draft of essay 2. Focus on Mary's application of Cummins' framework to Creole /English bilinguals.***
Final draft In order for Cummins framework to be useful in describing the situation of Creole speakers it has to be **reinterpreted**. My emphasis. (Me2fd:420-422).	*M: Well Cummins concept of surface fluency could be sort of applied to Creolized speech by West Indian children. When any person in education hears them, it gives them the impression, because of the nature of the language and its structure, it'll give the impression that this child's incapable of academic work. But sometimes people who speak Creole can read English and understand it quite well.* *T: I think you've got to say something like Cummins concept of surface fluency has got to be reinterpreted---* *M: I never knew that such a word existed, 'reinterpreted'.* *T: What other word would you put?* *M: I don't know. I don't think there's anything wrong with it. I think it's all right. I think it saves a lot of, time. Yeah, cause I didn't know what word to use. I was thinking I've got this idea and I can't say it.* (Me2disd4:296)

I focus on what we are doing in this talk in 8.4.1.2.

Her decision to use *reinterpreted* contrasts strongly with her rejection of *prerequisite.* This was a word she had come across in her reading and gave as an example to me of a

word she would not use. She sees it as an unnecessary, as *fancy,* as not enabling her meaning making:

Because prerequisite can be described in a lot of other ways, you see. You don't need it, it's just fancy, it's just an extra word. Reinterpreted, now, which means er being interpreted again in a different way, I can't see <u>*any*</u> *other word for saying that, without having a long string of words and make it unclear* (Me2disf: 92)

And she clearly associates *prerequisite* with a social group which has nothing to do with her own:

A sort of stereotype I would have would be people who would use words like that are real academics and people sit down and talk about <u>*prerequisite*</u> (laughs) *over coffee and tea (*laughs*). And I just don't experience those kinds of things so why should I...I could be left out from my own community, why am I talking like that for?*
T: And you don't want to be part of that community?
M: No, cause I don't fit in cause I'm Black. How can I fit in there? No way, no matter how qualified, how much qualifications, they'll still see me as Black and that's it. And I don't relate to those people any way, no, no. (Me1disf: 338)

Mary says she feels like that about a lot of words. She has concerns about how others will see her: if she talks to someone who has not been to college they will see her differently.

*They'll see me differently and I don't want them to, at all. At all. (*laughs*)---Oh they'll probably say something like erm, what's she using that word to me for? They probably* <u>*do*</u> *know what it means but they think there's no need for that. It's unnecessary. It's like putting on airs and graces in a way.*(Me2disf:71)

She also has concerns about how she will feel about herself writing in academia:

M: *I mean, if I write like that, if I use certain words that are just unnecessary, I'm just going to feel out of it.*
T: Out of what? (They laugh)
*M: Sort of like I'm not me, you know? It's too much of a big stride. (*Me2disf:97)

And about the type of relationship between reader and writer that she feels the formal features of academic prose sets up:

*It's like standing off, like I'm not interested in the person, I'm just interested in what they've written. Which I think is a bit, it's like, I just want your ideas, I don't want to know you. (*Me2disf:391)

In working at meaning making in this new context of HE, a prominent criterion Mary works with is whether new wordings are useful. However, this 'usefulness' is bound up with Mary's sense of who she is and wants to be both in relation to her community and the academic institution. Her relationship with wordings is therefore complex. The examples above point to a continuum of closeness and distance between wordings and Mary's sense of self. In looking for words that both fit the academic context yet do not move her away from her self, Mary listens out for wordings as *living utterances*, spoken by real people in real places (see 2 5 ; see also Bakhtin 1981). I will discuss Bakhtin's more abstract notion of the living utterance, that is how wordings through their use in discourses come to be populated with particular accents and orientations to meaning, in 8 5. But it is important to acknowledge the way in which Mary, and several other student-writers listen out for wordings in a very real sense associated, through individuals, with particular social groups. So Mary says she often looks at sections of her texts and asks herself:

Does that sound right? Have I heard it before? If I have heard it before, who though? Like if my uncle said it, Oh God! (laughs*), but if John Major said it last night on TV, it's okay. (*Me4/5disf:174)

In listening out for words that fit, Mary as a Black writer listens specifically for white words- words spoken by powerful white people. And where she can't actually hear such voices, she has to imagine them. In the extract from our talk below we're looking through her past essays from an A level English course which she had studied and failed:

*M: Sometimes when I'm writing I think how would they say it? (*laughs*) And I'd like be going through a few sentences before I put it down*
T: when you say they
M: [the whites innit?
T: Do you think of all whites speaking the same?
M: Similar
T: You don't think there's a difference in social class?
M: Oh there is there is. But I mean, a <u>particular</u> class <u>obviously</u>, how would they say this?
T: So you had to imagine that then?
M: Yeah. <u>Course</u> I do, I have to imagine it all the time.
T: Are you still doing that now then (towards middle of her second year)?
*M: Yeah, because it's not me is it? (*me4disf side 2:74)

This theme of pretence is also raised by Reba below and is a major concern for Sara, as discussed in 6.4.7.

6.4.4 Reba

As with Mary, Reba's feelings about wordings and her decisions to use them or not, cannot be put into any straightforward category of, for example, formal versus informal wordings. For although in example 4 above, she chose to use *airhead* because it sounds like her word rather than *in a derogatory way* which sounds as if she's copied it, in the same text she writes the following.

Extract from text	**Talk about text**
Language is a powerful human tool and we must begin to ask what role it plays in maintaining existing social structures. What contribution it makes to our hierarchically ordered classist, racist and sexist societies. (Re1dl:129-132)	Reba had just expressed her views about the use of *airhead* *T: Are these your words, 'hierarchically ordered'* *R: That's okay because I couldn't find another word for it. Not what I can't think of.* *T: But you think 'derogatory' is not your word. What about these (*hierarchically ordered)*? Would you use these, say, when you're talking?* *R: There's no other words for hierarchy, you could say the 'ruling classes' or something but...(*Re1disfd:133)

Like Mary, she suggests that she uses words which are necessary, words which help her to say what she wants to say, rather than because of any other value they may have. But like Nadia she is conscious that particular wordings have a greater value in the context of HE and decides she may use them if it helps her to get more marks.

In discussing our talkback sheet where we again consider her feelings about the wordings for the first essay, Reba comments on her feelings about *big words*:

You know the essay that I just did, I didn't really think about it. But I've always realized that I don't use big words... But then I thought, you know, what if you lose more marks, by using stuff like that (airhead) *rather than more formal words.* (Re1fdfe2: 55)

Unlike other student-writers who feel they have to seek out new words from the dictionary or thesaurus, Reba expresses the view that she has always known big words but has consciously avoided using them;

I've always realised that I er avoid words. Even if I come across a little word like dysfunction or something I sort of er break it up into smaller words.
*...Just so I don't have to write that word (*Re1fdfe2:363)

Using the example of *derogatory*, I asked Reba what she actually does, when a big word like that comes into her head:

*R: No, forget that word. (*Reba saying what she says to herself. Tells herself not to use it.)
T: Why?
R: Why? I don't know.
T: Why not stick it down? What's the problem with it?
R: Cause it's not something that I use in my language, the way I speak.
T: So you feel uncomfortable with it?
R: Yeah.
T: If you use words like that, what does it say about you then?
R: I don't know...
T: Does it mean you're somebody different from who you are?
R: (laughs) *Yeah. Not being who you are* <u>*really*</u>
T: (laughs) *And who are you really then?*
R: I don't know.(They both laugh*). It's because it's not me really.*
T: What do you mean, not you?
*R: Cause I don't speak like that. But I can write like that. (*Re1fdfe2 side 2: 01)

Reba highlights a view expressed by other student-writers: the use of certain wordings signifies belonging to a particular social group. Like Mary, she takes the view that she will use big words by default, as a last resort - that is if her smaller, more informal words won't help her say what she wants then she will use them. This is part of a wider concern about pretence in writing in academia, of *not being who you are really* and hence of only using the minimum necessary new words in order to stay close to who you are and who you want to be.

Reba's final comment above also reflects the view that talking is closer to who you are and that whilst it is possible to disguise yourself in your writing, it is not in talk, a theme that emerges strongly from Sara's comments, discussed in 6.4.7.

6.4.5 Amira

Amira, in example 8, states that being present through the use of *I* in academic writing enables you to say what you want to say. In the context of the Language Studies course where she is given explicit permission to do so, she does. She did not continue her studies the following year so it's not possible to say here what she would do, if a tutor did not allow it.

As discussed below in 6.4.7, Amira argues against another student's (Sara) declared aim to give tutors what they want rather than want she might want. Amira states that she will say what she wants, regardless of their views. However, her principal driving aim, particularly towards the end of the year's Language Studies course, is to achieve a distinction and her main concern becomes knowing how to achieve this aim. She works at this by coming to meet with me 4 times for her final project asking questions to seek out what will be valued in term of marks. She also, like other student-writers, points to a greater value being attributed to more formal lexical items and therefore works at introducing more formal wordings in her texts. Below are two examples which illustrate the type of difficulty she faces in her attempts to use more formal wordings:

Extracts from texts	**Talk about texts**
If teachers are not aware of this it is possible that any pupil from any gender who is **inferiorised** or isolated by others might find it difficult to learn and make progress. My emphasis (Ae1fd:449-452)	*A: Is this word definitely not in the dictionary,* ***inferiorise****?* (T and A check) *A: Well I think they should have a verb myself.* My emphasis (Ae1disf:126)
Extract from e2d1: A common disadvantage especially in Malta is when a person is forced back on one language, the person speaking finds himself **impendimental** because of lack of competence in one of the languages. My emphasis (Ae2d1:124-127)	*T: What does that mean,* ***impendimental****?* *A: I'm not sure...I think I looked that up.* (Ae2disd1:223)

The above examples indicate that student-writers need space to try out wordings. Yet as I have suggested in chapter 5, and as I explore further in chapters 7 and 8, such space is not available within the dominant type of addressivity surrounding student academic writing, where the tutor's focus is on text as finished product.

Amira, like Bridget, expresses no frustration, anger or pleasure at using such wordings. Her focus is on achieving a distinction and her desires around meaning making seem predominantly to centre on that aim.

Why are these accounts here?

Comment from one reader: *...this is a long section---a bit rambling. Is it justified?*
Intuitively I feel that these accounts should be here.
Why?
These are the stories that are told on a daily basis by many students struggling to make sense of their experience at university. But they're not often given a public hearing in academic circles- relegated to the assumed inferior status of anecdote. So. To make these stories heard is justification enough for them being here.
But why not tie them down a bit more? Marshall them into a tighter argument?
I think they are tied to argument, through my emphasis on regulation. And I do want to connect them to argument in order to emphasize my understanding of the significance of what is routinely enacted within institutions. But this argument, whilst grounded in the student-writers' experience, is mine. And I want to leave some space for the accounts to exist in their own right, to evoke responses other than mine. To allow for further questioning which I cannot respond to within the framework of this thesis...

6.4.6 Kate

Kate's main concern, as shown in example 9 in 6.3.3 above, relates to academic writing being cold and impersonal whereas she would prefer to write more personally. In Women's Studies she feels encouraged to include herself in her writing and to focus on herself through the use of the first person:

That's what I like about doing Women's Studies. If I thought I couldn't bring myself into it, it would be an enormous handicap. And it would be very difficult keeping it out. (KLH side2: 87)

But the decision to include herself in her writing, whilst a driving force and something she wants, is not straightforward. In Kate's case, being given permission to use *I* does not immediately enable her to use it, as is illustrated by extracts from her texts and her talk about the extracts below.

Using personal pronouns in Kate's academic writing

Extracts from texts	Talk about texts
one may argue as to the importance of women's interest in conventional politics. My emphasis (Ke1d1:8)	*K: Would it be better to say 'one' may argue? You see I always worry about putting 'I'. But she* (tutor) *has said 'put your own personal, you know, state where you stand personally. So I don't see why I can't do that. (* ke1disd1:99)
Because women have only achieved equal franchise this century, as relative newcomers to political activity there is a major problem of institutionalised sexism that faces them on entering the world of politics. That is, **they** must participate in an arena designed for and run by men. My emphasis (Ke1fd:53-58ff)	I asked why she used 'they', rather than the inclusive 'we" *It's also to do with whether you value your own opinion. So perhaps I felt safer saying that.* (they)(KLH side 2:138)
No longer are **they** prepared to be second class citizens and have their needs defined for them by men. My emphasis (Ke1fd:88-90)	*If it said no longer are <u>we</u>, it's a very assertive statement* (KLH side 2:150)

When we talked about the above extracts and her comments, Kate said she felt that although she was writing within Women's Studies where oppositional practices were tolerated and/or encouraged, she still had to write her text with dominant conventions in mind. This connects with comments made by Mary above, and Sara below; although it may seem that at the level of the context of situation the student-writer may be encouraged to include the personal self, the student-writer may still feel the pressure to respond to the dominant context of culture. In Sara's case, this means aspects of the context of culture at a societal level as they connect with the context of culture of formal

schooling. Kate's struggles around personal pronouns and voice here seem to relate more specifically to the context of culture of HE.

Although Kate finds it difficult to use the first person pronoun, she finds it easier to make a personal contribution through the selection and inclusion of an extract from a poem or literary prose. Kate showed me an essay on maternal instinct which she had written for the Access course and in which, after seeking permission from the tutor, she included a poem:

Poem included in essay	**Talk about text**
Poem Kate chose to begin her essay: The function of maternal instinct is to keep women in their place. Discuss. THE MOTHER by Anne Stevenson Of course I love them, they are my children. That is my daughter and this is my son. And this is my life I give them to please them. It has never been used. Keep it safe, Pass it on.	I asked her what the poetry contributed to what she wanted to say. *It sums up...and this poem, to me says what happens to women who have families erm, like my mum. Her whole life has been the family. She will argue, but I think she could have done an awful lot with her life. And so, and that poem says 'this is my life that I give to my children to please them'. In other words I do everything for them, and they're precious 'keep it safe'. In other words you live your life through your children* (KLH:288).

In later discussions, Kate described this as a *little protest* against the convention of rational argument. From her point of view, the poetry is not there for the reader, but for her the writer in expressing the emotion that she feels and yet feels unable (not allowed) to convey in conventional way. Although she feels that the reader will not see and accept the poetry as *supportive evidence* for her argument, it helps her, the writer, to feel that she is supporting her argument. She is conscious that it meets her needs as writer-author, rather than the requirements of the institutional context.

However, although Kate criticized the dominant discourse of academia as being male and logic centred, she also expressed her enjoyment at making a successful argument:

because it gives you a sense of control. (Ke1disf:54)

She, like Mary with wordings, decides she wants both rational argument and expression of emotional involvement for her meaning making in academia.

6.4.7 Sara

Pretence is a strong theme in Sara's talk, as is indicated by example 10 in 6.3.3 above where she points out that there is no space in academic writing for her sense of self as a Pakistani woman. Such a lack of space demands that she disguise herself as a white English woman. She feels this to be necessary even in the context of situation where there was encouragement for her to include her perspective as a Black bilingual woman and although she states that she will include her experiences if asked to do so. She is responding to dominant cultural values within Britain where being Pakistani is not publicly valued and which Sara has experienced, not least, through her personal experience as a pupil and as a teacher. In this context of culture, where what is valued is being white and English, she decides she has to put away her Pakistani self and give *them* what they want. Here we are talking in general terms about her second essay on childhood bilingualism:

T: *So is this your English point of view?*
S: *No it's not, but it's like, I don't know, it's like thinking, it's not an English point of view but I'm thinking well, I'm pretending that. It's difficult to explain, I can't explain it.*
T: *It's hugely difficult.*
S: *But it's two different identities. I'm writing something that they might want to hear, might be curious about. If I was this person writing this out, then what kind of questions would come into my mind, if I was this English person and if I was a Pakistani person, what kind of questions would that type of person be asking. So it's like two different views really.*
Interruption. ---
T: *There's a limit to how much you can say what you really think.*
S: *That's it, without it affecting your life. Obviously if they didn't agree with it, they'd say 'I'm not going to let her have that, she's going to get marked down for that'. People have their own views, don't they, obviously.*
T: *But is that specifically to do with, I mean talking about these two people, are you specifically worried about the Pakistani side of you*
S: [*coming out, yeah*
T: *Coming out?*
S: *Yeah, the strong views that you have of being a Muslim or whether it's about your language or your cultures and how you feel about how people treat you. I mean that can come out in your writing and you have to be really careful about that.*

T: *So you feel you've got to keep that out of it?*
S: *Yeah. And if you don't you can get into trouble. I mean, don't you think it would affect, you know.* (Se2disf:192)

However, as Ivanic has pointed out, students in *inventing the university* may not guess accurately what their tutors and departments want (see Ivanic 1994:16; see Bartholomae 1985 for notion of *inventing the university*). Consider the extract from Sara's text below which, through our talk, I discovered she had considered editing out.

The teachers only understood the importance of bilingualism when their monolingualism failed, after which they had to revert to asking a child for help in translation.(Se3fd: 283-285)

I said I liked how Sara had expressed this idea. Sara made no immediate comment but returned to consider this extract some time later in our discussion:

S: I was a bit worried about putting that in actually.
T: Which bit?
S: You know, the teachers' bit, about them failing .
T: Why?
S: I thought it might be a bit too strong, a bit too pushy, you know, I thought 'oh God, I hope I don't get marked down for that'. I was a bit...but I thought, oh I'll put it in anyway. Because I knew you were going to have a look at it before I hand it in. (Se3disd2:296)

Here Sara is drawing on personal experience inside and outside formal learning institutions, as both pupil and worker, to make decisions about what she should include in her essay. It becomes clear from other discussions that she feels she must not upset *them,* that is, the powers that be and, where necessary, in order to get her degree in the future, will say what they want her to say rather than what she wants to say. In this instance, it is reasonable to suggest that in faculties of education and language, her statement would not be seen as a threat or *too pushy*. However, she, as do all students, draws on her experience to imagine the university and perhaps by linking it to her current role as bilingual teacher in a school, where she knows that such a statement would be extremely controversial if made in the staffroom, assumes that this is also the case in the context of HE.

The decision that Sara took in including the extract above involved risk taking on two levels: firstly, the more obvious risk in relation to tutor assessment; secondly, the more

profound personal risk of letting 'them' know who she really is and consequently of how they might construct her (*a pushy Pakistani woman*?). The two parallel concerns are reflected in her comments below where, towards the end of her Language Studies course she is expressing concern about how she will present herself in the education course she expected to follow at that time. I asked her whether it was concern about tutor assessment that would influence her decisions about whether or not to write certain things.

Marks and how they sort of look at you, view you. Or if you've got some strong views, are you going to think oh, I'm not going to say that in front of her. And that's really sad because if you want to be on the same level, to be friendly with a person, you want them to be totally open with you and express their feelings to you, so you can understand each other. If you say something and they don't agree with it, then they're going to start hiding things, aren't they? Hold things back. That's what I'm worried about. If I go into that seminar and I say things that are going to offend people, I've got strong views, they're not going to like it. And that may affect me when I go on to the course, and that worries me a bit. (Se2disfc:132)

Here we hear of her desire for a different type of relationship with tutor, certainly wanting the possibility of dialogue, which has already been highlighted in the previous chapter (see also chapter 9).

Sara, echoing comments made by Reba above (see 6.4.4), also expresses the view that it is more difficult to disguise herself in talk than in writing. In the last section of the extract above - and at other points in our talk- she expresses concern about tutorials and seminars:

I disguise myself in my writing but when I'm speaking, I might put my foot in it (laughs) *and say something that they might disagree with. And later on when they see me, or marking papers, then anything can happen.* (Se2disfc:158)

She is afraid that in face to face situations her views will slip out, that it is easier to control potentially unwanted views in writing. This last comment emerged during one of our formal teaching sessions, a tutorial where student-writers were working individually on their writing and then discussing their writing with me. It emerged specifically in response to my asking the student-writers if they (one or any of them) wanted to do a small presentation with me to a group of interested lecturers at the

university about this research project. The student-writers expressed different views about having to or wanting to disguise their views and their selves in writing. Sara's view was that whilst she could disguise herself in her writing, she couldn't in her talking. Amira's view was that the lecturers *would have to like it or lump it*, as there was no way that she was going to sit back and pretend that she agreed with them. Siria argued that tutors don't have the power to mark you down without reasons and felt that it was a question of finding the right moment to challenge, either in writing or in talk, lecturers' views.

Sara argues that in playing the game in order to succeed, she is not compromising her beliefs and that her views will remain intact:

But they're not changing me, are they? Cause I've got my own views. (Se2disfc:238)

Sara's comments here point to the importance of disguise for being able to participate within HE whilst at the same time preserving her own views and identity. This view seems to connect with the use of the mask as metaphor in Black literature and poetry, discussed by O'Neale and referred to by Stanley and Wise (see Stanley and Wise 1990).

its 'origins' are those of oppression: superordinates fear that some secret knowledge, some secret selves, have escaped their control: while subordinates need secret knowledge and secret selves to survive, both physically and psychically.(Stanley and Wise 1990: 30)

If disguise in writing is possible it may mean that student writers can survive and succeed in dominant culture of HE without having to lose their own self of self. But there are two, at least, important questions to raise. Firstly, to what extent is disguise possible, given the difficulties both writers and readers face in controlling the voices they draw on? Secondly, what is at stake for both the individual and institution with such practices of disguise? The individual has to struggle to edit her views and self out; the institution loses potentially new meanings.

In terms of Sara's individual struggle, it seems that the need to disguise may have been too heavy a burden; she decided to leave HE because she felt there was little space for her and her interests.

6.4.8 Diane

Diane's predominant concern is to work out the conventions she is expected to work within. I discussed her frustration in chapter 5 in trying to work out what tutors were looking for in her second essay in HE.

As with the other student-writers in the project, Diane is concerned about the wordings she uses, both in terms of what she should use and what she wants to use. In working out the wordings she should use, she, like Mary discussed above, and Siria below, talks about listening out for who the words sound like, in her attempt to work on her meaning in two ways. Firstly, she listens out for whether the words sound like her when trying to work out whether she needs to provide a reference, in order to avoid being accused of plagiarism

If I thought it don't sound like me then I've thought I must have read that somewhere. (De1disd1:27)

Secondly she listens out for who uses/might use the words in order to work out whether they fit the context. She became more conscious of this after writing her first draft of her first essay in communication studies. She had written the extract below, which a friend, who was in her second year of undergraduate studies in a different course, had commented on:

Extract from text	**Talk about text**
`If my memory serves me right,` men in the past received higher wages than women for doing the same job. However, this changed when new equal pay policy was introduced. My emphasis (De1d1:72-75)	Diane tells of friend's comments on draft *I think I was talking about unfair wages, you know how men used to get paid more. And I couldn't remember where I'd read it, but I knew this existed and I'd said 'if me memory serve me right'. She (*friend*) says, ' what does that mean?' (*laughs*). In other words, I'm saying, if I remember right but she says 'no you can't put if me memory serve me right' either, cause you either know it or you don't know it. Just say, 'at one stage'. And I say, 'well, my dad says that to me, if me memory serve me right, Diane, it's upstairs on the wardrobe'* (laughs*).* (De1f2d1:side 2, 250)

Although her friend is pointing to the need for Diane to be factual *you either know it or you don't know it*, what she offers is an alternative wording *at one stage* which is as vague as Diane's original wording, but which **sounds** more factual and authoritative: thus, Diane's *if my memory serves me right* , which points not only to doubt (if) but also to the personal nature of her knowledge making (my memory), is replaced by the impersonal adverbial Theme, *at one stage*. Like Mary, she begins to judge whether her wordings fit the context of her academic writing, by listening out for who might or might not say them; wordings associated with family members, her dad above (see Mary's comments on her uncle in 6.4.3) are to be viewed as unacceptable.

Although she does not express anger, she expresses some frustration and at the wordings used and which are expected to be used in HE . She dislikes the way she feels lecturers use unnecessarily complicated words

Oh why don't they say what they're saying and stop using those words! (De1f21fd: 378)

But at the same time, like Nadia and Mary, she wants a wider range of words to draw on:

D:It's just really, not big words, really little simple words. And I think, why can't I think of another word for that?
T: To have a change?
D: Yeah just to get away from 'it, and, and'. (De1f2d1:318)

Diane also expresses frustration at the content she feels she is expected to produce. She, like Bridget above, feels that all tutors want her to do is to knowledge tell. But, unlike Bridget, she complains about having to simply *rattrap* what lecturers say, which is all she felt she had done for her first essay for which she had been awarded a distinction. I asked her what her essay would have been like if she hadn't had to worry about what they wanted:

D: Yeah, it would have been. It would have been crap (laughs*). It wouldn't have been, er, things like, 'I'm not sure if it's true but..'*
T: What, you'd like to be able to ask questions even if you haven't got the evidence?
D: Or like, talk, I mean I'm sure I haven't put anything in from my experience, have I? Of life.
T: Not as you as a woman.

D: Not my experience from speaking with and feeling that I'm not heard because I'm a woman. It's just about everybody else. It's, nobody. There's <u>*nobody*</u> *in it (*laughs*).*
No...do you know what I'm saying?
T: Yeah
D: ---Like I haven't said, yeah I know men talk to women differently cause I'm an only girl in my family, and I've got two brothers and my dad used to talk to me oh more calmer, and he used to talk to the boys rougher and shout at them, and things like that. I haven't put that in. But that's evidence, that's facts. It's about what happened to me.
T: But you don't think they want that?
D: No. They probably think, 'what's happened to you'? (laughs*) (*De1f2d1: side 2, 76)

Although Diane begins by dismissing as *crap* any essay she might have written without the constraints imposed by the context of academia, she points to the ways in which she would choose to connect her meaning making in writing with her lived experience: as has been argued by Karach (1992), she feels that there is no opportunity to include, draw on and connect her lived experience to the formal knowledge making practices of academia. As a result, although pleased at receiving a distinction for her essay, she feels that it is written about nobody.

6.4.9 Tara

Tara's main frustration in writing is in not knowing what tutors want (see chapter 5). Her driving force is to be successful in law with her principal concern being how to do it. She acknowledges that in order to be successful she has to change the way she both talks (lose her working class Welsh accent) and writes. She does not express anger about these rules, just frustration at not being taught what they are (see 5.4.3).

However, she increasingly feels frustrated with what she is doing in her writing. I have illustrated her confusion about the nature of her position as meaning maker in writing- *advise-argue-don't use the first person- include what you think-* (see 5.4.3). The result of her negotiation of this confusion is extreme caution in her meaning making. Towards the middle of her second year, although pleased that she is passing coursework, she is dissatisfied with her writing. We talked about an essay that she felt was now successful and sounded more academic, but that she felt it was boring because she is too cautious about her ideas. The question was as follows:

To what extent is the doctrine of undisclosed principal justifiable, given the lack of consensus?

Extract from text	**Talk about text**
Extract from middle of text. It is not only the personality of the principal however, that is a restriction of the doctrine, as the personal nature of the contract itself is important. In Collins v Associated Greyhound Racehorses Ltd [1928] C631 the plaintiff sought to have his name removed from a register of the members company as the holder of 8,160 shares at 5s each. (Te4fd:115-119)	*I'm not showing them that I know exactly what I'm talking about. I'm too afraid to let go on a piece of paper and I think that's what they like. Even if I'm wrong, at least they'd see, I know I have to be more assertive in what I think, put my own thoughts down a lot more, but also still keep to what I'm doing as well, keep it tidy. Keep it well presented. I mean, I'm one of the neatest, but it's boring.* (TLH:475)

The extract has obvious features of academic discourse (see Ivanic 1993 chapter 5 for discussion of features of academic discourse in student writing). It has two long sentences which are lexically dense whilst of low grammatical intricacy (see Halliday 1989: chapter 5). The lexical density of the first two clause is 1=4. The participants in the first two clauses are abstract- personality, restriction, nature- and the processes are relational (Halliday 1994:119). In the third clause there is a human agent but s/he is referred to in a lexical item specific to law- plaintiff. The extract consists of many such law specific lexical items. For these reasons, this extract, like much of Tara's essay **sounds** more academic than others to date. Yet she is dissatisfied.

Tara feels she has much to risk by *letting go* in her writing, most obviously failure. By playing it safe, she knows her work will pass, but she feels she is limiting what she is doing in her writing. That these feelings are not peculiar to her but are more widespread in academia is reflected in Sara Ruddick's comment about her own experience as academic and which is characterised by what she calls *timid professionalism*: that is, only making meanings that you know will be accepted (in Belenky and others 1986:96). Whether and how Tara develops an assertiveness to take such risks remains to be seen.

6.4.10 Siria

Siria views her experience throughout the Language Studies course during which our discussions took place, as one of learning. Her priority is to find out what is expected and to be a *player*. She agrees with the view that as student-writers they have to try and give tutors what they want to hear, and like Mary and Diane above, works at this by listening out for the appropriate voices in her writing. She explains how this works when using words from the thesaurus :

What I'm saying is if I don't feel comfortable, and I've heard it somewhere, and I think yeah someone like so and so says it, then it's acceptable.(Ae1disf:117)

But she also feels that it is possible to find spaces to say and be who you want.

S: It's like playing a game. But I'm not going to be quiet all the time, but it's about working out when you can say things
T: Like, it doesn't have to all come out in one go?
S: No (agreeing) *it's about finding an appropriate time.(* Se2disfdc:279)

She gives a specific example from recent experience in dealing with racism at school to exemplify how by talking to several teachers over a period of time she made an impact on their thinking and suggests to the other student-writers listening, Sara, Amira, Mary, that she views what (and how) she will say in her academic writing in a similar way: finding spaces where she can say what she wants to say. An example of her finding and using such a space is in her writing of her second essay. She consciously chooses to write on a question which allows her to draw on her experience as a worker with pre-school children and contrasts the way she is approaching the writing of this essay with her first one:

Extract from text	Talk about text
Opening of essay For this essay I have chosen to look at childhood Bilingualism (pre-school). At the present moment, I work with bilingual children under the age of five. The children are born into an environment where they have a language at home and a language at school and in the community. (Se2fd:17-23)	Siria' s comments on approach to the essay. *The last one, I went to the material and I'd taken the notes. Whereas, this one, I've not really done that. What I'm trying to do is get a clear picture of what I want to do.* (Se1disf:14)

I discuss the way we work at constructing unity in this essay in 7.3.2.

Overall, Siria's approach to her academic writing is probably best described as calm. She expresses no anger and little frustration, viewing both her writing and formal learning as a positive learning experience. She is positive about the talk in which we engage around her writing (see chapter 9) and when I ask her questions about what she is trying to say in her writing, she often tells me to *relax* and *not to worry.* This seems to connect with her approach to life more generally; like several of the other students in the project she has had to face major decisions about the way she wants to live her life-relating to family, community, marriage (see 4.4.9). But unlike several of the other students at the time of the project she feels she has successfully resolved conflicts. In comparison then, she seemed more optimistic about the possibilities for change, both in her life and as a student-writer making meaning in academia, than others.

6.5. Difference and commonality in regulation and desire

All the student-writers point to problems in using their habits of meaning within the institutional context of HE, in relation to wordings, content, the nature of the task but they express a range of different feelings about what they have to do. So for example in relation to wordings, Nadia likes and wants new words but to the exclusion of her old words; Amira, recognising the value attributed to more formal words in academic texts, works at including new words, some of which are invented by her. Mary and Reba want

some words but not others depending on how close or distant they feel such words are to their sense of self.

Nadia, Reba, Mary and Sara in particular point to the problematic relationship between their habits of meaning, their sense of self and the institutional context. Nadia feels that by using more formal words she acquires a new social status. Yet a problem she faces in attempting to use words which are not her own is that she produces meaningless text which reinforces the tutor-reader's view that her work is not of an appropriate standard and thus, as one tutor told Nadia, she *should not be at university*. Whilst Mary likes and wants some new words, both she and Sara point to the enforced need to imagine themselves and their words as white in order to disguise their selves- their Black, bilingual selves- in their academic writing. Both feel that the risk of presenting them selves in their writing is too dangerous, both in terms of tutor marks and of how they will be viewed. Reba too is concerned about having to pretend to be somebody she isn't in her academic writing. Kate points to gendered ways of meaning in academia. She wants to challenge the dominant discourse of rationality by both including poetry and extracts from literature in her texts and by writing in the first person. But she also discovers that being given permission at the level of context of situation does not allow her to use *I* as she might have assumed and wished.

The levels of anger and frustration about regulation vary according to individual student-writers and specific moments in time. Mary and Sara express strong feelings of anger and frustration, whereas Bridget and Amira never do. The nature of the desires they expressed around and in meaning making also varies. Mary expresses anger at the type of writer she is supposed to be and expresses a strong desire for a different type of relationship between writer and reader. Sara expresses the desire for a different talking relationship between student-writer and tutor-reader around meaning making in writing and learning more generally. But all the student-writers want a talking relationship with their tutors, at least in order to establish the rules.

The nature of individual desires for meaning making within their academic writing are clearly linked to their perspective on the nature and function of formal education. Thus, in example 1 in 6.3.1, Bridget's comments seem to indicate an acceptance of education

as transmission: that is, learning is learning what someone tells you counts as acceptable knowledge. This parallels Nadia's concern to use institutionally appropriate words rather than her *common words*, a view which many tutors might agree with. This stands in contrast to Mary who resists and actively challenges the notion that, for example, informality makes what is being said any less significant. She points instead to conventions of formality contributing to particular types of relationships between the writer and her text and the writer and potential readers.

The differences between student-writers feelings and consequent actions in relation to meaning making within the institution can, to a certain extent, be linked to Chase's adaptation of Giroux's categories of *accommodation, resistance and opposition* (see Chase 1988, Giroux 1983). Chase uses these three categories to describe different student-writer standpoints to dominant conventions in academia and provides case studies to exemplify the three positions: accommodation is the process whereby students learn to accept conventions without necessarily questioning how conventions privilege some forms of meaning making at the expense of others; opposition refers to students who, whilst aware of how dominant conventions work to constrain meaning making, continue to write as required; resistance is *a movement against the dominant ideology--toward emancipation Chase* (1988:15) and refers to a student-writer's active decision to challenge dominant norms. However, although we might at first sight categorize Bridget as engaging in accommodation, compared with Mary as resisting and Kate as opposing, it is clear from the discussion that the processes in which they engage cannot be so neatly categorized. It seems much more accurate to think of each student-writer engaging in the three processes at different moments in time and to different extents.

6.6 Conclusion

By focusing on specific instances of meaning making, we can glimpse the ways in which regulation, through the dominant monologic type of tutor/student addressivity, occurs.

Dominant conventions surrounding the writing of academic texts regulate student-writers' voices in a complex way. Although direct control of content is an aspect of

individual students' experience (tutor tells student what s/he can(not) say), indirect regulation is more common, manifesting itself in this study in two ways. The most obvious form of indirect regulation over content occurs through tutor comments on what might be considered to be relatively unproblematic conventions surrounding acceptable features in academic writing, e.g. contractions. If we listen to students, we will learn how such apparently insignificant dominant conventions may marginalize writers and readers, and ensure that only a particular type of writer-reader relationship is maintained in academia.

The second form of indirect regulation of student writing relates more broadly to *the context of culture* of higher education, through the more abstract workings of addressivity (see Halliday 1978, chapter 2). An example from this study is that, the student-writers, in inventing the university, draw on their previous and current personal and professional experience in education in order to establish what authorities within the institution want to hear. In many cases, they guess correctly- for example, the need to use a language which is different from their own- yet they may not know what sort of language, or which specific features of language are required (for example, full rather than contracted forms). On other occasions they may edit out specific content which university lecturers (rather than headteachers) might want to hear. In this study, even where students were encouraged to include their lived experience in their writing, this was often edited out. There is clearly a need, at the least, for students to be told of the range and diversity of political perspectives within academia if we are to create spaces for their voices to be heard.

The data-experience from this project points to institutional regulation through the contexts of situation and culture as a major dimension in student-writers' experience of making meaning in academic writing. As discussed, it is difficult to get close to student-writers' desires for their meaning making within the context of this pedagogical research. The limited desires which are expressed are bounded by, and to, the context of HE and as such allow us only to glimpse potential desires. However, it is possible to signal certain sites of connection between dominant institutional convention and individual desire for meaning making. The specific instances arising in this project are the desire for some new wordings and the desire to learn how to construct rational

argument: the student-writers expressed the view that these enabled their meaning making. Desires which diverge from institutional convention are the desires for different relationships around knowledge making: between writer and reader, between tutor-reader and student-writer, between writer and text. The type of relationship wanted is one of connection and personal involvement which, both at the levels of context of situation and culture, HE denies. One student-writer specifically wants to include lyrical texts alongside rational argument in order to acknowledge the personal and emotional alongside reason.

This chapter has been framed by both an explicit and a less explicit dichotomy: the explicit dichotomy has been regulation-desire, the less explicit dichotomy, monologic-dialogic tutor/student addressivity which I have discussed in chapters 2 and 5. Whilst these dichotomies are useful, I hope that by focusing on individual experience, it will also be clear that the student-writers' experience of the making of meaning is more complex than any simple dichotomies may imply.

Thus, whilst regulation and desire emerge as a significant dimensions of the student-writers' experience of meaning making, writing within this dichotomy does not offer a complete account of the student-writers' experiences. In some instances, individual desire in and for meaning making seems to powerfully connect with dominant institutional practices and is not necessarily experienced by the individual as regulation; for example, Nadia's rejection of her *own words* alongside her desire for new words. Moreover, in focusing on extracts from texts and talk about texts, there is a danger that I may seem to be presenting desire and regulation around meaning making as static and fixed. They are not. Making meaning in writing is not (always) about transferring meanings to paper but of forging meanings in particular contexts, by negotiating both desire and regulation. I return to this in chapter 8, where I explore some instances of how, through talk, we worked at forging meaning in writing.

In relation to the dichotomy monologic/dialogic addressivity, I have argued that the dominant type of addressivity at the levels of contexts of situation and culture is monologic. That is, at the level of context of situation the tutor controls meaning making by deciding what count as appropriate meanings within the institution. At the

level of context of culture, monologism is dominant in that the student-writers listen out, for what count as appropriate voices, beliefs wordings in order to included these in their written texts, whilst at the same time consciously editing out what they understand to be inappropriate voices. 'Appropriate' voices are the dominant voices within society: for example powerful white voices such as a prime minister and dominant views on monolingualism and monoculturalism. Yet there is also evidence of cracks within this monologic order and of hybridization creeping in (see Bakhtin 1981:366; see also 6.2.2.). For example, in my talk as tutor-assessor with student-writers, I give permission/encourage the use of the personal experience as well as the first person, *I*. Another tutor, as reported by the student-writer, Kate, explicitly allows/encourages her to include poetry within her essay. I explore the possibilities of engaging in dialogic practices around student meaning making within a predominantly monologic institutional space in chapter 8.

However, my aim in the following chapter, chapter 7, is on the teaching of the dominant literacy practice of HE, essayist literacy, by focusing on tutor/student talk about writing.

NOTES

[1] Some of the ideas and data-experience discussed in this chapter appeared in Lillis (1997).

[2] Briefly, these features are as follows. high lexical density = a high number of lexical words in each clause; relational/mental clauses = clauses with verbs such as is, seems, points to, involves; material process = verbs of doing; nominal style = long nominal groups, for example 'the critical discourse approach'; carrier nouns = nouns which refer to mental/verbal processes, for example, 'fact', 'idea'.

PART C: TALKING OUR WAY IN

TALKING OUR WAY IN?

INTRODUCTION TO PART C

In part C my aim is to focus on the talk between individual student-writers and myself as tutor-researcher/*knowledgeable-insider* (Harris 1992) about the students' writing (see chapter 3 for distinction between my roles).

Throughout the project I became increasingly aware that the student-writers' desire for talk with their tutors was a significant dimension to their experience in HE. In the accounts of the student-writers' educational and broader life experience in chapter 4, taking part in higher educating emerges as a shared desire. Yet, as I have explored in chapters 5 and 6, the dominant monologic type of addressivity within institutional practices works against their desires for participation (see chapter 5) and, evident in some instances, for the meanings they wish to make (see chapter 6). The possibility of talk between student-writer and tutor seems to hold out for the student-writers the promise of learning and participation in HE. I decided it was important to focus on actual instances of our talk in order to explore how, and to what extent, student-tutor talk can fulfill such a promise.

This involved exploring the mediating potential of talk between student-writer and tutor-researcher for teaching and learning essayist literacy, as well as for facilitating greater individual student-writer control over her meaning making. There is inevitably a tension between these, with dominant conventions regulating meaning making in specific ways, as discussed in chapter 6. However, I argue that there are also spaces for potential control which a tutor researcher can facilitate through talk even whilst working within essayist literacy as I explore in the following chapters.

Chapters 7, 8 and 9 represent my attempt to come to some understanding of the work we do in talk and its impact on shaping the written text. They are organized in the following way: chapter 7 focuses on talk in relation to the teaching and learning of essayist literacy; chapter 8 focuses on talk in relation to populating texts with intention (Bakhtin 1981:293-4; see also 2.7.3); chapter 9 focuses on the students' comments about our talk.

Chapters 7 and 8 can be read as, and in some ways are, responses to chapters 5 and 6 respectively. They are not intended as 'solutions' to the 'problems' posed but as contributions to the questions raised in chapters 5 and 6. In chapter 5, I illustrated the difficulties the student-writers faced in working out what tutors required, emphasizing the limited opportunity for dialogue; chapter 7 thus responds to chapter 5, by focusing on the way in which student-tutor talk enables the student-writer to find out what is required. By tracing through the impact of talk on later drafts, I demonstrate that talk is useful for allowing the student-writers to engage more successfully in essayist literacy. However, I also point to the limitations in such talk resulting from concentrating primarily on the **doing** of essayist literacy.

Chapter 8 responds to chapter 6 by focusing on how, through collaborative talk, the tutor can help the student-writer work at taking greater control over meaning making. This necessitates a shift away from the dominant student-tutor relations of monologic addressivity in HE towards a dialogic type of addressivity, that is, more collaborative practices around meaning making. This involves the tutor working with the student-writer to foreground the student-writer's preferred meanings as well as working at making language visible in the processes of making meaning by challenging a transparency notion of language.

Chapter 7

TALKING TO TEACH AND LEARN ESSAYIST LITERACY

7.1 Introduction

Learning the conventions of essayist literacy is not straightforward. In chapter 5, I argued that the student-writers were not familiar with the conventions surrounding academic writing and found it difficult to work out what they were. I argued, moreover, that the dominant monologic type of addressivity within HE significantly contributed to the specific nature of the student-writers' participation in HE. The monologic type of tutor/student addressivity worked against the student-writers coming to learn (about) the dominant conventions as there was little opportunity for talk. Where there were opportunities for talk, there seemed to be little space for the student-writer to negotiate a greater understanding of institutional demands.

This chapter both contrasts with, and yet is a continuation of themes raised in chapter 5.

The content of this chapter contrasts with that of chapter 5 in that in the latter, I highlighted the limited opportunity student-writers felt they had for talk with tutors, whereas this chapter is based on substantial talk between students and myself about their writing. The data-experience for this chapter is drawn from this talk, in particular, from the talk between the six student-writers and myself who were working as students and as tutor-assessor-researcher in a Language Studies course. We had made a conscious decision to make space for talk, one principal aim of which was to teach/learn the dominant conventions of student academic writing.

This chapter is a continuation of chapter 5 in that the talk takes place between participants who are within the same institutionally defined roles as students and tutors referred to in chapter 5. The context is similar to that described by several students in chapter 5, in that I was one of several tutors teaching a course and writing essay questions. This chapter is also a continuation in that, although we engage in talk, the type of addressivity continues to be fundamentally monologic in that my aim as tutor is

to work within the frame of a predominantly *authoritative discourse* (Bakhtin 1981:342; see also 2.5.3) to teach the privileged literacy practice of academia and hence to impose a particular way of making meaning.

In order to explore the teaching and learning of essayist literacy, I focus on one significant dimension to this practice which was a prominent aspect of our work in talk and which, although not uniform, I think is least negotiable to student-writers: that is, what I am calling here, the construction of *essayist unity*.

In the following sections my aim is as follows: to explain what I mean by *unity* in essayist literacy in 7.2; to explore both the features, in 7. 3, and the purposes of the talk in 7.4, in which the student-writers and I engage for the teaching and learning of this unity, tracing throughout the impact of our talk on the student-writers' next draft; to signal the possibility of talking at cross-purposes in 7.5; to discuss the general impact of talk on student-writers' texts in 7.6; to discuss, in 7.7, the ways in which our talk works as both solution and problem, by facilitating student engagement in essayist literacy, whilst also potentially contributing to the practice of mystery, referred to in chapter 5 and by serving to socialize student-writers into dominant ways of meaning. There is inevitably overlap between the sections, particularly 7.3 and 7.4, but I have organized the chapter in this way in order to foreground different dimensions.

7.2 Focus on unity in essayist literacy

7.2.1 Unity as culturally configured

The notion that student texts written within essayist literacy should be constructed with a particular configuration of unity is evident from studies exploring the teaching and learning of academic writing. For example, Clanchy points to a key criterion used by tutors in assessing student writing as being as follows: the essay *should clearly focus on* ***a set topic*** *with its* ***central concerns*** (1985: 3 my emphasis; see also discussion 5 2.1). This characterisation of unity as a text explicitly constructed around one principal focus is found in the work of other writers. Kaplan and Ostler (1982) talk of expository prose as containing *all but nothing more than the stated topic* and they outline what they understand to be the features of English expository prose as follows:

a clearly defined topic, introduction, body which explicates all but nothing more than the stated topic, paragraphs which chain from one to the next, and a conclusion which tells the reader what has been discussed---no digression, no matter how interesting, is permitted on the grounds that it would violate unity. (1982:14)

Likewise, Freedman and Pringle, talking about written argument, state that the text *must be unified by either an implicit or --- an explicitly stated thesis* (1984:74; see also 7.2.2 below for discussion of difference in notions of unity)[1]. They list their criteria for evaluating written argument:

First the whole piece of discourse must be unified by either an implicit or (more commonly) an explicitly stated single restricted thesis; that is, the whole must be so unified that each point and each illustration either directly substantiates the thesis or is a link in a chain of reasoning which supports that thesis. Secondly, the individual points and illustrations must be integrated within a hierarchic structure so that each proposition is logically linked not only to every other proposition but to the central and indeed to every other proposition within the whole text. (1984:74)

Newkirk, focusing on student-tutor talk in writing conferences, also points to the importance of a student academic text having one principal focus, thus signalling the nature of essayist unity (1995). He points to the different notions of unity that tutor and student were working with in a writing conference aimed at supporting the student in her writing of an academic essay. He suggests that their different working notions of unity reflected greater and lesser cognitive complexity. Thus, drawing on Vygotsky (1986), he suggests that whilst the student-writer was working with *complexes*, the tutor was working with *concepts*. Briefly, to construct a *complex* the writer links individual objects because of concrete or factual similarities; whereas to construct a concept *the learner has to abstract, to single out elements, and to view the abstracted elements apart from the totality of the concrete experience in which it is embedded* (Newkirk 1995: 204).

Newkirk's comments here link with claims about the links between literacy and cognitive development/higher order thinking made by writers working within an autonomous model of literacy (see for example Applebee's formulation of narrative as moving from heaps to focused chains 1978; see Luria in Gee 1996: 52-57; Olson 1994). These claims, made about the interrelationships between a notion of autonomous literacy and cognition, have been challenged by researcher-writers drawing on ethnographic research, such as Scribner and Cole (1981), Heath (1983) and Street

(1984) as well as by those exploring a range of rhetorical traditions; these include writers from feminist traditions who argue that making meaning within Western academic tradition is a culturally privileged practice, rather than a cognitively or intellectually more superior way of making meaning (see discussion in 6.2).

Gee, has argued that a key dimension of unity within essayist literacy is to talk *about one important thing* and has argued that this is a culturally specific practice (Gee 1990: xvii). As discussed in 6.2.1, he exemplifies the nature of this unity by contrasting the 'sharing time' turns of two seven year old girls: a middle class Anglo-American girl, and an African American. He argues that the turn of the African-American girl was unsuccessful in the teacher's (and school's) terms because her principal aim was *to create a pattern out of language* to draw her audience into constructing shared meanings with her, rather than, as was the case with the Anglo-American girl, to construct a text around one main focus, the making of candles.

Lu has also pointed to the ways in which notions of unity are culturally situated in profound ways. She argues that student-writers from diverse linguistic and cultural backgrounds are anxious not to disrupt notions and practices of unity when they move from one discourse to another; they work at maintaining clear boundaries between the separate and distinct ways of meaning and being- between for example the home and formal schooling (1987, 1990). However it is also clear that, in attempting to maintain such boundaries, student-writers draw on their specific life and discourse experiences to establish what will and will not be accepted as unity within the different socio-discursive contexts, as illustrated in student-writers' comments in chapter 6.

On the basis of the experience of the student-writers in this project, it is clear that a significant dimension to their learning of how to make meaning in academic writing is their learning of **what counts as unity** in essayist literacy. This involves not only learning about the prominent debates and dominant textual practices of a particular discipline area (as discussed for example by Bartholomae 1985; Ivanic 1993, 1998 chapter 9, Ivanic 1998; Bazerman 1994; Berkenkotter and Huckin 1995). But, crucially, and as suggested in the writers' comments above, it involves coming to learn a way of constructing knowledge which centres on a powerful and culturally specific notion of unity, as I explore in the main part of this chapter. I do this by focusing on the

talk between six student-writers and myself, as tutor-researcher, in the specific context of a Language Studies course (see 3.2.1 for details of this course), in our attempts to teach and learn what counts as unity in their writing.

7.2.2 Unity in student academic writing

Whilst arguing that a specific notion of unity underlies essayist literacy, I would also argue that different dimensions of this unity are emphasized in practices surrounding the teaching of student academic writing. That tutors expect student-writers to construct texts around one main idea, generally determined by the 'essay-type' question set by a tutor, would not I think be contested (see 5 for discussion of 'essay-type'). However, exactly how tutors and students view the notion of writing about one 'main idea' is not so clear. In relation to expectations around textual unity, there are indications that tutors want and expect *argument*, that is, the establishment of a position from which the writer constructs the text, as illustrated by Freedman and Pringle's description of unity (see 7.2.1). This contrasts with what it seems many students seem to work with: that is, a notion of unity outlined by Kaplan and Ostler (see 7.2.1) which focuses on structure in terms of chaining content, rather than argument in terms of constructing a position (see Hounsell 1984; Norton 1990; see also chapter 5 for tutors' and students' understandings about what is required).

However, the situation is far more complex. For, there is evidence to suggest that whilst tutors state a preference for argument in student academic writing, they may in practice be working with a combination of criteria which are prominent in their teaching and assessment, that is in the **doing,** of student academic writing. These criteria include notions of structure similar to that outlined by Kaplan and Ostler and adopted by many students, that is structure as chaining. This is indicated in Norton's work where she seeks to establish which criteria are central in the assessment of student essays . But she also points to the idiosyncratic nature of tutor assessment behaviour (1990). For example, whilst emphasizing the importance of structure or argument, tutors often engage in assessment practices which emphasize aspects such as *style*. In their work, Lea and Street (1998) suggest that whilst the notions/wordings structure and argument are widely used by tutors in talking about student essays, this focus on such wordings/notions in fact masks underlying epistemological concerns, that is concerns

about what counts as acceptable knowledge making within disciplines and fields of study (see Lea and Street 1998).

It became increasingly clear to me, as I reviewed my talk with the student-writers, that the disparity between tutors and student-writers' perspectives on textual unity may in part be a result of the difference between what tutors say and what they (we) do in getting on with the doing of student academic writing in HE. Moreover, analysis of this talk points to a need to focus as much on what counts as knowledge within the institutional context, as on any presumed transparent notions of argument and structure, as argued by Lea and Street (1998). Thus, for example, whilst stating a preference for argument, through their (our) actions, they (we) may be teaching student-writers to simply knowledge tell: that is, to chain together institutionally acceptable items of knowledge, albeit organized around one main theme. I would suggest that there is a need to focus in more detail on what tutors do, in talk directed at large groups of students in lectures as well as in smaller and individual face-to face contact with students, in order to tease out the nature of actual practice in HE. The following analysis of extracts from talk between individual student-writers and myself is intended as a contribution.

Throughout sections 7.3 and 7.4 below, I explore the work we do in talk, by focusing on the features and purposes of our talk. There is considerable overlap in the sections for two reasons: a) whilst foregrounding the distinction between features and purposes, it is not useful or possible for the purposes of analysis here to construct them as unrelated; and b) I want to maintain continuity throughout the two sections in order to explore the links between features, purposes of talk and the impact on the written texts in all the specific examples discussed. All examples are numbered in order to provide an overview in section 7.6.

7.3 Working at constructing unity: prominent features of our talk

In order to illustrate prominent features of the talk between the student-writers and myself, I begin by focusing on extracts from talk with one student-writer, Sara.

7.3.1 Seeking and giving direction

7.3.1.1 Example 1

The first example illustrates how in some instances, talk between student-writer and tutor can in a relatively quick and straightforward way re-focus the writer's attention on what is intended to be the main focus of the question. Two student-writers, Reba and Sara, decided to write on the essay question below:

Essay question

a) Drawing on your reading, explain some of the ways in which research has shown linguistic behaviour to be gender related.
b) Drawing on your experience in education, discuss how relevant you think an understanding of gender and language is to teachers

Consider the extracts from Sara and Reba's texts below :

Extract from Sara's text (draft 1)	Extract from Reba's text (final draft)
Schools can sometimes act as amplifiers for society's stereotypes. Because of this stereotyping the boys and girls have many career opportunities denied them including skills and interests which in turn discourage them to find out their potential talents. (Seldraft1:31-34)	School does not give equal opportunities to girls and boys, whatever means of equality it may seem to represent. The way forward is more clearcut for boys, who still face a life of continuous working. Whatever level of a job they are aimed towards, they only look towards a working future. (Rel fd:172-178)

In these extracts, both Sara and Reba had moved away from what I, as tutor, had intended to be the central focus of the question **language and gender** to the area of **gender and education**. As a Language Studies course, the central focus had to be language. I pointed this out to Sara when she showed me the above extract as part of her first draft; I also reminded her of the recommended related texts she might read.

Our conversation lasted a few minutes whilst I was making a cup of tea in a break between teaching sessions. As can be seen below, she made a significant shift of focus in her second draft towards language and gender in education

Extract from draft 2

It may not be necessarily true that girls are disadvantaged in class because they don't get the chance to talk. The frequency of talk in a class is important but more importantly is the quality of the answers. Having said this there are still some areas where girls lack confidence in e.g. technology, and computing. So it would be better if practical work could be organised in a way that girls could take a part in without being dominated or overwhelmed by the boys. (Se1d2:222-229)

Reba, in contrast did not show a first draft to me although, as I discuss below, she had been unsure at the time of writing whether she was writing what I required (see 7.4.2.2.).

As shown above, Sara, with minimal intervention through talk, redirected the first draft of her first essay by focusing on the area of gender and **language** in education, rather than gender and education more broadly. She achieved the grade of distinction for this essay. However, this success, with such minimal tutor intervention, did not mean that she had now learnt the practice of focusing her text as required for essayist literacy, as is illustrated below.

7.3.2 Cued elicitation, modelling

7.3.2.1. Example 2

Consider Sara's second essay question. Below is an extract from her first draft and our talk about the extract

Essay question

Discuss the ways in which different linguistic environments affect the development of bilingualism in pre-school (under 5 years) children.

	Extracts from text		Talk about text
1	I hope that by the	1	*T: That doesn't seem to me to be really what*
2	end of this	2	*you're doing.(*Re-reads section)
3	assignment I may	3	*S: What about linguistically capable?*
4	have come to some	4	*T: But you're talking about a specific group*
5	sort of conclusion,	5	*of children aren't you?*
6	as to why some	6	*S: Bilingual children.*
7	children are	7	*T: Right, so I think you need to be specific*
8	proficient in some	8	*here as to why some*
9	languages and not	9	*S: [bilingual children,*
10	others. (Se2d1: 40-44)	10	*would that be better?*
		11	*T: Well let's try and follow that through.*
		12	*Some bilingual children are*
		13	*S: [well, yeah. I*
		14	*mean some bilingual children are proficient*
		15	*in some languages and not others*
		16	*T: But if you've already called them*
		17	*bilingual, you've got a problem there.*
		18	*S: Yeah, well but the business about what is*
		19	*bilingual though. I mean, who is considered*
		20	*a bilingual, when <u>are</u> you bilingual?*
		21	*T: Right okay, let's take it like that.*
		22	(T re-reads section)
		23	*T: Have you come to any conclusion about*
		24	*what might be the best environment?*
		25	*S: Yes. I mean, there were some things in*
		26	*there that I thought that's a good idea, I*
		27	*could use that myself.*
		28	*T: Well, don't you think then that what*
		29	*you're saying is I may have come to some*
		30	*sort of conclusion as to why <u>certain</u>*
		31	*environment help children to become*
		32	*bilingual more than others. Isn't that what*
		33	*you're doing?...*
		34	*S: I think that's probably what I'm trying to*
		35	*say but I haven't written it down properly*
		36	*T. It's just that, what you've written here is*
		37	*too vague.* (T reads extract) *The second*
		38	*reason given here should be the key.*(contd)

	Extracts from text contd.		Talk about text contd.
	---	39	*S: Yeah* (sounds unsure).*So if I said erm*
11	what effects	40	*that by the end of the assignment I may have*
12	different	41	*some idea*
13	environments have on	42	*T: [as to why some children...*
14	their development	43	S: *erm...*
15	(Se2d1:55)	44	T: *develop bilingual skills and what effect*
		45	*that has on their development. I mean that's*
		46	*what you're talking about, aren't you?*
		47	*S: <u>How</u> they develop bilingual skills.*
		48	*T: Yeah*
		49	*S: Can I write that down or I'll forget.*
		50	*S*: (Writes*) As to why, no... how some*
		51	*children develop bilingual skills.*
		52	*T: I think that's much more what you're*
		53	*saying... and then what effects.*
		54	*S: Yeah.* (Writes*)* (Se2disd1side 2:268).

This episode includes a number of features common across the talk between the student-writers and I, as tutor-researcher, and illustrates the predominantly monologic type of addressivity surrounding student meaning making.

In the above talk episode, the institutionally sanctioned teacher and student talking roles, which have been emphasized in analyses of school based talk, are prominent. I control the opening and closing of the sequence. In general, I control the talk by assuming my institutional right to ask questions and make evaluations of the student-writer's comments: there are obvious, although extended, initiation-response-feedback patterns (IRF), for example at lines 1-7, 23-36, where I act as questioner and evaluator of her work (for IRF see Sinclair and Coulthard 1975; for similar pattern, IRE , see Mehan 1979); I engage in what Edwards and Mercer call *cued elicitation* at lines 12-14 (see Edwards and Mercer 1987: chapter 7; Mercer 1995: 26-27) where I guide the student-writer's contribution by seeking to elicit specific responses; and cued elicitation as part of modelling written text (see lines 41-47); and joint modelling with the student-writer; I control the opening and closing of the sequence. I am using *modelling* here to mean instances in talk where we rehearse sections of written text orally (this is in line with examples of modelling given by Harris 1986: 66-69).

There is evidence of me attempting to minimize my directive role through different types of hedging: for example, *that doesn't seem to me to be really what you're doing* (line 1)*; don't you think* (line 28), *isn't that (*line 32) , *I mean (*line 45). Whilst some of these exchanges take on a particular significance for the teaching and learning of essayist literacy as I discuss below (see section 7.3.3), they are also politeness strategies; paying attention to Sara's negative face wants through hedging allows me the possibility of re-directing her text without directly rejecting her text and views (see Brown and Levinson 1987). The negative tags in the sequence - *don't you think, isn't that what you're doing, aren't you?*- are indications of my attempt to persuade her to take up my directives.

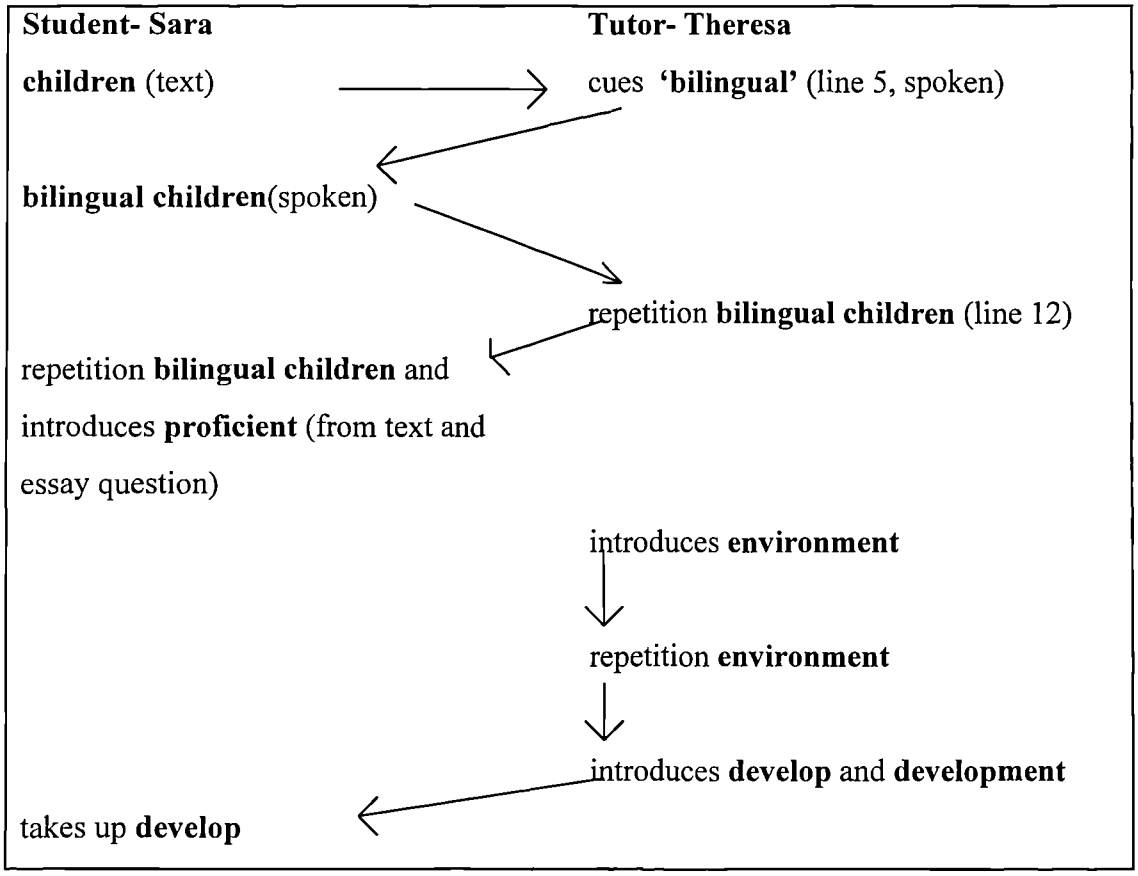
All of my contributions are directed at pushing her towards constructing the unifying central focus demanded in essayist literacy. I do this notably by introducing wordings from the essay question in my talk and eliciting them in her talk: at lines 4-6 towards the group of people intended to be the focus of the question, children being brought up bilingually; lines 23-24 towards the particular dimension of their experience to be explored, that is, their environment. I ignore Sara's comments at line 25-27 on the usefulness of the text by Arnberg she is drawing on (Arnberg 1987) in order to steer her towards a central focus on the effect of the environment on the development of bilingualism. We return to discuss the way she is being drawn into the intention in her source text below (see section 7.4.3.1). Having established the focus in terms of who and what, I work with Sara to model text which she might include in her essay, at lines 39-47.

Sara actively works with me in the talk by responding to my direct questions (for example at lines 6 and 25) offering suggestions (lines 3 and 9) introducing her own questions about a term (19), introducing her own opinion on a source text (lines 25-27), echoing my comment that there are problems with the way she is using the word *bilingual* (line 15), working with me to model text (lines 39-47).

Repeating wordings from the essay question is a seemingly obvious way of constructing essayist unity within texts, but is not necessarily something the student-writers think of

doing. In the figure below I outline the way in which I cue key wordings from the essay question for Sara to include in her written text.

Working at constructing textual unity: wordings from essay question in student-tutor talk



The arrows indicate the introduction and take up of specific wordings in our talk and as is shown in the extract from Sara's final draft below, these wordings are also taken up by Sara in her final written draft.

The impact of our talk on her written text can be traced in the final draft, as shown below. The extract from her final draft shows how she reworked the wordings of her first draft by both incorporating wordings close to the essay question- bilingual, develop, linguistic, environment- and including revisions traceable to our talk. Thus she has used the word bilingual, but has shifted it from a description of the child to description of skills, thus avoiding her original problematic use of the term bilingual; her incorporation of her suggested use of the word *how*, rather than my proposed *why*. It shows how she has not simply transferred text suggestions from my talk- for example,

in our talk I questioned her use of the word bilingual but I did not model an alternative - but has reworked text from our talk (see Patthey-Chavez and Ferris 1997 for the distinction they make between transfer and transformation).

Extract from final draft

I hope that by the end of the assignment I may have come to some sort of conclusion as to **how children develop bilingual skills** and what effects different environments have on their linguistic development.(Se2fd:14-16)

7.3.3 Reconstructive paraphrasing

A significant feature of our talk in the talk extract above, and a strong indicator of the monologic type of addressivity within which the student meaning making takes place, is the way in which I, as tutor-researcher, insist that I know what the student-writer is trying to say as compared with what she actually does say, either orally or in her written text. This connects closely with what Edwards and Mercer, in their analysis of school-teacher talk, have called *reconstructive paraphrasing* (Edwards and Mercer 1985: chapter 7). This is a process whereby the tutor reconstructs the meanings the student is making in order to bring them in line with institutionally preferred meanings. Thus, in the episode above, I open and close this episode by suggesting that I know what Sara is trying to say as compared with what she has written. I also do this at line , *That doesn't seem to me to be really what you're doing*; at line 28, *don't you think that what you're saying is;* at line 45, *I mean that's what you're talking about, aren't you*; at line 52 *I think that's much more what you're saying.* In closing the episode I suggest that all of our talk has been about making Sara's intended meanings textually explicit. Sara's comment at line 34, *I think that's probably what I'm trying to say but I haven't written it down properly* indicates that she is willing to accept my interpretation of what I think she's trying to do, although *probably* indicates her doubt about me, and perhaps her, knowing her intended meanings. It may be the case that, based on a reading of her notes, headings, rough drafts I was convinced that she understood the question and that much of her material was relevant. However, knowing that she understood the intention of the question and that much of her draft was relevant, is different from knowing what it is she is trying to mean/meant at any one moment in time. In working at securing an

institutionally acceptable focus, I reflect the *teacher's dilemma* (Edwards and Mercer 1985:130), engaged in the balancing act of listening out for what the student might want to mean and imposing a particular way of meaning.

7.3.3.1. Example 3

How this dilemma is enacted can be further illustrated in the following extract, from the same talk session as above. I open the sequence by questioning the relevance of Sara's definition of bilingualism -which we had begun to explore in the talk above- to the essay question.

	Extracts from text		**Talk about text**
1	I personally	1	S reads text
2	maintain the idea	2	*S:That's my view and what I think for a*
3	that if a person can	3	*person to considered bilingual.*
4	communicate in all	4	*T: Why is this bit relevant to the question?*
5	the languages they	5	*S:* (S rereads section) *Well it depends,*
6	possess and can in	6	*because here's different types of bilingual*
7	turn be understood	7	*children, well looking through, there's*
8	may resume the title	8	*active, passive and another one, three*
9	of a bilingual	9	*different sorts of, if you like, proficiency in*
10	(Se2d1:69-74)	10	*bilingualism. There's one, the passive one*
		11	*where the child can, er, communicate, you*
		12	*know, in the other language but cannot read*
		13	*and write, you know, and there's the active,*
		14	*active yeah, I think, where the child can*
		15	*actually read and write in the other*
		16	*language, I think*
		17	*T: [well, don't forget, we're*
		18	*talking about children under five. So*
		19	*reading and writing is not that relevant.*
		20	*S: I mean in future, these things will*
		21	*obviously affect the child*
		22	*T: [right fine*
		23	*S: [I mean*
		24	*these are the first stepping stones towards*
		25	*being a balanced bilingual and you've got to*
		26	*consider this before you actually go into it.*
			contd.

	Extract from text contd.		Talk about text contd.
11	how does a child	27	*T: Right, so somehow we need a link*
12	become a bilingual?	28	*between what you've said here. It may be, in*
13	There are various	29	*order to become bilingual using this*
14	situations in which	30	*definition, the linguistic environment in*
15	children can	31	*which the child finds itself will be of crucial*
16	actually become	32	*importance. You've got to link this to where*
17	bilingual.(Se2d1:188-	33	*the essay is going. Just now you've*
18	189)	34	*explained it, you've said depending on*
		35	*where you want to go, that has major*
		36	*implications for the sorts of linguistic*
		37	*environment you're going to try and set up.*
		38	*So that needs to go there.*
		39	(S.marks her text.T reads heading.)
		40	*T: For a child to become bilingual in the*
		41	*long term there will be major implications*
		42	*for the sort of linguistic environment that is*
		43	*required, or something like that. I'm just*
		44	*thinking that you talk here about different*
		45	*situations. So you need to say something*
		46	*about the range of*
		47	*S [different situations*
		48	*T: [which*
		49	*will have implications for the type of*
		50	*bilingualism which they will*
		51	*develop.Somehow you need that link*
		52	*there.Do you see what I mean?*
		53	*S: Yeah (*sounds unsure)
		54	*T: Or not?*
		55	*S: Definitely. I see what you mean.* (Se
		56	2disd1:5)

This extract has typical features of student-tutor talk found in the previous extract (section 7.3.2): me directing the sequence through IRFs at lines ; modelling text; using what I understand in this institutional context as directives- *don't forget, you need, you've got to.*

There is also an instance of reconstructive paraphrasing which is central in my attempts at securing an acceptable unity within essayist literacy. Thus, at line 4, I'm still not sure what her intended meaning is or indeed whether Sara has an intended meaning or is working at meaning. I pursue her reference to reading and writing, rejecting its relevance. Sara responds by explaining why it is relevant. Her wording *in future* seems to enable me to get closer to what I understand to be her intended meaning. I reflect this back to her at lines 28-29 pushing it textually closer to the central focus of the essay

question -the development of bilingualism- with the wordings *in order to become bilingual.*

In this sequence, then we move from a written personal definition of bilingual couched in general terms- *can communicate in all the languages they possess*- to a verbal statement where Sara demonstrates her knowledge of the more complex definitions of bilingual; to a verbal explanation/clue *in future*-as to why Sara considers reference to reading and writing to be relevant, alongside an ambiguous use of *these things*; to my transformation *in order to become bilingual* and then move to textual modelling.

In re-examining my wordings in this extract, I find it difficult to explain how or why I came to understand *in future* as *in order to become bilingual* or to know what sense I was making of Sara's *these things* and *these*. What do *these things*, *these* refer to? Reading, writing, active passive bilingual? It may be that these non-specific wordings indicate that Sara is working at meaning making at the moment of talk, whilst I as tutor, am drawing on what Gee refers to as the *guessing principle* to work at sense making within this context:

We can only make judgements about what others (and ourselves) mean by a word used on a given occasion by guessing what other words the word is mean t to exclude or not exclude. (Gee 1996:74)

But clearly such guessing is influenced by another of Gee's principles, that of context. In the talk with Sara, I am not only trying to understand what she is saying but drawing heavily on what I consider it to be acceptable for her to do within the practice of essayist literacy and within the field of Language Studies, in order to **make** sense, in particular to construct what counts as textual unity. An indication of this is at line 33, when I say *Just now you've explained it, you've said depending on where you want to go*. She had, in fact, said, *in future* .

This seems to be an instance of making meaning which involves the following dynamic: the student-writer making meaning at the moment of talk; me investing a student-writer's words with a particular meaning in accordance with a particular area of study, which is in turn bound up with the socio-discursive context of essayist literacy ; me then modelling text orally. Although she has her doubts, Sara colludes with what I am doing,

because as someone learning the rules she is prepared to follow me in the doing although perhaps not sure about what we're doing or why.

In her final draft, we can see textual traces of our talk, but not in any straightforward, transfer way, but as reworked by Sara.

Extract from final draft

In order for a child to become bilingual, certain linguistic environments, that the child will find itself in, **will be of crucial importance** to his/her development. In fact there are a **range of different situations** which will **have implications** within **the type of bilingualism** the child will develop. In other words the environment will affect the child's proficiency in the languages that he/she will eventually acquire. My emphasis (Se2fd: 104-108).

The wordings in bold can be considered a reworking from my modelling at two distinct points in our talk, at lines 29 and 41 and her modelling at line 47 drawn from my talk about her text (various situations).

7.4 Working at constructing unity: purposes of our talk

The features of talk described above occur across my talk with student-writers in my attempt to teach dominant conventions. My aim in this section is to continue to point to such features, but also to foreground the purposes that our talk serves in the teaching and learning of essayist unity.

7.4.1 Staying with the essay question

In this section, I focus on four specific examples of my attempts as tutor to teach the student-writer how to maintain the essay question as a central focus.

7.4.1.1. Example 4

Learning to construct a text around what is considered to be a central focus in essayist literacy is not an easy or quick process. As shown above, it cannot be assumed that if a student does this successfully and apparently with minimal guidance in one essay that she will be able to do so for the next, even within the same discipline area. This can be

further illustrated, in following Siria's experience of learning how to construct a main focus in response to an essay question. For her first essay at HE level, the question she is writing on is as follows:

Essay question

'KNOWLEDGE ABOUT LANGUAGE' AND EDUCATION
a) *Knowledge about language/language study* is an integral part of National Curriculum English. Explain what is meant by *knowledge about language*, based on your reading of official documents (such as the Bullock and Kingman Reports and National Curriculum English documents) and the work of several educationalists-linguists.
b) Using your personal experience as student and worker in educational settings, discuss the type of understanding about language that teachers and/or pupils need to develop. Give specific examples relating to language and learning, for example, talk in the classroom.

Below is an extract from her first draft and our talk around that extract.

	Extracts from text		Talk about text
1	If we have implicit	1	*T: (*reads 5-7) *Is that implicit or explicit*
2	knowledge about	2	*knowledge?*
3	language we already	3	*S: Implicit.*
4	know unconsciously	4	*T: Okay (*reads 29ff) *From her own*
5	how to speak and	5	*knowledge about language*
6	talk. We dont always	6	*S: [from her own*
7	know the explicit	7	*knowledge of language*
8	knowledge which is	8	*T: [Right, are you are*
9	about rules of	9	*going to make a distinction in your essay*
10	language and	10	*between knowledge <u>of</u> and knowledge*
11	grammar functions.	11	*<u>about?</u>*
12		12	*S: Yes.*
13	A girl aged 5 may	13	*T: Right, you'd better be careful then.And I*
14	make a comment such	14	*think you need to say it right up here.*
15	as 'I want my	15	*S: The first bit is the bit I was worried*
16	shoes'.It is the	16	*about, starting...once that was out of the*
17	language she has	17	*way it gets easier to sort of go on, elaborate.*
18	been taught to use	18	*T:I think in here you're going to*
19	to express herself.	19	*have to say something, er I think it's useful*
20	The child knows by	20	*to make a distinction between knowledge of*
21	using the group of	21	*language*
22	words in that order	22	*S: Yeah.*
23	she has given a	23	*T: Because that's what you're*
24	clear and correct	24	*doing aren't you?* (T reads *).*
25	message that is	25	*S: Right, so if I make this comment it will*
26	understood by those	26	*make it easier to understand this?*
27	around her.	27	*T: I think so. Do you?*
28		28	*S: Yes, that's why I wasn't*
29	From her own	29	*happy.*(Sie1did1:3)
30	knowledge about		
31	language she knows		
32	that the		
33	group of words		
34	cannot be arranged		
35	any other way to		
36	make a correct		
37	meaning.(Sie1d1: 13-29)		

In her draft, Siria is focusing on the implicit knowledge we have of language and gives an example to illustrate such knowledge. In the talk, I check her understanding of implicit v explicit and then move on to check whether Siria is making a conscious decision to use the preposition *about* after knowledge. Given Siria's use of *about* in her written text and her use of *of* in her talk, it seems possible that she was using them interchangeably. I returned to this distinction when we met up two days after the above

discussion which had been cut short- it had lasted only 13 minutes- because the caretaker had to close the building we were in.

T:Are you consciously making a distinction between knowledge of and knowledge about language?
S: Yeah there's a difference.
T: Knowledge of language links up with the notion of implicit knowledge, whereas knowledge about may be more to do with explicit. Is your example of the girl, explicit or implicit?
S: Implicit.
T: I think you really need to spell out what you're saying here.
S: This is an example of knowledge of language, implicit language.(Se1disd2: 200)

There are similar patterns of exchange in both sequences above as found in the talk with Sara: they are tutor directed with IRF sequences, directives- *you'd better be careful* (line 13), *you need to say* (14), *you're going to have to* (18)- and I close down a potential topic for talk at line 15, where Siria begins to talk about her concerns when starting off writing. There is an example of me engaging in reconstructive paraphrasing, at line 24, where I say *because that's what you're doing, aren't you?*. In fact, Siria was not at this stage making a distinction between knowledge **of** and knowledge **about** language; this is a distinction I am pushing her to make. Siria, like Sara, seems prepared to accept the way in which I am **making** sense: this is indicated by her comments at lines 25-29, where she doesn't respond by agreeing with my version of what she's doing but with another question:

Right, so if I make this comment it will make it easier to understand this?

indicating that she's not clear about what I'm suggesting or why. I return to this below in section 7.6.

This is an example of working at the essay question, by me the tutor attempting to help the writer to get closer to where the essay question is coming from; in this case, it can be located within the debate around *knowledge of* and *knowledge about* language (see discussions in Carter ed. 1990). That student-writers may not necessarily be aware that essay questions and their wordings are part of prevailing debates within disciplines, rather than being simply invented by the tutor, is brought home vividly in Ivanic and Roach (1990). To Denise, a student-writer at the time, it was a *revelation* that the essay

title could in fact be located within debates within a particular discipline. Significantly, she found this out from her friends who told her to find out where the title came from, whose work it related to, if a particular person said or used it and where. Although tutors may assume that, from teaching sessions, bibliographies, key texts and, as in this case the use of scare quotes around key terms in the question, students know how the essay question connects with the area under study, we clearly cannot assume that this is the case.

Siria's final draft contains significant revisions. There is an indication of take up from our talk in her emphasis on the distinction between implicit and explicit knowledge.

Extract from final draft

The child knows by using the group of words in that order she has given a clear message that is understood by those around her. It is useful to make a definition between knowledge of language and knowledge about language
i.e. Implicit=knowledge of language, how we learn and use language.
Explicit+ knowledge about language, rules and definitions of how to use language
From her own knowledge of language the girl knows that the group of words cannot be arranged any other way to make a correct meaning. (Sielfd:33-45)

7.4.1.2. Example 5

When we meet to discuss Siria's second essay, we also work at establishing one central focus. The essay question is as follows:

Discuss the ways in which different linguistic environments affect the development of bilingualism in pre-school (under 5 years) children.

In the extract below, although Siria is clear about the need to state her purpose in the introduction, I push her to make a focus which is textually closer to the essay question.

S: *The introductions going to be short saying in this essay I'm focusing on bilingualism from my personal experience.*
T: *You're not focusing on bilingualism. Think back to the question. That's too broad is what I mean, think back to the question. Say exactly what you're focusing on.*

S: *There are different linguistic environments children develop bilingualism in, and from this I'm going to draw some of my personal experience and I'll be looking at the ways... I'll write out the introduction and show it to you.* (Sie2disd1:74).

Here we are working with Siria's idea for a draft, rather than a draft text. By directing her to return to the wordings of the question, Siria begins to model a text orally. Although she begins to make a shift towards the wordings of the essay question orally, *different linguistic environments*, she does not do this in her written text, as the extract from her final draft below shows. In the talkback sheet and discussion I raise this.

	Extracts from text		Talk about text
1	Introduction	1	T: *What I'm thinking of all the time is <u>why</u>*
2		2	*are things here? Why are they relevant?*
3	For this essay I	3	(T points to extract) *Can you think of a way*
4	have chosen to look	4	*of making this more relevant?*
5	at childhood bi-	5	*S: What I was trying to say here was that*
6	lingualism (pre-	6	*different environments affect bilingualism.*
7	school). At the	7	*T: You haven't said that, have you?*
8	present moment, I	8	*S: No*
9	work with bilingual	9	(Sie2dif:21)
10	children under the		
11	age of five. The		
12	children are born		
13	into an environment		
14	where they have a		
15	language at home and		
16	a language at school		
17	and in the		
18	community. There is		
19	encouragement on one		
20	language in		
21	particular and not		
22	both, however both		
23	languages are		
24	important to the		
25	child, because the		
26	child is bilingual.		
27	(Sie2fd: 17-26)		

Here I'm critical of Siria's failure to repeat wordings from the essay question. Directing student-writers to make textual connections with the essay question by repeating wordings from the essay question as a way of constructing textual unity, is common across my talk (see section 7.3.2.1).

7.4.1.3 Example 6

In discussing another section of her draft, we again work at making textual connections with the essay question:

Extract from text	Talk about text
As a child it was difficult for me to understand why I had to learn to speak another language to communicate when I already spoke Sylheti quite well. (Sie2d2 notes)	*T: Why is this bit relevant?* *S: This is relevant.It's drawing on the different linguistic environments that I had to cope with.* *T: You need to say that in the essay.* *S: This is a completely different environment, where everybody spoke one.It was a dialogue, I mean* *T: [it was a ?* *S: Dialect* (laughs). *I'm sorry. That's...that was the only language from my idea that existed. I didn't know about standard Bengali.* (Sie2did1:117)

In this instance, Siria takes up the textual connection with the essay question made in our talk, in the form of the subheading in her final draft.

Extract from final draft.

Coping with bi-lingualism in different linguistic environments
I was born in Bangladesh in the city of Sylhet, where the majority of people living there spoke the Sylheti dialect. (Sie2fd:38)

7.4.1.4. Example 7

Making sense of what tutors consider to be relevant source material and using it in a way which ensures that there is a central focus in response to the essay question is a problem faced by student-writers. In the first extract below I am checking Nadia's understanding of source material, before pursuing in the second extract the relevance of this section to the essay question. The essay question is as follows:

How might a child get rid of errors without being corrected by others?

Extract from text	Talk about text
Skinner has also the same opinion as Pavlov. Skinner talks about conditioning which basically means a person is forced to operate something in order to benefit from the experiment .(Ne1d1:29-33)	*T: Is that what it* (conditioning) *means?* *N: It don't mean that. But you know, cause of the rats like, they accidentally put their hand on the space bar and they noticed that the food would come, yeah? So, they did it again and they did it again, and the first time they were probably wondering why they're in here and when he accidentally touched the space bar, he realised it would give him a benefit which was the food..Isn't that kind of a repetition thing?* *T: Yes, it's just that I'm not clear about how you're explaining it here,* (Ne1disd12:73)

(See 8.5.2.7. for discussion of Nadia's wordings here.)

Having asked for clarification, both in order to get closer to Nadia's intended meaning and to check, as a tutor, such a meaning, I pursue the relevance of this description to the intended main focus of the essay question.

T; Where's the essay going now?What's the relevance of the rat business to children?
N: It's where they repeat it and it being repeated so many times that they learn it. In this case the rats wasn't told that they had to press the space bar, they just did it by accident, yeah. And it relates to the child cause if you teach it so many times, then they'll get the hang of it, yeah. Oh I've got to do this or that. It's like, kind of repetition. (Ne1disd1: 115)

In her final draft, extracts of which are shown below, there is evidence that Nadia has worked at making textually explicit the link between the conditioning of the rats and child language learning. She does this primarily by juxtaposing the two sections. However, the effect of introducing children with the cohesion reference item, *another*, is that children and language learning are not at the centre of her text, but rather presented as just one item in a list (for reference cohesion, see Halliday 1994:313).

Extracts from final draft

<u>Behaviourist theory</u>
Lines 10-21
Pavlov (1927) experimented on dogs. Dogs normally salivate---
Lines 21-29
Another example of this kind of conditioning is when a Mother says No. A child will recognise NO, as meaning Stop or you will be punished. Once this had been repeated several times, the

child will instantly know what he or she has done, in order that the adult has said NO. (Based on Cruttenden).

Lines 29-41
Skinner talks about conditioning which basically means a person is forced to do something in order to benefit from it.

In her final draft, Nadia has thus taken one step in response to my push for one main focus, by taking up my directive to focus explicitly on children and language learning within her section on behaviourism. But she does not construct them as a central focus. As is exemplified here, Nadia is a student-writer who needs considerable help in coming to learn what counts as textual unity within the practice of essayist literacy.

7.4.2 Constructing one main focus

A problem several of the student-writers brought to our talk was how to construct a response to the essay question out of the mass of information they had collected . In this section, I trace through three instances of my attempts to construct, with the student-writer, one main focus.

7.4.2.1. Example 8

Amira and I met to discuss her writing on the following question:

What does codeswitching tell you about a bilingual's competence?

At this stage, Amira had gathered together ideas and information based on her reading into five A4 pages of a combination of handwritten and typed notes and which were organised around several headings: definitions, child code-switching, codeswitching in the classroom, advantages and disadvantages, conversation, language shift, explanations. However, she was at a loss to see how she could use this material to respond to the essay question. In the extract below, I am attempting to help her construct her text around a central focus.

	Talk about text (draft/notes)
1	*T: You need an introduction, let's see, your introduction is simply saying what*
2	*you' re doing. Now with Poplack, you can put that under the definition.*
3	*A: So what about the explanations of codeswitching?These definitions that was*
4	*taken out of books and the tag switching, the intersentential?*
5	*T: All part of definitions.*
6	*A: That's all definitions.*
7	*T: So this part* (pointing to definitions*) is saying what it is and then you've got*
8	*this bit saying why does it happen. Riley says it happens because people haven't*
9	*got the word and they put the word in from the other language.*
10	*A: It's because it's not part of the vocabulary. I can't remember what Poplack*
11	*put.*
12	*T: You need to dig that out. Wasn't it about showing fluency?*
13	*A: Yeah, advantages.*
14	*T: Then the main part of the question is what does that, codeswitching, say*
15	*about linguistic competence. Now I know they link up if you follow Riley who*
16	*says that you use one word from another language because you haven't got that*
17	*word, then presumably you're saying you're weaker in one language than*
18	*another. So that's what you're getting on to here. And then we talked about*
19	(previous discussion*) whether codeswitching reflected a general language shift*
20	*for a whole community*
21	*A: [I've done something on language shift*
22	*T: Do you want me to look at the different bits* (of her drafts/notes)?
23	*A: Yeah.*
24	(They begin to look through pages of draft/notes).
25	*A: I didn't work on it last night cause I felt too ill* (A is pregnant*).*
26	*T: What, were you throwing up or*
27	*A: [all night*
28	*T: Are you eating?*
29	*A: No*
30	*T: You ought to, a bit of toast or something*
31	*A: No, look there's language shift and I did reasons for codeswitching. And I*
32	*don't know where it's going to go, cause I got all these from different books.*
33	*T: Well they're your explanations aren't they?*
34	*A: But I haven't got a reference, because they came from lots and lots of*
35	*different books, you know, I took it out of all different bilingual books.*
36	*T: Well somewhere at the bottom you're going to have to put based on a*
	*reading of and put titles.(*Ae2disd1:18)

My initial talk here indicates that I am focusing on organising Amira's material spatially, drawing on the traditionally defined three part structure of an essay. This is reflected in my reference to *introduction* (line 1) *main part* (line 14); as well as in the wordings of directives I give her, *you can put that under definition* (line 2). This last comment also points to my use of functions to direct her construction of a text *all part*

of definitions (line 5), which I use in response to Amira's introduction of *explanation* (line 3, my repetition at line 33).

At lines 14-20, I seem to be engaging in reconstructive paraphrasing to construct a text out of the material Amira is bringing to the task: working at investing Amira's mass of material with what I consider to be appropriate meaning -*now I know they link up* (Amira's definitions with the main part of the question) line 15, *then presumably you're saying* line 17 , *that's what you're getting on to here* line18.

After a brief conversation about Amira's health relating to her pregnancy, Amira indicates that the way in which I am working to construct her text is not obviously meaningful to her, as reflected in her comment *I don't know where it's going to go* (line 32). Her confusion may be linked to the predominant frame she is working within in her attempt to organize her material at this stage, which turns out to be the **negative and positive aspects** of codeswitching, rather than the focus intended in the essay question, that is, linguistic competence, as is clear from the following extract from our talk.

	Talk about text
1	*T: So where does this take you then. What's your conclusion. What do you think*
2	*you're going to come up with?*
3	*A: er to conclude whether it's a positive thing or negative thing.*
4	*T: And what do you think?*
5	*A: Positive, in some ways. I mean it's got its disadvantages but overall...*
6	*T: What's the positive side?*
7	*A: The positive side is that you've got the advantage of having two sets of*
8	*vocabulary the monolingual hasn't got and you can switch when it's necessary*
9	*to switch whenever you want to. If you can't find the necessary word in English*
10	*you can switch to another language.*
11	*T: And what does it say about the competence then, because that's the*
12	*question, make sure you get that in the conclusion. What does it, all*
13	*this. You've written your essay, you've got the ideas there, the question is what*
14	*does it say about a bilingual's competence?*
15	*A: Well, if the languages are equal and they're good in both, then they've got*
16	*a high competence in both languages.*
17	*T: So when you say if the languages are equal*
18	*A: If they've been exposed to both of them enough. Because some people,*
19	*they've got their English and their Arabic is not too good, so they're*
20	*codeswitching for a reason, maybe it's because they actually don't know the*
21	*word.*
22	*T: Right, so if that happens, what would that say about their competence.*
23	*A: that would be low competence.*
	(T writes on notes remember to focus on competence) (Ae2disd1;110).

After asking questions to get closer to what she thinks her conclusion might be, I push her to move towards the essay question by asking her how what she is defining as a positive aspect of codeswitching links to linguistic competence (line 22). Although I think she is still unsure of what and why I'm directing her in this way, Amira, like Sara and Siria above, collaborates with my questioning. Traces of our talk can be detected in the changes she makes in her final draft, extracts and notes of which are below.

Extract from final draft: shift towards competence

Extract from section 3 of 4 sections of essay

3. What does codeswitching say about a person's linguistic competence?
Section which describes possible explanations as to why codeswitching occurs, lists the interaction functions of codeswitching, i.e. to exclude/include certain speakers and listeners; describes studies aimed at measuring how long it takes to switch between languages.

Extract from conclusion

Conclusion
People have different views about codeswitching, about what it says about a person's linguistic competence. The view of Weinrich is that code-switching is regarded as a problem with people's language. He says that it shows that the person is facing problems with keeping his/her languages separate.
On the other hand there is another view which I have took from Poplack, he says that code-switching is a special skill which is practiced by bilinguals and is acquired by special training.
I don't think you can measure someone's linguistic competence by measuring how much a person code-switches. It seems to be an unreliable and complex type of measurement, yet to be thought of. (Ae2fd: 278-295)

Our talk therefore seems to have been useful in helping Amira construct a central focus; in her final draft she has a central focus- codeswitching and linguistic competence. However, what I am actually teaching her here about tutor/institutional expectations around textual unity in student writing is problematic, as I discuss in 7.7.

Working at constructing unity...

Focusing on our talk about writing and thus coming to see the centrality of the particular notion and practice of textual unity we are expected to make meaning within in academia has inevitably made me conscious of the ways in which I have pushed and pulled at the ideas of others, my ideas, the data-experience, in order to construct unity in this chapter. It has been such a struggle, firstly to make visible to myself this unity and secondly to write within it. Particularly in this chapter.

It also raises questions for me about alternative notions of unity...how else might I construct meaning?

But it is as if this construct of unity is so powerfully bound to the context in which I'm writing-a PhD thesis- that I can't step outside it and imagine other ways of meaning.
Maybe I can work at breaking out after I've finished this thesis?

7.4.2.2 Example 9

A further example of a student-writer not knowing what to do with the material she has collected is Reba's experience when writing her second essay. Reba, as discussed above (see 7.3.1.1), did not construct a central focus in line with the intended focus of the essay question. I was thus very concerned to help her focus on intended central elements of further essay questions, as indicated by my comment in the talkback sheet below (see 3.5.3 for talkback sheets).

Extract from talkback sheet 1

Discussion of Mod1 final draft 17/3/95
1. Answering the question
You said you didn' t answer the question and that you weren't sure which bits were relevant. One reason for this was that we didn't look at a draft. How will you make sure you answer the question this time ? (for essay 2).
In Mod 1 essay you talked about gender and schooling but not about language.

I pointed to this comment when we met to talk about her draft notes for her second essay. The question she was working on was as follows:

To what extent does the state education system successfully support the bilingualism of minority language speakers?

Reba was struggling to construct one main focus.

	Talk about text
1	*R: There's too much stuff to write about.*
2	*T: You need to say in your introduction exactly what you're going to look*
3	*at.Then you're making it clear that you're not attempting to look at everything.*
4	*Does that help?*
5	*R: I don't know cause there's so much information on it. You don't know*
6	*which bit to pick sometimes.*
7	*T: You need to have key themes.*
8	*R: I started off with three main questions, like splitting the question up into*
9	*three different parts.*
10	*T: Right have you got that with you?*

	Talk about text contd.
11	*R: Yes, just a bit about that...1) What is bilingualism, 2) who are the minority*
12	*language speakers 3) what is state education?*
13	*T: And then there's the main question that's missing, isn't there?*
14	*R: Then I go on to that afterwards, to answer the question.*
15	*T: So what you're saying is that before you go on to answer this question,*
16	*you've got to explain 3 key things?*
17	*R: Right*
18	*T: Okay. But the main part of your essay then, is about how the system*
19	*supports, is it?*
20	*R: That's what I go on to afterwards.*
21	*T: But that's the main part of your essay?*
22	*R: er...*
23	*T: Is your main part about how it supports bilingualism?*
24	*R: Yes, but I have to separate it into 3 different parts first to answer the*
25	*question* (Re1fdfe2:25)

The success of our talk here seems limited. Most obviously, I do not directly respond to Reba's concern about there being too much material which she states at line 1 and repeats at line 5; I respond by telling her what she needs to have- *key themes* - for the purpose of the essay but I don't engage with her question about how to select information. From lines 13 to 23 the talk doesn't move forward: I continue repeating the need for Reba to focus on the *main question* to which Reba responds she has first to consider three main questions. Although she indicates that she does have and will pursue one main question- *I go on to that afterwards* at line 14, and *I have to separate it into three different parts first to answer the question* at line 24- I am not convinced, as is indicated by my repetition of the need for a *main part*. Other factors influencing the success of this talk as compared with other talk, are as follows: a) the limited amount of draft text for us to talk about- where student-writers bring text, it is easier to open up talk about what they are trying to do and to redirect or narrow their focus (see previous examples; see also chapter 8); and b) Reba's general unease about talking with me about her writing (chapter 9.2).

It's not clear from our talk whether my insistence on a *main idea*, in an attempt to impose essayist unity, is necessary. Perhaps Reba was clear about exploring her three questions within a principal focus in response to the essay question. The reason for my insistence was my concern resulting from her first essay, where she had not focussed on

the intended key aspects of the question. Her third essay, which we did not discuss in draft form and where there was no main focus, would indicate that indicate I was right to be concerned. And although it is not possible to trace the impact of our talk in any direct textual way, this second essay stands in contrast to both her first and her third in that it is more narrowly focused on the essay question.

Thus, in her final draft of this essay, her subheadings indicate that she does stay close to the intended main idea of the question: introduction, bilinguals, needs of minorities, British schools, bilingual programmes in Britain, support services, section 11, bilingualism in Sheffield, National curriculum, conclusion.

Extract from conclusion

The conclusion is that the state education system does not support the bilingualism of minority language speakers---Great attention has been focused, on the teaching of English but pupils first languages have been neglected as outside the concern of schools, even though physiological research now supports the claim that *'bilinguals are said to mature earlier than monolinguals, both in the development of cerebral lateralization for language use and in acquiring skills for linguistic abstraction'* (Albert & Obler 1979:83:4) (Re2fd:234-241)

For this essay Reba received her highest mark with which she was quite pleased. She did not talk to me about drafts for her third and final text for the course because, amongst other reasons such as responsibilities at home and work pressures, she was not convinced that talking about drafts of her text was something that we should do as tutor and student (see discussion section 9.2).

7.4.2.3. Example 10

Mary, in contrast to the other student-writers, usually feels that she knows in the early stages of considering her response to the essay question, what her focus is going to be. Thus in talking of her second essay says that she knows her *route through,* but states that she needs help to write within the limited space allowed - 1500-2000 words- Her second essay question is as follows:

What evidence is there to support the view that bilingualism has a significant effect (positive or negative) on cognitive development?

Her first draft includes some three and a half A4 pages explaining four categories of bilinguals, after Skutnabb-Kangas (1981). Below is an extract from these pages and from our talk.

Extract from text	**Talk about text**
Bilingual individuals can be grouped into four main categories in which all groups undergo different experiences to attain bilingualism. Based on the work of Skutnabb-Kangas, I will take brief notes on the important points which typify the situation for bilinguals in each of the four main groups: There follows 3 and a half pages under the following headings. Elite bilinguals Children from linguistic majorities Children from bilingual families Children from linguistic minorities (Me2d1: 45-210)	*T: I think you can say all that you need to say in one or two sides rather than four. You could focus on just two of groups, elite and minorities and contrast them.* *M: Oh just two very different ones? Oh and then, oh that's a good idea. Now why didn't I think of that? Well I thought I would have to mention them all you see.* *T: You can't, there's not enough space.* M: *So what do I do? Let the reader, know that I do know that the other groups exist but I'm going to write about...* T: *Yeah for the purposes of this essay, I'm going to focus on two types.*(Me2disd1:5)

It is important to note here that Mary is already working with the notion of the fictional reader, although, as discussed in 5.6.2, she is not necessarily happy about this.

Here I am teaching her how to use the available space within an essay, which, although it may seem obvious to those who are familiar with the convention of providing a general outline and then stating clearly which aspects we will deal with, is not necessarily obvious to student-writers. Here Mary seems to grasp immediately what I am suggesting and why. This is reflected in final draft, shown below where there is evidence of her taking up my directive to limit her focus. However, in discussing her final draft I raise a further related point about presented selected definitions, which I hadn't made in the sequence above.

Extract from text	Talk about text
Bilingual individuals can be grouped into four main categories in which all groups undergo different experiences to attain bilingualism. Based on the work of Skutnabb Kangas, I will highlight certain points which typify the situation for two of the bilingual groups. (Me2fd: 47)	*T: You need to say why you're talking about two groups.* *M: Well, it's to contrast the two groups* *T: But presumably you've chosen those two because they are the most useful contrasts in British situation. You need to be explicit about your reason for choosing 2 types to focus on.* *M: For standard English and Creole speakers. Yeah, it is because of that.* *T.You need to say that.* *M: Yeah I'm not tying it in with what my project's all about. I'm not relating it to me. Yeah I can see that.* (Me2disfd:53)

This example, where I tell Mary she needs to give reasons for talking about the two groups, illustrates the ways in which clarifications have embedded in them further questions and raises the question of how much detail the tutor can and should teach at any one time. Decisions taken at the moment of talk may be what we might consider to be educationally justifiable, e.g. the tutor feeling that to pursue in any more detail would be too burdensome for the student at that point in time. Or decisions may be the result of more practical considerations, e.g. the tutor may simply be tired and want to close the session. As such, this example illustrates the need to develop *long conversations* (see Maybin 1994:136), where the student-writer and tutor can raise concerns and discuss the nature of conventions over a period of time. I return to this in 8 6.

7.4.3 Redirecting

The extracts from talk with student-writers above indicate that constructing what counts as textual unity through response to an essay question is not a straightforward task. Through talk we can glimpse the specific ways in which a student-writer, even when conscious of the need to stay with the essay question, may be drawn away from her attempt to do so. In such instances, the aim of my talk as tutor, and at some points that of the student-writer, is to redirect the student-writer's focus.

Below, I consider two such specific instances. Both involve source texts; the first, a convergence of interest between student-writer and a source text; the second, a convergence of voice but not necessarily of interest with a source text.

7.4.3.1. Example 11

In section 7.3.3.1 above I referred briefly to Sara being drawn away from the main idea in responding to the essay question, towards her own specific interests as a bilingual parent. Her interests converge with and are also fired by her reading of a book by Arnberg, Raising children bilingually, (1987) where a substantial section of the text consists of advice to parents. Sara , in her first draft, gets drawn into the specific advice aim of this section of the book which she reproduces in her draft and which I raise in talk with her.

	Extracts from text		**Talk about text**
1	Bilingualism at home	1	*T: Is this a section about how bilingualism*
2	Children enjoy	2	*develops at home or is it about giving*
3	themselves	3	*advice?*
4	tremendously through	4	*S: The way it can develop at home.*
5	the chanting of	5	*T: Right, cause I think that problem comes*
6	nursery rhymes. The	6	*from Arnberg's book.*
7	actual rhythm can	7	*S: Yes, it's advice isn't it, yeah.*
8	aid in developing	8	*T: So you have to be careful whether you're*
9	the child's memory.	9	*switching suddenly in the essay. Don't*
10	If you choose to	10	*forget your essay is about answering a*
11	use rhymes in the	11	*question, what's the effect of different*
12	minority language,	12	*linguistic environments. Now, suddenly*
13	it may have certain	13	*about halfway, you seem to be changing tack*
14	phonics that are	14	*and saying this is what is good. Are you*
15	difficult in	15	*with me?*
16	pronouncing. (Se2d1:	16	*S: I should be saying, it could be good,*
17	pp26-40 notebook 1)	17	*instead of it should be good. It may be*
		18	*useful...*
		19	*T: Does that answer the question?*
		20	*S: Well, what if I said 'these conditions*
		21	*could affect the child's bilingualism*
		22	*positively'. Would that be better?*
		23	*T: Yes. I just put* (of) *here* (commenting on
		24	another section*) and I'm not saying it goes*
		25	*there but* (returning to this section*) what*
		26	*you're doing is returning, you're answering*
		27	*the question. Otherwise, you're going to*
		28	*end up answering a question 'Discuss how*
		29	*erm bilingualism can be developed at home.*

	Extracts from text		Talk about text contd.
		30 31 32 33 34 35	*S: Yeah.* *T: Do you know what I mean? That's what you're beginning to answer here. That's not the question although it might be part of the implications of what you're saying.* (Se2disd1:108)

I open the sequence by asking Sara to explain her intention in writing the extract but I restrict her explanation to a choice of one or two alternatives. Sara's response indicates a rejection of my possible two alternatives and charts a course between both, which is exactly my concern about her essay; that she is conflating the intended focus of the essay with the focus of a specific section of Arnberg's text. She understands my concern about the way she is presenting material in her draft which is reflected in a shift in modality at line 16, where she suggests replacing the modal of prescription **should** with the modal of possibility **could** (see also **can** at line 4). Although the wording *should* is not in her text, Sara is here acknowledging that she is transferring the voice of advice present in Arnberg's text to her own. The shift she makes here can be traced explicitly in her final draft to **can**, see below. It is important to note, moreover, in the first draft, Sara had written some fifteen pages of ways for parents/carers to support their children's bilingualism under headings such as books, games, nursery rhymes, TV videos, records. These are reduced for the final draft to the two extracts below:

Extracts from final draft

Once the child starts to use his/her linguistic development, such as television, books, songs and nursery rhymes. These factors obviously, when used appropriately, **can** aid in developing the child bilingually. (Se2fd:183-186)

And

If nursery rhymes or songs are used in the minority language then the child can practice using the various phonics in his/her languages. These are just a couple of examples, from my own experience, of how using nursery rhymes, and the like, can create an environment for the child to help develop a wider vocabulary in his/her languages. These features that I have explained, are not the only factors that will affect the child linguistically. Other influences outside the home can also play

a large part in influencing how he/she develops in their own linguistic environment. (Se 2fd: 202-215)

Through talk, I redirect her away from the convergence of her personal interest with that of the prominent source text in how to develop children's bilingualism, towards the intended principal focus of the essay question. Thus whilst she is allowed (within the confines of this particular course) to acknowledge textually her own interest and experience as a bilingual parent, she has to do so within the frame of staying close to the intention of the question (see 6.4.7 for sense of exclusion of Pakistani self from academic writing).

7.4.3.2 Example 12

Sometimes the student-writer knows she is being drawn away from writing around a main idea, but can't quite see how or why this is the case. As can be seen below, Nadia opens our talk by stating that she doesn't think her draft is relevant. I ask questions to try to work out why Nadia might have thought her text was relevant even though she doesn't think so now. The essay question she was responding to was as follows:

To what extent do you think the state education system successfully supports the bilingualism of minority language speakers.

	Extracts from text Opening section of essay 2 draft 1:		**Talk about text**
1	Liverpool and	1	*N: This isn't answering the question, it's*
2	Cardiff are one of	2	*halfway through actually. I'm just involving*
3	the many cities	3	*the...how can I say? How the minorities*
4	which have been able	4	*entered the UK, what people actually*
5	to observe the vast	5	*thought of them. At first they'd think well his*
6	increase of foreign	6	*first language is Arabic, well how is he*
7	origin. It was	7	*speaking English so good? It just gives you*
8	astonishing to hear	8	*small details*
9	a Chinese boy or	9	*T: What are you doing? Thinking about*
10	girl in Liverpool or	10	*what things might be useful?*
11	the Arabic boy in	11	*N:* (checks through her draft) *I don't*
12	Cardiff, not only	12	*think this has got any relevance.*
13	speak English in a	13	*T: No?*
14	very smooth way,	14	*N: It has but not a lot.*
15	with assurance and	15	*T: So which bit's relevant? That's the*
16	control but also	16	*question, isn't it?*
17	spoke it originally	17	---
18	and with the accent.	18	*N: In this essay I'm seeking out information*
19	These children had	19	*on what support is available to ethnic*
20	been born and	20	*minorities in England. Is it England?*
21	brought up in this	21	*T: But support in terms of what? The focus*
22	country more often	22	*is on bilingualism. So, in this essay*
23	speaking English	23	*N: [I am*
24	even as well as	24	*aiming to produce...*
25	their Mother tongue	25	*T: What are you aiming to do in this essay?*
26	language. (Ne2d1:1-13)	26	*N: I am aiming to...I can't think...find out*
		27	*what support is available to bilingual*
		28	*speakers* (Ne2disd1: 40)

In the excerpt above from our 18 minute discussion of draft 1, I am trying to find out why Nadia might have thought the six A4 pages she had written on immigration and schooling in the 1960s- an extract of which is above- was relevant to answering the question. I work at getting her to focus on the question which we do by beginning to jointly model text (line 22ff) . Whilst I was unsure as to the significance of her references to Liverpool and Cardiff, rather than, for example, Sheffield, Bradford, London, I only discovered in a later meeting that Nadia was drawing heavily on one particular text, an HMSO pamphlet written in the 1960s. As can be seen from the extract below from this pamphlet, we can trace the source of Nadia's opening section in her first draft.

From English for immigrants,(1963) Ministry of Education Pamphlet No.43, HMSO London

For many years it has not been an uncommon sight, especially in Liverpool and Cardiff and some other places, to see in our schools children whose appearance proclaimed their foreign origin. It was always perhaps a slight shock to hear that those children, the Chinese boy in a Liverpool school or the Indian boy in Cardiff, not only spoke English fluently but spoke it with a marked local accent. For those children had been born in this country and grew up often speaking English as well as, if not better than, their own mother tongue.

Relying heavily on one text creates all sorts of problems for Nadia here: the time frame is wrong- Nadia is writing from the sixties rather than from 90s, talking about *the last 15 years;* and more significant in terms of her meaning making, she is drawn into adopting the voice and interests of a text which may differ significantly from her own. I will return to this in chapter 8 (see 8.4.2 and 8.5 for 'voices in the text) but for the moment I just wish to show how a student-writer my be drawn away from the intended aim of the essay question because of over reliance on one text.

Nadia makes significant changes in her final draft by a) distancing herself from statements made in the HMSO document, and b) reducing from 6 pages to 2 paragraphs her text on immigration and schooling in the 1960s. She also includes comments on more local developments as well as on personal experience as teacher and pupil.

Extracts from final draft.

According to the education authorities in Britain (in the 1960s), the authorities were under a lot of stress due to the vast increase of ethnic minority children entering British schools. (Ne2fd:28-32)

I play a role in helping the minority children develop their English literacy---Yet I do not however support or even know of any support systems which help minority children to maintain their bilingualism. (Ne2fd: 326-334)

In the final draft then, Nadia takes up her own rejection of the content of an earlier draft which had emerged through talk with me as tutor.

7.5 Talking at cross-purposes

A prominent aspect of the student/tutor talk in the examples discussed in previous sections is that the student-writers are willing to work with my implicit purposes of talk: that is, they are willing to submit to the institutionally governed rules of talk in order to get close to what is required in writing in this context. Moreover, although there is never any explicit statement as to the purposes of particular features of my talk- for example I never say, and here I'm modelling text- they seem able to work with my implicit purposes.

However, there is one specific instance where this was not the case, as I now outline.

7.5.1 Example 13

As can be seen in 7.4.1.4 above, Nadia's effort is concentrated on understanding and writing about behaviourism. I push her to state the implications of Skinner's position on 'errors' as compared with Chomsky's;

	Talk about text
1	*T: But why would the child say 'catched' rather than caught? How*
2	*would Chomsky explain it? And we can put error in inverted commas*
3	*because Chomsky's saying it isn't an error.*
4	*N: No it isn't an error, it's kind of being creative as a child.*
5	*T: Where's the creativity?*
6	*N: Sticking ed at the end.*
7	*T: Why what's the ed?*
8	*N: It's like the past*
9	---
10	*T: The point is that Skinner and Pavlov would see it as an error.*
11	*N: Yeah they would see it as an error. But Chomsky would say 'no'*
12	*T: This is an example of a child showing its learning*
13	*N: Yeah.*
14	*T: Right so you can talk about whereas Chomsky would see this as*
15	*evidence of a child learning particular patterns of language, Skinner*
16	*would see this as an error.*
17	*N: That's true. But why though? Because he's not speaking the English,*
18	*because he's making it up.*
19	*T: Who?*
20	*N: Skinner.*
21	*T: What do you mean?*
22	*N: Why is he thinking it's an error if a child learns patterns and*
23	*everything, yeah, and end up forming 'ed' on to catch, making it*
24	*catched, yeah. Isn't that a good thing?* (Ne1disd1:200)

My intention here is to try to help Nadia connect her comments on Skinner and Chomsky to the essay question. I do this by asking her a series questions in order to elicit Nadia's understanding of Chomsky's approach to 'errors'. At line 14, I model the contrast between Skinner's and Chomsky's positions- which Nadia has pointed to at lines 4 and 11. But Nadia doesn't hear my text as modelling for her written text but rather hears it as my continued contribution to our talk. This is indicated by her response *That's true*, where she hears my wordings as part of our talk about Skinner's claims and continues the discussion through her question, *Why though*?; and also in her final draft, where she reiterates her questioning (and possibly mine?) from our talk.

Extracts from final draft

`For example in order for a child to learn a word and understand it, would you have to repeat it several times for the child to know it? (` (child using ed to mark past tense on catched) (Nelfd: 61-65)---
`Wouldn't it be a creativity or wouldn't the child be overgeneralization?` (Nelfd: 235-237)

When I ask her about her use of questions in the final draft, it emerges that she has a combination of purposes in asking such questions:

It's like, I'm answering the question yeah, but I just like to trigger their minds off. And it's like repetition is needed for a child to learn something but I don't think it's of extreme importance yeah. Pavlov and Skinner think it is, so I just like to trigger their mind off and ask them the question, would they need to repeat it several times to know it? I don't think it is. The main part is understanding. (Nelfdisfd: 35)

It seems as if she is here choosing to focus on questions which are significant for her: she wants to ask questions and wants to engage the reader in the same questions. However, this episode also illustrates the potential limitations to talk between tutor and student for the teaching and learning of essayist literacy. Here, Nadia does not engage with my implicit purpose and hence this specific instance of our talk does not contribute towards her successful production of essayist textual unity.

7.6 Traces of talk in written texts

The aim of this section is to summarize the impact of the tutor/student-writer talk on the student-writers' text. The table in this section is based on all the examples already

discussed in detail in this chapter. I have organized the summary around the following categories: a) whether the talk centred on a draft or not; b) a brief description of the nature of the tutor and student talk in which we engaged in each instance; c) instances of take up (or not) of talk in text and a brief description of the take-up. It may be useful to refer back to the listed example when considering the table on the following page.

It cannot be proved that instances of talk directly affected the students' writing of their texts; their writing may have, and will have, been influenced and shaped by a range of factors, including comments made by other student-writers', tutors, friends, as well as concerns at a more general level relating to the context of culture of HE (see chapter 6). However, the examples discussed in this chapter and summarized in the table above strongly suggest that specific instances of written text can be traced to specific instances of talk.

Thus in 11 of the 13 examples discussed, specific instances of talk between student-writer and tutor seem to be influential in shaping the final text (examples 1, 2, 3, 4, 6, 7, 8, 10, 11,12, 13). In these instances, the take-up can be considered successful in meeting the aim of shifting the student-writer's text towards essayist unity. In the remaining example where this shift does not occur (example 13), the student-writer, Nadia, does not take up the text modelled by the tutor, but rather the questions both she and tutor ask in our talk. This highlights the need for talk between student and tutor about the nature of the activity in which the tutor thinks she is engaged, which I will return to in section 7.7.

In the remaining two instances, there is no take-up (example 5) and unclear take up (example 9). It is important to note that the three instances where there is either unsuccessful take up (example 13 discussed above) no take-up (example 5) or unclear take-up (example 9) involves talk where there is no, or only limited, draft text at the moment of talk. Thus in example 5, our talk focused on Siria's verbal intentions for text, in example 13 on the tutor attempting to explain different perspectives on 'errors', example 9 on how to provide a focus for the Reba's essay based on only brief notes.

Talking to construct essayist unity in student academic writing

	Draft ?	Features of tutor talk	Features of student talk	Traces of talk in text
1	√	directive, brief	seeking direction	take-up of directed re-focusing, *shifts focus to language.*
2	√	-cued elicitation -asks open question to seek elaboration -reconstructive paraphrasing -initiates text modelling -ignores aspect of contribution	-offers suggestions -initiates text modelling -responds to question -introduces opinion	take-up of wordings close to wordings of essay question; incorporates student's reworking
3	√	-questions to seek elaboration -rejects student-writer's contribution -reconstructive paraphrasing -initiates text modelling	-states view -responds to questions -explains view -contributes to text modelling	take-up of wordings/focus emerging from tutor directing and joint modelling
4	√	-cued elicitation -directs -initiates text modelling -reconstructive paraphrasing	-responds to questions -states concern	take-up of directed distinction *between knowledge of and about*
5	--	-challenges content in relation to essay question -directs	-initiates text modelling	no take-up in text
6	√	-cued elicitation -directs	-responds to question -initiates modelling	take-up of wordings from student modelling
7	√	-cued elicitation	-responds by elaborating	incorporates student's reworking into text
8	√	-directs -explains content -reconstructive paraphrasing	-asks questions -seeks direction	take-up of directed central focus
9	brief notes	-directs -cued elicitation	-states concern -explains focus -responds to questions	unclear whether text influenced by talk
10	√	-directs -initiates text modelling	-responds to tutor comments	take-up of directive to select/limit focus
11	√	-question to clarify writer's aim -challenges content in relation to essay question -directs	-responds to question -offers suggestion -initiates text modelling -seeks direction	take-up of tutor's rejection of content *reduces 15 pages to 2 paragraphs*
12	√	-asks question to clarify writer's aim -cued elicitation	-student rejects content in relation to essay question -initiates text modelling -responds to question	take-up of student's rejection of content in relation to essay question
13	--	-cued elicitation -questions to check understanding -initiates text modelling -questions to seek elaboration	-responds to questions -does not engage in text modelling -asks questions about content	take-up of tutor's and student's questioning

In all of the instances there is much tutor directed talk: as summarized in the table, prominent features of tutor talk are directives, cued elicitation, reconstructive paraphrasing, initiation of text modelling. Student-writer participation is marked by responding to my direction . However, there are differences in the nature of student-writer participation in the talk, which are more clearly evident in the discussion of the examples rather than in the table summary. One difference relates to confidence in understanding the subject matter combined with familiarity with essayist literacy practice. Thus Sara, whilst unsure of where my talk is ultimately going, seems much more connected to my immediate intentions and works with me in modelling and in introducing questions which indicate an awareness of the area under debate (i.e. the problems surrounding defining bilingualism) as well as familiarity with the practice, and purposes, of our textual modelling. Nadia, on the other hand, responds to my requests for explanation and elaboration but in ways which remain close to her original draft . She needs support to make sense of the subject matter (Chomsky, Skinner and 'errors') as well as clarification as to why I, the tutor, am talking as I am - that is, to tell her what I intend the purpose of our talk to be. Their different participation is paralleled by the different points they reach in their final texts. Sara in both examples 1 and 2 moves significantly closer to the main focus of the essay questions; in example 1, she moves from a mistaken focus to the main focus of the essay question and in example 3 moves from a focus on children's proficiency in languages to the effects of different linguistic. Nadia, in examples 7, and 13, on the other hand moves a little away from a predominant focus on conditioning in general terms towards a specific focus on children and language learning, but maintains a major focus on conditioning.

7.7 Talk as solution and problem

M: To me, essay writing is a bit like implicit knowledge.

T: *In what way?*

M: *Not all explicit, is it?*

T: *What do you mean?*

M: *It's like common sense, not common sense, it's like implicit knowledge. You know it's intuitive in a sense, like. you feel that you should mention his name. The problem is, some people might not feel it.*

T : *The problem is, how do you get to feel it*

M. *Yeah. Cause I do know what you're talking about when you do make your criticisms because I recognise them myself, but I just don't know how to put my finger on it. I wish I could get a bell in my head which says 'Hey, something's wrong here. I don't know what it is but I'm not quite sure but, you know, if I show it to Theresa, she'll point it out and I'll, oh yes.* (Me1disd1:250)

Mary's comments above indicate the following: a) it is difficult to make essayist literacy conventions visible in learning and teaching essayist literacy; and b) the only way to learn such conventions is to be with someone who already *feels* it and who can share these implicit understandings and feelings. Her comments link with arguments made by Heath who argues for outsiders to be apprenticed to insiders in order to teach and learn particular ways of knowing (1983).

The examples of talk between tutor and student-writer discussed in this chapter seem to point towards talk as serving this apprenticeship function, to some extent. By responding to, and engaging with, specific types of tutor directed talk, in most instances the student-writers were able to engage in the doing of essayist literacy, whilst still unfamiliar with its conventions. In this way, they were engaging in making sense in ways which **counts** as sense within the university context. As Gee points out

*Making sense is always an attempt to recruit 'appropriate' hearers and readers; and hearers and readers, within their own social and political contexts, recruit speakers' and writers' meanings in diverse and value-laden ways.(*Gee1996: 121)

To teach and learn to construct written texts within the context of academia is not easy for two reasons. Firstly, those who have not been socialized into the practices, in this instance the student-writers, find it difficult to identify and follow the conventions in which such sense making is embedded. Secondly, those who are responsible for teaching such conventions -the tutors in this instance- tend to view such conventions as 'common sense', because they have become part of their (our) tacit knowledge that we have acquired as part of our socialization into academic discourse and may not necessarily be aware of. Hence, talk between tutor and student-writers which is focused on the **doing** of essayist literacy would seem to be an important way of enabling student-writers to participate more successfully in HE.

However, there are problems in advocating, such a model of talk-as-apprenticeship. One problem highlighted is that some student-writers may not respond to the implicit purposes of talk and fail to learn essayist practices, as with Nadia in 7.5. A further problem relates to the question raised at the beginning of this chapter: to what extent does tutors' doing of essayist literacy with student-writers parallel what tutors think and say they (we) are doing, and hence, expecting of student academic writing.?

In relation to the focus of this chapter, the construction of textual unity, the following point can be made. Implicit in all the examples of my talk with the student-writers is that the student-writers' aim should be to construct institutionally acceptable knowledge: hence to work with a notion of textual unity akin to Kaplan and Oster's chaining, rather than explicitly working with any notion of argument (see 7.2.1). Example 9 seems to be particularly suggestive in this respect. In this example, my focus is on helping the student-writer to construct her text by organising her material in terms of space and function, rather than in terms of argument. As I discuss in chapter 8, there are instances of me encouraging the development of argument at a local level, but my general approach in the instances discussed in this chapter involves relegating, however implicitly, to the conclusion. Although I am focusing in this chapter only on one tutor's talk- mine- I think it is suggestive of problems with tutor-student talk about writing (where it occurs- see chapter 5 for limited opportunity for such talk) indicating how what we are teaching may thus be significantly different from what we are demanding. There is clearly a need for further analyses of tutor-student talk around writing.

A final and more profound problem in advocating talk-as-apprenticeship relates to Gee's *deep paradox* (1996:65). That is, such tutor led talk is a process of socializing student-writers into particular ways of meaning making, whilst constraining others, specific instances of which are given in chapter 6. The extent to which tutors can work with student-writer to facilitate greater student-writer control over meaning making and hence mean in different ways, albeit within the boundaries of the academic context is the focus of chapter 8.

7. 8 Conclusion

My aim in this chapter was not to offer a pedagogical model for the teaching and learning of essayist literacy but rather to illustrate the work that can, and, where space is made, does go on in talk between student-writer and tutor. Focusing on such talk enables us to explore the ways and extent to which talk between tutor and student-writer fulfills the promise of teaching and learning specific dimensions of essayist literacy.

In the examples in this chapter, I have analyzed one principal function of my talk as tutor as being to work with the student-writers to construct essayist unity. Such talk seems to enable the student-writers to engage in the doing of a central dimension of essayist literacy, constructing essayist unity and thus to get on with the *business-as-usual* (Ellsworth 1994) of higher education.

The extent to which individual student-writers find it easy or difficult to construct unity in response to the essay question clearly varies. Whilst it would be easy to categorize such differences, such as Sara and Nadia, in terms of 'stronger' and 'weaker' students, it is important not to construct their differences in terms of any straightforward notion of 'ability'. For example, Sara is potentially unsuccessful in one example (see 7.4.3.1) because of the way she is drawn into her interests as a bilingual parent, rather than because of any 'lack' in linguistic or intellectual capacity. As to Nadia, given her severe lack of confidence in her right to use her *own words*, all acts of meaning making in academia are fraught with difficulty (see4.4.6.2 and 6.4.2).

All the student writers in this project need considerable support in constructing textual unity within essayist literacy, even after their first year. Differences in terms of the nature of their participation in talk and the impact of such talk on their texts as discussed in this chapter, can be related in some instances to dimensions of personal experience, as indicated in the brief comments on Sara and Nadia above (see chapter 4). These include individual feelings about being and writing in HE alongside the extent of familiarity with practices surrounding essayist literacy. This last is closely connected with previous experiences and extent of success in formal courses of study. Thus Mary, having

previously successfully complete a psychology A level (although she had failed A level English) is familiar with the notion of working with a main idea yet needs direction as to how to work within confines of 2000 words (see example 10). Her difficulty here is qualitatively different, and comparatively less problematic in relation to institutional success than, for example Siria's or Amira's attempts to stay with the question in examples 4 and 9.

In summary the following points can be made about student-tutor talk and the teaching and learning of unity in essayist literacy.

- tutor/student talk has an effect on written texts.
- specific changes in written texts can be traced to specific instances of tutor/student talk, where the talk has focused on a written draft.
- in relation to the area under consideration here, the construction of essayist unity, tutor directive talk involving cued elicitation, text modelling, reconstructive paraphrasing is useful in moving student-writers closer to one main focus in response to the essay question.
- the student-writers engage in different types of participation both in their talk and in their written texts.
- the reasons behind both different types of participation and changes in texts are linked to a number of interconnected factors, including feelings about being and writing in HE, previous successful experience in formal courses, the extent to which they are able to ignore other interests.

The tutor directed talk in the examples in this chapter constitutes an example of the monologic type of addressivity discussed in chapter 5 in that my aim as tutor in the talk is to impose a particular type of unity on the student's academic texts. It differs from chapter 5 in that the tutor directed talk here enables the student-writers to take part in the practice of essayist literacy. As such the talk can be considered to be talk-as-apprenticeship to the practice of essayist literacy. However, there are problems in viewing such talk as apprenticeship unproblematically. Firstly, specific aspects of what we as tutors do may be different from what we are demanding. There is therefore a need for greater critical examination on the part of tutors as to what they (we) are doing.

Secondly, some student-writers may need explicit direction about the nature of the practice as well as engagement in it. Thirdly, if we view such talk as apprenticeship, then the tutor is actively working at socializing the student-writers into dominant ways of meaning. If an aim within HE is for student-writers to take greater control over their meaning making, there is a need to transform the type of addressivity within the context of HE in order to push at the boundaries of this practice This last is the focus of the following chapter.

NOTES

[1] Mitchell foregrounds these links between Kaplan and Ostler and Freedman and Pringle in Mitchell 1994: chapter 9.

Chapter 8

TALKING TO *POPULATE WITH INTENTION* [1]

8.1 Introduction

In the previous chapter my aim was to focus on how the student-writers and I, through talk, worked at the teaching and learning of one important dimension of essayist literacy: a specific configuration of textual unity. I argued that tutor directive talk enables student-writers to engage in the practice of essayist literacy which is the privileged literacy practice within the university. However, I also stated that such talk as socialization inevitably involves the regulation of meaning making, given that conventions surrounding essayist literacy facilitate particular meanings whilst constraining others, as indicated in chapter 6.

The aim of this chapter is to explore the potential of tutor-student talk for facilitating greater individual student-writer control over meaning making within the context of HE. In so doing, this chapter can be viewed as a response to chapter 6: in chapter 6 I foregrounded instances of regulation of student-writer meaning making at the levels of context of situation and culture, whereas in this chapter I am foregrounding the possibility of greater student-writer control through more collaborative student-tutor practices.

In the following sections, I focus on extracts of spoken and written texts drawn from across the ten student-writers. These texts are drawn from the second strand of our talk in which we worked at developing more exploratory and collaborative dialogue (see 3.4 and 3.5).

In section 8.2, I foreground the tensions inherent in any tutor led attempt to facilitate student control over meaning making; in 8.3 I point to the possibility of greater

individual student control whilst acknowledging the way in which all meaning making is context embedded; in 8.4. I illustrate specific ways in which I, as tutor-researcher, worked with student-writers at collaborating around their making of meaning in writing; in 8.5 I focus on the specific ways in which language is/can be made visible in meaning making; in 8.6 I explore aspects of a *long conversation* (Maybin 1994) with one student-writer.

8.2 Tensions in transforming the dominant type of *addressivity*

In order to facilitate greater control over individual student meaning making, the dominant monologic type of addressivity within HE needs to be transformed. That is, there needs to be a shift away from a practice where there is denial of actual participants and an emphasis on the student-writer as sole producer of written texts, towards more collaborative practices around meaning making (see 5.6 for dominant addressivity within HE).

Of course, the difficulty of engaging in tutor/student collaborative practice within the hierarchical structure of HE is not to be underestimated. Difficulties surrounding the possibility of developing egalitarian dialogue have been emphasized in the work of critical pedagogy, with different emphases, (see for example, Freire 1996, orig.1970, chapter 3; Freire and Shor 1987 chapter 1; Ellsworth 1994; Lather 1991, in particular, chapter 3) but less so in writings which seek to facilitate problem posing dialogue around student academic writing. Thus, although some writers engaging in critical language awareness argue for, and indeed, practise joint inquiry (see as examples Clark and others 1990; Ivanic and Simpson 1992) there has also been a tendency I think to see the tutor-researcher as holding the main responsibility for problem posing around meaning making and thus maintaining a dominant position as *interpreter of the world* (Reynolds in Lather:59) . This is the case I think, for example, in most chapters in Fairclough 1992 (Fairclough ed. 1992).

I am not suggesting that there is any easy resolution to the tensions between collaboration and control in research and pedagogy (see 1.5.4 for discussion), but rather

that there is a need to foreground the tensions in our work. I highlight the tensions relating to talk between tutor-researcher and student-writer throughout this chapter.

8.3 The possibility of student-writer control over meaning making

In raising the possibility of greater individual student-writer control over meaning making in academic writing, I am not arguing that meaning making can somehow stand outside the context of HE in which it takes place. I pointed to the limitations in viewing the student-writer experience through the binary regulation/desire in chapter 6, which, although it represents a significant dimension to the student-writers' experience, also tends to oversimplify their specific acts of meaning making. Horner has recently foregrounded the dangers in constructing student-writers' experience in terms of simple dichotomies, such as self/social, personal/institutional:

> *That distinction* (between the social and the personal) *denies, for example, the possibilities both that 'personal' writing is socially inscribed and that individual students may well have 'personal' interests articulated in more 'academic writing'* (Horner 1997: 511)

With this in mind, I am not suggesting that there is a clear division between monologic and dialogic types of addressivity, either actual or at the more abstract cultural/institutional level (see 2.7.2) or that a straightforward distinction can be made between tutor directive talk, aimed at the doing of essayist literacy, and tutor facilitative talk, aimed at some notional 'free' meaning making. I have pointed elsewhere to small instances of hybridization (see 6.6). What I am suggesting is that there can be significantly different emphases in the purposes of student/tutor talk which, at specific moments of talk may involve the following: a) the making of meanings which are closer to the student-writer's evolving intentions; and b) the foregrounding of the constructive role of language in meaning making. In order to engage in these two processes, the tutor can use her institutional power to open up the talking space (see 3.4 and 3.5).

One obvious way in which the tutor can open up possibilities for meaning making and thus to facilitate student attempts to populate their writings with intention (Bakhtin

1981: 293/4) is, although seemingly paradoxical, to explicitly give permission to the student-writer to try out different wordings. In this study there are only a few examples of tutors (including myself) encouraging the student-writer to use discourse features which are often considered to be inappropriate: the use of *I* and the use of poetry alongside argument (see 6 4.6). [2] However, there are other specific ways in which, through talk, I as tutor-researcher have attempted to open up the institutional talking space and which, for the purposes of this chapter, I have organized along three dimensions:

- talking to collaborate around meaning making
- talking to make language more visible
- talking to participate in the struggle of meaning making

Although these three dimensions of talk are closely interconnected, for the purposes of the discussion here I am foregrounding them as distinct dimensions.

8.4 Talking to collaborate around meaning making

In this section, I explore specific instances of how the student-writers and I, as tutor-researcher, worked at engaging in a more collaborative practice around meaning making and how this contributed to the meanings constructed in their texts.

8.4.1 Foregrounding preferred meanings

One specific way in which the tutor can facilitate greater control over meaning making is to listen and look, in drafts, for the student-writer's preferred meanings and help her to construct these in her written text, as I illustrate below.

8.4.1.1 From *lack of participation* to *exclusion*

In discussing the first draft of Kate's first essay, we spent a lot of time discussing the introduction, which Kate felt was weak but was not sure how to change. We had talked about the section below:

Extract from text	Talk about text
Factors such as cultural attitudes, institutional sexism and power elites will be introduced and discussed in relation(ship) to the problem of women's lack of participation. (Kel d1:4-7)	*K: What I want to do is say there are certain things which have led to the exclusion of women in politics and the ones I've picked out are the institutional; sexism, cultural attitudes and the actual power that politics itself has.Does that make any sense to you?.(*Kel disd1:68)

Based on Kate's oral explication of her text above, I suggest she foreground the notion of *exclusion*, rather than *lack of participation*:

T: *If what you want to say is that there are three factors which still work towards women's exclusions then that's different isn't it? From their lack of participation. Exclusion presumably assumes that something or someone is excluding them Whereas lack of participation*
K: *[is*
not as strong
T: *No. And it depends on what you want to say.*
(K reads section)
K: *I really want to put, that the exclusion is done on purpose, not...Do you know what I mean? How do I put that?*
T: *From what you've said...I just wrote down what you said before. You're going to state your position first, er, and then that sentence is quite nice In this essay, the aim will be to, or I will aim to 'discuss. That's okay. And then you're being more explicit about what you're doing.* (Kel disd1:3)

Kate includes the notion/wording of exclusion in her final draft:

Women have always been political despite male assertions to the contrary and this essay argues their exclusion has been by design and not by choice or apathy.In discussing the problems, politics will be defined in terms of western democracy and then I will introduce factors in cultural attitudes, institutional sexism and power elites which I feel may have a direct effect on the exclusion.(Kel fd:13-17)

This example of meaning making in writing reflects collaboration around representing the individual's preferred meaning, as expressed orally, in her written text. I get closer to her preferred meaning through what she says at this particular moment in time, rather than what I might know about her views more generally. In other instances, as in 8.4.1.2 below, my questions about whether the written text

constitutes the student-writer's preferred meaning, are based on what I feel I already know about a student-writer's views.

8.4.1.2 *Reinterpreting* a theoretical framework

Having a developing sense of what it is the student-writer is attempting to represent in her writing is obviously important if the tutor-researcher is to be in a position to collaborate around specific instances of meaning making. In writing her second essay on the relevance of Cummins' distinction between BICS (basic interpersonal communicative skills) and CALP (cognitive/academic language proficiency) to Creole-English speakers at school, Mary discussed her ideas with me on several occasions (for BICS/CALP see Cummins 1984 chapter 6). Thus when she showed me a draft of her written discussion of this relevance, I was already familiar with what she wanted to say. In the extracts from her text and our talk below, I check out with Mary whether my understanding of what she wants to say is correct, point out what I think is not represented in her written text and suggest a particular wording, *reinterpreted,* to foreground what it is Mary wants to do in her text (see 6.4.3 for Mary's comments on using this wording).

	Extracts from text		Talk about text
1	A large percentage	1	*T: Aren't you saying something like, a*
2	of black children	2	*Panjabi speaker might speak well in terms*
3	were mistakenly sent	3	*of surface fluency, a teacher might listen to*
4	to schools for the	4	*that child and assume they have sufficient*
5	Educationally	5	*English to use academically, but aren't you*
6	subnormal, as a	6	*saying that with a Patua/Creole speaker*
7	result of obtaining	7	*what the teacher assumes is the opposite*
8	low scores in IQ	8	*M: Yes*! (enthusiastic)
9	tests,in which many	9	*T: That their language is so inferior that*
10	of the questions	10	*they can't do anything.*
11	were quite stupid	11	*M: Yes. That's what I'm saying.*
12	and unrelated to the	12	*T:You haven't said that.*
13	experiences of West	13	*M:I have*
14	Indian children.---	14	*T:Show me where. I'm not being funny. I*
15	This sort of	15	*know what you're saying but I don't think it's*
16	judgement could of	16	*here.*
17	derived from	17	(M. reads from 'surface, fluency' to skills).
18	'surface fluency,	18	*M:The surface fluency of Creole isn't it?*
19	the childs verbal	19	*T: No, but what you're saying is, and you've*
20	linguistic ability	20	*explained it to me before and I think it's a*
21	is underestimated	21	*really good point, you shouldn't put that in*
22	(instead of	22	*brackets because it's an important point.*
23	overestimated as	23	*M: Really?*
24	known in Cummins'	24	---
25	theoretical ideas)	25	*M: Well Cummins concept of surface*
26	which is the basic	26	*fluency could be sort of applied to Creolised*
27	interpersonal	27	*speech used by West Indian children. When*
28	communicative skills	28	*any person in education hears them,it'll give*
29	(BICS). Therefore,	29	*the impression, because of the nature of the*
30	the child is assumed	30	*language and its structure it'll give them the*
31	to have problems	31	*impression that this child's incapable of*
32	with his/her	32	*academic work.But sometimes people who*
33	cognitive/academic	33	*speak Creole can read English and*
34	language proficiency	34	*understand it quite well.*
35	(CALP) skills too.	35	*T: I think you've got to say something like*
36	Here the	36	*Cummins concept of surface fluency has got*
37	interpretation of	37	*to be reinterpreted---*
38	Cummins two concepts	38	*M: I never knew that such a word existed,*
39	(CALP) and (BICS)	39	*reinterpreted.*
40	are anticipated in	40	*T: What other word would you put?*
41	the opposite	41	*M: I don't know. I don't think there's*
42	direction.(Me2d4:235-253)	42	*anything wrong with it. I think it's alright.* contd.

	Extracts from text contd.		Talk about text contd.
		43 44 45 46	*alright. I think it saves a lot of time. Yeah, cause I didn't know what word to use. I was thinking I've got this idea and I can't say it.* (Me2disd4:246)

In my talk above I question whether Mary's intended meanings are in the written text (lines 14-16). On re-examining the talk, I still consider this questioning justified, in that her Mary's draft is unclear as a result of a combination of the following features some of which, I suggest, she uses in order to 'sound academic' : a) she backgrounds, through parentheses, a key element to her interpretation of Cummins (lines 21-24); b) she makes substantial use of impersonal/agentless constructions- *were mistakenly sent, is underestimated, is assumed, are anticipated.*

In her final draft, in contrast, Mary foregrounds what she is doing with Cummins' BICS/CALP framework as follows: by introducing it a) in Theme position within the paragraph structure, and b) as marked Theme within the opening sentence where she uses the lexical item *reinterpret.* She continues to use passives but uses a comparison between the relevance of BICS to Panjabi-English learners and Creole learners, as a key aspect of her interpretation. This contrast, which I made in my talk, is important because it points to Mary's understanding of how the BICS/CALP dimensions are usually used in relation to bilingual learners, as well as her *reinterpretation.* To demonstrate understanding of an idea before offering a reinterpretation is essential in student writing at university:

In order for Cummins frame work to be useful in describing the situation of creole speakers it has to be reinterpreted. Whereas an English/Punjabi bilingual child's English surface fluency can be overestimated so the child is expected to have competent academic linguistic skills in English. But the experience for creole speakers has been that their fluency (so to speak) is under estimated and their CALP skills are assumed to be worse than what they actually are. Concequently a large percentage of black children were mistakenly sent to schools for the educationally sub-normal as a result of obtaining low scores in IQ tests; in which many of the questions asked were unrelated to the experience of West Indian children. (Me2fd:420-430)

This is an example of supporting the student-writer to make her preferred meaning but within essayist writing conventions.

8.4.2 Identifying voices in the text

An important way of helping the student-writer to populate her texts with her preferred meanings is to work with her on identifying the diverse voices in her text as a step towards establishing which voices she wishes to own, as I illustrate below.

8.4.2.1 *Education authorities under a great deal of stress*

On reading drafts for Nadia's second essay, I was not convinced, based on listening to her talk about the experience of minority groups in school, that her written text expressed her views, as is indicated by my questions below.

	Extracts from text		Talk about text
1	The education	1	*T: Is that something that you would say, that*
2	authorities are	2	*<u>you</u> think?*
3	under a great deal	3	*N: Well it is true, isn't it?*
4	of stress due to the	4	(T rereads section)
5	vast increase of	5	*T: Is this what you think?.*
6	ethnic minority	6	*N: Well, it is true. Well, it's not true but*
7	children entering	7	*they're not under a lot of stress. I don't*
8	British schools.	8	*believe in that.*
9	(Ne2d2:15-17)	9	*T: So, this sounds as if it's your idea.*
		10	*N: No.*
		11	*T: So how do you make sure that it looks as*
		12	*if it's not your idea?*
		13	*N: Just say, oh,reference.*(Ne2disd2:12)

This extract illustrates some of the tensions surrounding any tutor-researcher attempt to facilitate meaning making at the levels of context of situation and culture, as I now outline.

Based on what I understood some of Nadia's feelings to be, from comments on her personal experience as a bilingual learner and worker in schools, I was surprised at the content of the draft extract above and for this reason queried whether the text represented her view (line 1). However, my query and Nadia's shift from *it's true* to *it's not true* (line 6) may indicate a response to my institutional position as tutor, rather than Nadia coming any nearer to stating her preferred view. At the same time, it is important to consider the extent to which Nadia's draft above reflects a concern to conform to

dominant cultural values, in this case, dominant perspectives on immigration and schooling in Britain (see also Sara 6.4.7). Attempting to provide a space where Nadia can explore her views and construct meanings without feeling constrained either at the level of context of situation, by me as tutor, or context of culture is hugely problematic.

From our discussion, I discovered, and Nadia realized, that her writing was drawing heavily on an official document of some thirty years before, an HMSO document dated 1963. This document expressed complete support for the marginal provision for children learning English as a second language, celebrating the fact that local authorities were providing some support.

After our talk, where I ask whether the text represents her view, she makes two specific changes to her final draft: a) in relation to the specific section discussed above where she clearly separates her voice from that of the source text, as indicated below:

According to the education authorities in Britain (in the 1960's), the authorities were under a lot of stress (Ne2fd:28-29)

but also b) in the content overall where she shifts the emphasis to current provision for bilingual learners as well as offering an account of her personal experience of it (see 7.4.3.2).

8.4.2.2 *Positive*

In the extract below I challenge Sara's statement claiming that schools have responded positively to the presence of bilingual pupils in state schools, on the basis of criticisms she has made earlier in her written text.

	Extracts from text		Talk about text
1	Bilingualism is	1	*T: A lot of your analysis shows that schools*
2	being recognised	2	*haven't been positive.*
3	slowly as something	3	*S: In <u>their</u> eyes, it is positive though, isn't it?*
4	positive, but only	4	*Maybe that's what I should have written*
5	in certain context	5	*down.*
6	like schools.	6	*T: Right...*
7	(Se3d2:313-316)	7	*S: They're taking bilingualism as being*
		8	*something positive. When I say bilingualism,*
		9	*I'm talking about the bilingual teachers that*
		10	*they're employing.*
		11	*T: Right* (understands)
		12	*S: They're realising that they <u>do</u> need a*
		13	*person who's bilingual within school, not the*
		14	*children, not that sense but employing*
		15	*bilingual teachers, you know, making that a*
		16	*point to employ a bilingual person, not just*
		17	*a monolingual person. They need bilingual*
		18	*teachers in school.*
		19	*T: But although they need bilingual*
		20	*teachers, does that mean they see*
		21	*bilingualism as something positive?*
		22	*S: Not necessarily.*
		23	*T: No. And what you've said before, you see*
		24	*S: [But*
		25	*what I was talking about was actually*
		26	*employing bilingual teachers, as that being*
		27	*positive.*
		28	*T: Okay so that's a positive step.*
		29	*S: Yeah, a step.*
		30	*T: Right, I do think you need to explain that*
		31	*then.* (Se3disd2 side 2:49)

Sara's comment at line 4 indicates that she is coming to see how wordings in the text can mask her intended and more complex meanings and hence the need to attempt to clarify who's saying what in the text.

In her talk, Sara indicates both a point of divergence and convergence between hers and the official view: divergence -*in <u>their</u> eyes it is positive* (line 3)- indicating that, as in the rest of her essay, she does not feel that bilingualism is viewed positively in schools; convergence- *employing bilingual teachers, as that being positive* (lines 26-27) . However, even though she has articulated these more complex views in her talk, this complexity is only partly realized in her final draft:

Bilingualism is being recognised slowly as something positive, **because it is finally creating jobs for bilinguals**, but only in certain context like schools. My emphasis (Se2fd:306-308)

For whilst she gives a reason for stating that bilingualism is being viewed as *something positive* (see bold print), the complexity of her intended meanings is minimized because of her use of categorical modality (is), as well as the passive and impersonal voice. Thus our talk only went some way towards enabling her to construct Sara's preferred meanings in the written text.

8.4.3 Confronting uncertainty

In the examples above, our collaboration centred on me as tutor working with the student-writer to textually represent what the writer seemed confident she wanted to say. On other occasions, through talk about the text we come to identify aspects that the student-writer is not sure about. In the context of student academic writing, this may point to the need for seeking out relevant information, as is exemplified in this example. Bridget is writing on housing policy and how it relates to the specific case of one family.

Extract from text	Talk about text
They are obviously behind with the repayments as the house could be repossessed. If this was the case, the family would be homeless so surely they would be re-housed by the council, but only in the area where they are living. (Be2d1:29-35)	*T: This surely, why is that there?* *B: I don't know.* *T: It...just sounds as if you're not sure.* *B: Mmm... I'm not sure actually.* *T: Do Social Services, or the council have the statutory obligation to house homeless people?* *B: In certain conditions, like if there are dependants.* *T: So, you need to work that out, then this surely would go.* (Be2disd1:259)

I query Bridget's use of *surely* as an appeal to the reader/listener to agree with the claim that she is making. This prompts her, in her final draft, to provide information drawn from a relevant and named source- Housing Act- to state, rather than suggest, the legal situation in which the family finds themselves.

> If the house were repossessed the family would be homeless and homelessness is governed by the Housing Act of 1985 which states that Social Services have a right to co-operate under the Act. They are obliged, in certain circumstances, in regard to rent arrears, to make a financial payment so that the family are not homeless. If the house was repossessed, the family would come within a priority group, i.e. Dependent children living with them. The housing department's duty would be to investigate and offer suitable permanent housing. (Be2fd:109-118)

This last instance of talk around the production of the student-writer's text is clearly an example of my talk being closer to the control end of the continuum: I am directing Bridget to engage in the dominant convention of making and substantiating a claim, rather than attempt to convince the reader through an appeal. This contrasts with the previous instance in 8.4.2.2, where my talk is more towards the facilitative end of the continuum: my talk is aimed at clarifying Sara's intended meanings around the word *positive* and to explore the extent to which her preferred meanings are represented in the written text. However, I would argue that both are examples of negotiating a more collaborative talking space, in that both the tutor-researcher approaching student writing as meaning making in process, rather than as finished text.

8.5 Talking to make language visible

The inherent tension in the above attempts to facilitate and problematize, without taking control over, the student-writer's meaning making is particularly evident in attempts to make language more visible, given that this involves the tutor-researcher often directing the student-writer to particular wordings. Orner, in her critique of feminist and critical writers' positions on student writing, has pointed to the arrogance of critical writers who assume that they have somehow managed to take control over their meaning making, whereas student-writers need to get *worked over* (Orner 1992: 87).

My own position on what we, as student-writer and tutor-researcher, bring to our talk is as follows:

- student-writers bring significant dimensions of awareness about the socially situated nature of language
- at the same time, there is a tendency for student-writers to work with a romantic notion of authorship and meaning making
- I, as an individual tutor-researcher, share some dimensions of the awareness and confusions with the student-writers about the workings of language but also bring particular dimensions of awareness based on my years of interest in language
- through talk about the student-writer's experience, my own awareness is raised about specific relations between evolving intentions, wordings and meanings.

The above dimensions are evident in the instances of talk below as I now consider.

8.5.1 The awareness that student-writers bring

The table below provides specific examples of all ten student-writers' awareness of language as being socially situated, as indicated in comments at some point in discussions with me. These examples should not be viewed as a complete account of their understanding of the workings of discourses. I can only draw from comments made to me; as such the examples should be viewed as a partial indicator of their awareness.

Student-writer awareness of the socially situated nature of academic discourse

Focus	Example	Comment	Reflects awareness of language as socially situated discourses.....
lexical items	Mary new words: wants *reinterpreted* but not *prerequisite* in her text	M doesn't want *fancy nonsense* *A sort of stereotype I would have would be people who would use words like that are real academics and people sit down and talk about prerequisite (*laughs*) over coffee and tea (laughs). And I just don't experience those kinds of things so why should I ...I could be left out from my own community. (*Me1disf:333)	-wordings are used differentially across socio-ethnic groups -using certain wordings in academic writing involves taking on a particular socio-ethnic identity
	Reba uses *women portrayed as total airheads* but knows that *women portrayed in a derogatory way'* expected	Of derogatory way *But I don't like using these words cause it sounds---it sounds as if it's been copied off somewhere...It doesn't sound like my work.(*Re1disfd:90)	-wordings reflect who we are and are not -wordings she is expected to use in academia do not reflect who she is/wants to be
	Nadia using 'other words' orally-*take into consideration* written- in order to, undertake, proceedings	using certain words *puts me up a bit---.puts me at the same level as a teacher , a degree level, you know, got a degree and entitled to use these words.* (Ne1disff:200)	-wordings reflect and constitute social status -people of higher social status have the right to use high status wordings
	Kate wants to use *'I'* but uses 'they'	Uses 'they' in order to make text not sound *too emotional---to make it sound more logical, more academic*	-the privileged status of rationality over emotion in academic texts
lexical items/ syntax	Amira writing in an academic way It seems to be an unreliable and complex type of measurement, yet to be thought of. (Ae2fd:295)	Using words of *higher level, to try to make it more academic (*ALH:side 2:11)	-wordings/impersonal language-passives privileged in academia -some wordings have higher status within academia

Student-writer awareness of the socially situated nature of academic discourse (contd.)

Focus	Example	Comment	Reflects awareness of language as socially situated discourses.....
lexical items/ syntax	Tara comment in general	*I've got middle class friends, and I wouldn't say their knowledge is any different to mine, but they speak differently to me. And it does give it that extra bit, especially if you're at university (*TLH:120)	-privileging of middle class way of speaking/writing at university
	Siria comment in general	Listening out for the appropriate voices *I think yeah, someone like so and so says* it (no example given*), then it's acceptable.*(Sie1dif:11)	-certain voices expected/privileged at university
grammatical forms	Mary wants to use contracted forms *can't, I'm* not *cannot, I am not*	*Everybody knows what I'm not means.It's like trying to segregate, you know you've got a like a boundary that sets, you know, you apart from other people.(*Me2disfd:137)	-using certain wordings separates and excludes those from lower social classes/Black people.
global features of academic discourse	Kate wants to use poetry as well as logical argument	*I never see academic writing as personal. It's cold.* says logic perceived as male art whereas *we were put down as being over-emotional which is a classic way, classic thing that men say, she's either neurotic or whatever.. (*Ke1disf:257)	-convention of excluding of the 'personal' in academic writing -convention of excluding emotion gendered
position of student writer	Sara talking about what she can include se3adisd2p.316	Saying certain things... *it could sort of ruin their* (tutors') *day* (laughs), *if you like. You know like, who's she saying things like that. She doesn't know, she's only a student. That kind of view.* (Se3adisd2:316)	differential status and power of student-writer within academia affects what allowed to say.
	Diane content has nothing to do with her personally	*there's nobody in it* (her writing) (De1f2df:side 2:76)	-convention of excluding the person(al)
	Bridget not expected to contribute personal view	*They just want to know that we understand what they're trying to teach us.* (Be1disfd:256*)*	-purpose of student academic writing reflects transmission model of education

There are important differences across individual experience as articulated by the student-writers. First of all, they focus on different aspects of academic discourse. On many occasions, as illustrated in the table, student-writers focused on lexical items; as Ivanic has pointed out, *words seem to be the most intuitive linguistic unit for non-linguists* (Ivanic and Roach 1990:13). But some student-writers also comment on other dimensions; Mary on grammatical forms; Kate on the privileging of logical argument in academic discourse; Sara, Diane and Bridget on the status of the student-writer engaging in academic writing.

Secondly, there is a difference in terms of the generality or specificity of their comments. Thus, Tara, Siria and Amira make general comments about the privileging of particular ways of meaning making in academia. Tara links such privileging with social class. Mary, Reba and Kate name and point to the ways in which specific features of dominant academic discourse contribute to particular ways of meaning making, in ways which they don't like.

Thirdly, there are differences of attitude towards what the individual student-writer knows about the nature of academic discourse. Thus, whilst Mary and Kate are critical of particular dominant conventions, Nadia and Amira are not and focus primarily on how to sound academic.

There is commonality across their experience as non-traditional student-writers in HE, most notably in their general sense of unease about engaging in academic discourse as currently configured. This is most evident in the comments on wordings which point to tensions between wordings they feel they would normally use and which seem to be closer to the student-writers' current sense of personal and social identity and wordings expected and privileged in academia .

8.5.2 Problematizing wordings

As indicated by the table above, the student-writers are aware of the significance of language in and for meaning making in a number of specific ways. However, they

also find it difficult, and in some cases, resist my attempts to problematize wordings in relation to possible meanings. This is most clearly evident in Mary's comments which indicate a romantic notion of authorship. She doesn't like the idea of revisiting texts in any way, for example to re-examine particular wordings because

writing's about expressing yourself and how you feel at that time (Me2disfd: 9)

and, as she explains at another moment:

to me, an essay's like a mood---it's got a feel to it, hasn't it? Like if I read certain essays, like if I read the bilingualism essay and I read the project, it's got a different mood. I don't know. (Me3disfd:4)

I attempted to work with the student-writers at problematizing language, through what I have called short conversations, moments where we may briefly stop to consider wordings used, as well as through long conversations which I explore in section 8.6.

I cannot claim greater student-writer awareness on the basis of the short conversations, examples of which I provide below, only point to particular moments of working at making language visible. The wordings focused on here relate to two broad areas: firstly, wordings which student-writers bring to their academic writing from the sphere of work; secondly, wordings which constitute dominant discourses. Although in some cases I can trace changes made in the student text to the talk, and hence suggest that the talk has made an impact on the written text, in many cases the examples here focus on final drafts and hence it is not possible to trace through changes in texts.

8.5.2.1 *Training*

In discussing Amira's essay on codeswitching, I queried her use of the word *training*.

Extract from text	Talk about text
He (Poplack) says that code-switching is a special skill which is practiced by bilinguals and is acquired by special **training.** (My emphasis) (Ae2fd:246-248)	*T: Training?* *A: It sounds like a job doesn't it?* (Ae2difdf:201)

Amira immediately locates the wording in the world of work although she doesn't link it directly to her work, which she refers to in her literacy interview as 'training'- preparing speakers of Arabic for work opportunities through the teaching of English and 'life-skills'.

8.5.2.2 *A good coping vocabulary*

Siria works as a bilingual support worker for the under fives. When I queried her use of *good coping* to describe the vocabulary of a bilingual child, she like Amira, identified the wordings as being work related.

Extract from text	Talk about text
she has a good coping vocabulary (Sie3fd:92)	*S: This is a word we use from work.* --- *S: Well you'd say she had a coping vocabulary and, say, words she could actually use. You could say she had enough.* (Se3disfd:280)

She is drawing wordings from a standard assessment record sheet used across the local education authority (LEA) for the assessment of children's language development. I questioned the usefulness of such a general description in a Language Studies course essay, telling her that in a linguistics essay she needs to draw on other wordings/notions, thus challenging the assumption that wordings are equally valid in all contexts.

8.5.2.3 *A support teacher only*

This third example is of a student-writer using wordings from her sphere of work but which are also clearly a part of a dominant discourse within education about Section 11 workers.[3] The *only* indicates lower value attached to the work done and the lower status accorded those who carry out the work. Although this has been contested by many practitioners within Section 11, including Sara in several discussions both inside and outside formal teaching sessions, in the written draft here Sara is echoing the dominant discourse as if it were her view. In our talk, focus on *only* in order to explore whether Sara wants to consciously echo this view or not:

Extract from text	Talk about text
I am a **language support teacher only** where I help children, in main stream education, with language difficulties. (My emphasis) (Se3fd 286	*T: Why did you use only ?* *S: I'm not in mainstream. I'm not sort of teaching other lessons in support at the moment.* *T: If you didn't say only, I'm a language support teacher, does that not still say that you're a language support teacher? Why would you want to put only?* *S: 'only' because I'm not regarded as a teacher-teacher. I don't feel I am anyway.* *T: So when you say 'only', it's not* *S: [I'm not a teacher, I haven't got that status. I'm only a support teacher. That's what I've been told and that's what other people regard me as.* *T: Who says that then?* *S: Oh a lot of people, You're only a support teacher.* *T: Yes, clearly this is a view people have, you're only a support teacher, therefore you're kind of less than a teacher.* *S: That's right.* *T: But do you agree with that then?* *S: I don't agree with that but I thought I should point it out.* *T: But that's what this means here, is you saying something like this, so it's like you consider yourself to be lower, rather than.* *S: [Right yeah.* *T: If you say I'm only a language support teacher, it's like you're saying the same thing as other people are saying to you.* *S: I see what you mean.* *T: If you're saying I'm a language support teacher, you're not telling any lies, that's what you are, but you're not saying that's any less than anything else, are you?* *S: I suppose people have said it to me so many times, I've begun to believe it now.* *T: And do you believe that now then?* *S: I don't know, half of me does. It's difficult* ... (Se3disfd:469)

Sara's final comments indicate the complexities surrounding owning voices: she both accepts and rejects the dominant voice on her position. However, this complexity is not constituted in the text.

The devaluing of bilingual support staff indicated in this instance by *only,* is part of a dominant discourse which is both maintained and contested within a specific public arena - that of schooling, and in particular bilingualism and schooling. That I would recognize and describe this as such is the result of my having worked as a Section 11 teacher for some ten years. I thus easily pick up on and question such wordings; other people may not. This raises the question of who and how we identify dominant and oppositional discourses and points to the importance of engaging in dialogue with people in order to uncover such dimensions to discourse (see examples in chapter 6)

The example here stands in contrast to more publicly contested discourses such as *foreign* and *immigrant* below, which are part of dominant and contested discourses across more broad areas of practice, research and policy within British life.

8.5.2.4 *Foreign*

In the extract below I query Sara's use of *foreign:*

Extract from text	**Talk about text**
Children from minority groups can have many distractions towards the second language, in a foreign country. (Se2fd:223)	*T: Why foreign country?* S: *Well, like me, for instance. I'm living here and everything but everybody else considers me as a foreign person because it's not my country, really is it?* T: *Well, you tell me.* S: *Well, I don't feel that it is. Because, I don't get treated, if you don't get treated as if you belong somewhere, you don't feel as if you belong. You know. Even though, you probably will because you've been born and bred here and you know, this is the only place you really know but...other people don't make you feel as if you belong, I think you still feel like a foreigner, you know.* T: *So this, when you say a foreign country, is that how, like the children view it, or how the people in society view it, or both?* S: *Both.* (Se2disfd/f:480)

As in the case of *only* above, Sara in her verbal explanation points to the more complex meanings surrounding her use of *foreign* which are buried in her actual text. In the text she ventriloquates, and hence appears to agree with, the dominant discourse on Black bilinguals as being *foreign* rather than being British. Yet her talk indicates the following; that she is using foreign because that is how others refer to British born

Pakistani women (and children); that she agrees that she is foreign in the senses that she doesn't feel she belongs and others don't make her feel that she belongs; that she does belong -and hence is not a foreign- because she was born in England. However, her use of *foreign* in the text does not constitute the complexity of meanings that she expresses verbally.

8.5.2.5 *Immigrant*

In the example below I question Nadia's use of the word immigrant.

Extract from text	Talk about text
Repeated use of immigrant as noun and adjective-18 instances Examples: A huge number of immigrants have entered the UK (41) A few immigrants have little understanding of the English language (45) Once the immigrants enter the UK (51) These immigrants became more regular (69)	*T: Is that a word that you would use?* *N: No, er, minorities.* *T: I mean, some people might use that word. But is it a word <u>you</u> would use when you're talking about the kids you work with?* *N: No.* *T: But then the problem is you've used this book which uses that word* *N: [a lot* *T: so it looks as if it's* *N: [my word* *T: Your word. Do you see what I mean?* --- *N: I wouldn't use <u>immigrant</u> family.* *T: Why not?* *N: Because it's kind of offending, isn't it? Being classed as an immigrant.* *T: When the word tends to be used, the word itself needn't be offensive, it can just mean somebody moving from one place to another. But the way it tends to be used in England* *N: [it's to offend.* (Ne2did1b:65)

In her final draft Nadia used immigrant twice (as compared with 18 in the first draft), one of these being part of a direct quote which was referenced. In contrast she uses *minority/ies* as adjective and noun, as well as bilingual. She therefore makes a significant shift from draft 1 to her final draft.

However, given the becoming nature of meaning making (see 2.5.3), her predominant use of minority/ies here is a provisional one. Six months after writing this essay, she told me that felt unhappy with 'minority/ies', feeling that the use of such a term was a way of *segregating everybody from everybody else.* At this point in time she said if it

was important to identify ethnic difference between peoples, she felt more comfortable with the idea of using specific names-for example, Yemeni and Pakistani- rather than any more general naming.

8.5.2.6 *Appropriate*

The wording and notion of appropriateness has been problematized recently by Fairclough (1995) but, I would argue, has not been as widely or publicly contested as the previous two wordings *foreign* and *immigrant*. Below I query it in Amira's writing about gender.

Extract from text	Talk about text
I have already mentioned that school can play a major part in language and gender. They can help to rid gender appropriate behaviour by reversing the process, by becoming aware and to open it up for possible change. (Ae1fd:477)	*T:* (reads)*They can help to rid gender appropriate behaviour.* *A: By appropriate, I mean the way it's expected.* *T: So gender stereotypical behaviour.Cause otherwise, if you say it's appropriate, then why would you want to get rid of it?* *A: Right, yeah.* (Ae1disfd 2:35)

8.5.2.7 *Action*

Nadia's avoidance of her 'own' words, as already discussed (see 6.3.2) leads her initially to produce sentences such as the one below.

Extract from draft	Talk about text
Skinner talks about conditioning which basically means a person is forced to operate something in order to benefit from the experiment. (Ae1d1:29-33)	*T: Why operate?* *N: Operate's like, to do something..* --- *T.: Why not use action instead of experiment?* *N: But doesn't action mean like something more than just* *T: [doing something?* *N: Yeah* *T: What do you think of when you think of action then?* *N: More like TV action hero* (laughs) *T: Drama and things going on? Well it does mean that but action can simply be something that you do.* (Ne1disd1:93)

For Nadia, action is populated with the notion of excitement and drama and she remains unconvinced by my attempt to depopulate it. This in her final draft she does not use *action* but makes changes to her text by replacing *operate* with her own alternative, *do*.

`Skinner talks about conditioning which basically means a person is forced to do something in order to benefit from it.`(Nelfd:30-33)

As already stated, I cannot make claims of greater awareness from the instances of talk above. However, our talk here did seem to move Nadia closer to wordings she was familiar with and which, when used, made considerable more sense in her text. There are also some indications from the student-writers' own comments that talk encourages the student-writers to reflect on what's involved in student academic writing (see 9.5).

Talking to make language visible....

Extract from my introduction	Comment by one reader/assessor on wording *imbricated*
`This involves viewing student academic writing as a social act, imbricated in the social context in which it takes place rather than an act of autonomous and individual meaning making` Echoes of Berlin....	*R/A: Why are using this word, imbricated?* *T: I don't know. I like it...* *R/A: Aren't you just falling into the trap of using the sort of language that your students complain about? You know, unnecessarily complex words?* Echoes of Elbow...

I liked this word and it felt intuitively right to use in the way I was using it. But where had I actually got this word from? It clearly wasn't a word I'd normally use. And shouldn't I work out where I'd got it from in any case, in order to decide whether I wanted to consciously use it, to own it, or not?

I thumbed through numerous articles and books to see if I could find this word but couldn't. Then one day I suddenly remembered..Berlin, it's from Berlin.

Our consciousness is in large part a product of our material conditions. But our material conditions are also in part the products of our consciousness. Both consciousness and the material conditions influence each other, and they are both imbricated in social relations defined and worked out through language. Berlin 1988: 489.

Okay. So I think that's where I got it from and I seem to have taken it up because I like what Berlin is saying here, and the way he says it. But.

Who am I writing to? And how does using this word *imbricated* help me to talk/write to who I'm talking/writing to about what I want to say?

I'm left with the problem once again of who am I writing to/for. And how much I'm deciding to stick with what is accepted practice in academic writing. As to Berlin. He like other writers (most I think) who argues that dominant academic conventions serve to exclude significant numbers of people from powerful knowledge making sites, such as the university, makes no comment on his participation in maintaining such sites through his use of language. Elbow has stressed this.

Here he's talking here about another term used by Berlin, as well as many other writers, *epistemic*:

Berlin uses a special term, 'epistemic'---One might call it a technical term that is necessary to the content (you can't talk about penicillin without the word 'penicillin'). But (and colleagues argue with me about this) I don't think 'epistemic' really permits him to say anything he couldn't say just as well without it-using 'knowledge' and other such words. Admittedly it is the mildest of jargon these days and its use can be validly translated as follows: A bunch of us have been reading Foucault and talking to each other and we simply want to continue to use a word that has become central in our conversation'. But through my experience of teaching this essay (Berlin 1982) *to classroom teachers (the very audience that Berlin says he wants to reach), I have seen another valid translation: 'I'm not interested in talking to people who are not already part of the conversation'.* Elbow1991 :145

Audience and addressivity again. So what do I do? When I'm wavering all the time about who I'm writing to/for? And when, like Mary and Nadia I want, and obviously enjoy, new words?

8.6 Talking to *participate in the struggle* (Ivanic and Roach 1990: 8)

Although all the student-writers in this study bring awareness of the socially situated nature of academic discourse to their academic writing, they, at the same time, bring major concerns about their intellectual ability, their right to be at university, their feelings of concern about the distance between the language they use and the language they feel expected to use in academia. What a more collaborative talking relationship between student-writer and *knowledgeable-insider* (Harris:1992) around meaning making within academia can offer them is the possibility of examining some of these concerns and making sense of them within the specific context of writing in HE. A tutor/student talking relationship can thus provide student-writers with the opportunity to *participate in the struggle* of meaning making within the particular socio-discursive context of HE (Ivanic and Roach 1990).

As discussed in chapter 3, the use of talkback sheets enabled us to open up our discussions and work at developing long conversations, that is pursuing specific concerns and interests across conversations over an extended period of time (see Maybin 1994 for her notion of learning and teaching as a long conversation). These stand in contrast to the brief one-off encounters exemplified in the extracts above, although some of these were part of longer conversations, as is illustrated by Mary's example below in section 8.6.1

What I want to do here is to explore aspects of a long conversation with one student-writer, Mary.

8.6.1 A long conversation: Mary

In working at developing and maintaining long conversations, the interconnected nature of seemingly discrete student-writer and/or tutor concerns becomes apparent. Below, I illustrate how we attempted through talk to explore Mary's many concerns about writing in academia.

Time

Talking about texts/writing	
A From discussion of talkback on essay 1	*M: It's such hard work.Sometimes it takes me an hour to get lines written And that's why I don't think, it's maybe not natural* (laughs). *I have to work too hard for it.* *T: Do you think it's harder for you than others. Do you think it's hard for everybody?* *M: I don't know. Maybe other people will experience it as well, but say, I don't want to use anybody as an example, but say for instance, somebody in our class, like G----- can speak his first language very well, that's the impression I've been given, so maybe he can speak English very well as well He can write it very well, maybe, that's the impression I get, I might be wrong. But because I can't speak either language very well, I probably, that's probably why I find it so difficult to write standard English. Because I've got like a mixture of dialects, haven't I, the Yorkshire dialect and then I've got Creole and I've got no standard in a sense, so when I use standard English I find it very difficult to get ideas down properly, I know I can do it and if I hear something that's ungrammatical in English, I can pick it out. But to produce it, get it down in a quick time, takes a very long time. It takes a long time, I have to think about it as well. At one time I used to have problems with the past and present tense. I didn't see it as important because in Creole they don't stress tense. So I used to have a problem when I wrote in English.*

Time ↓

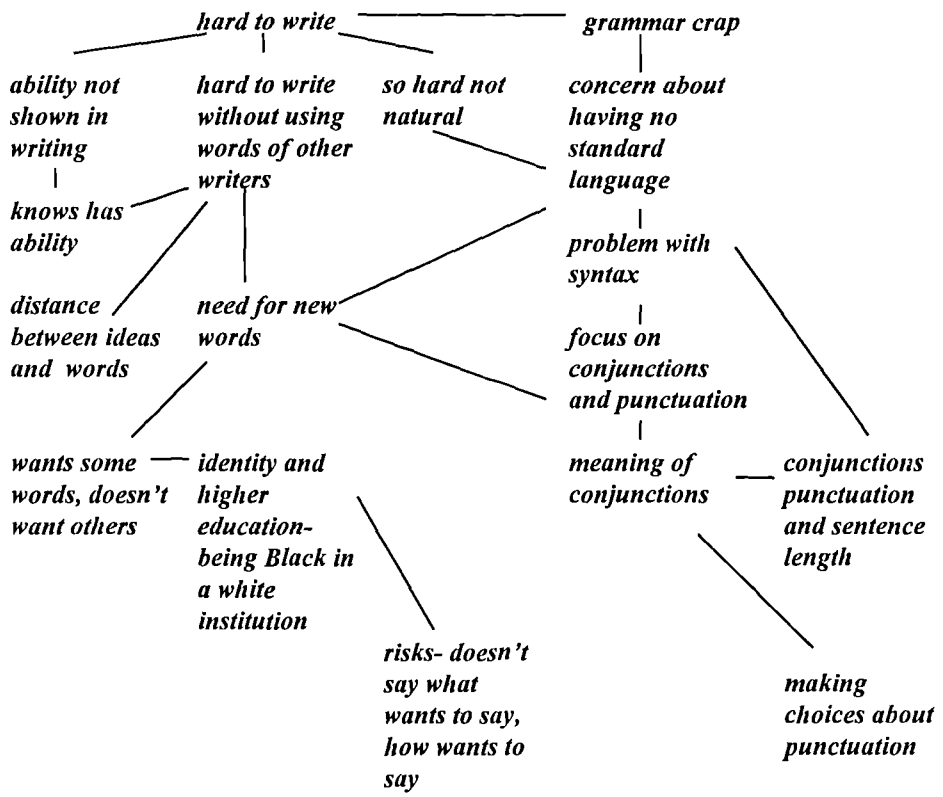
Talking about texts/writing contd.	
	I'd write wasn't there and is in the middle of a paragraph when I was talking about the same subject when I should use the same tense all the way through. But I don't have that problem so much now. I've conquered that. But it's like each time I start a course or I do some kind of written work I conquer something.
B From discussion of first draft of essay 2.	*M: Oh I find writing very difficult Theresa, very difficult.* *T: But you've written this so far* *M: [yeah and it's not very good. I know it isn't.I'm not lazy, you know. I don't know, I just don't think it's for me you know, but I've got to do it.*
C Extract from talkback sheet on essay 2.	When we were discussing your final draft of your first essay, you said that you felt you had no standard language and that was a reason why you found it so hard to express yourself in writing (in Standard English?) You said that it was such hard work that you wondered whether it was just 'not natural' for you to study. ---Again when you were writing your second essay, you seemed to be questioning whether this studying was really for you. What do you feel now?
D From discussion of above point of talkback sheet on essay 2.	*M. I do think I've got the ability to study, I've always known you know. I can think for myself, I know that. But I just feel that my thinking's just way above my writing. Sometimes I want to say things and I'm thinking of words to say them and it really, gosh, my thinking's way above my writing. Do you get what I mean? And that's how I'm feeling now. I feel like what I really could say if my writing was just that bit better. And that's only for the purpose of getting my ideas across more clearly and better.* *T: And would that relate again to why you want a word like 'reinterpreted' because that is a word that helps to explain what you're trying to say whereas the other one* (prerequisite) *was just 'fancy nonsense'?* *M: Yeah, I don't want no fancy nonsense. But I do want words, I do want to improve. Course I do. I need it to say what I want to say. Cause what I've got to say needs to be expressed better. And I think at the moment, with the vocabulary that I've got, it's not that bad. But it doesn't mean, I miss out a lot of things cause sometimes when you find a better word you can say more things in that one word, whereas when you go lower down the vocabulary, it means very few sometimes. You know what I mean? The thesaurus is no good because when I look up words I do know what they actually mean and I see they've got other words what are supposed to be having the same meaning* (Me2disf:84)

*In using 'fancy nonsense' I am echoing Mary's own words in order to stay close to her concerns

In Mary's initial response (A), reflecting on whether writing at university is harder for her than for others, she raises a number of interconnected concerns about being in academia. An obvious- and what seems to be a central concern at this stage- is her being a Yorkshire/Creole speaker who has no 'standard' language and which she links to her difficulties in writing in standard academic English. In the talkback sheet (C), I pick this theme up and link it to other comments she has made about being at university. This leads to further reflection and comments by Mary of another related concern (D), that she is not able to express what she wants in her writing, which in turn leads me to raise comments made previously by Mary about her desire to use some words rather than others (see 6.4.3 for her views on *reinterpreted/ prerequisite*).

Below, I outline the interconnected nature of the concerns and issues raised in our talk.

How concerns around writing connect: Mary



At specific moments, any one of the above points became the focus of our discussion and thus became temporarily our principal concern. Here I will pursue two prominent theme from those highlighted above in order to indicate how, through further talk, we worked at naming and acting on Mary's concerns. The first is her feeling that her

grammar was *crap* ; the second is the difficulty of talking about the ideas of others without using their words.

8.6.1.1 *Crap grammar*

In our first meeting Mary said that her grammar was *crap* but couldn't give any specific examples of what that might mean. As Gardener has pointed out, 'grammar' is a word often used by student-writers to indicate a whole range of concerns and uncertainties about writing, and language use in general (1992:36-41). An aim therefore in both my reading of her texts and in our discussions was to name more specifically what Mary might mean by *grammar*. After completing her first essay, and thus having completed an introduction to the study of language on the Language Studies course, Mary pointed to *syntax* as the problem area in her grammar.

I *must admit, I've got a problem in that I haven't got much confidence in my syntax. I think it is that because sometimes I write my own sentences and I think, does it make sense or does it not make sense? And I have to keep going to my mum all the time and reading it. She says, yes that makes sense.(* Me1disfd:88)

After reading her texts, the only problem I identified with Mary's syntax was the use of conjunctions in relation to, a) the meaning of specific conjunctions, and b) punctuation and clause boundaries. We pursued these problem areas in our talk as I outline below.

Strand one-conjunctions and punctuation

Time ↓

Talking about texts/writing	
A Extract from draft	Whereas an English /Punjabi bilingual child's English surface fluency can be overestimated so the child is expected to have competent academic linguistic skills in English. But the experience for creole speakers has been that their fluency (so to speak) is under estimated and their CALP skills are assumed to be worse than what they actually are.(Me2fd:420-430)
B Extract from discussion of final draft	*T: Whereas, all that, what?* *M: What I'm going to do is to make a comparison between the Panjabi and the Creole speakers, that's all. That's why I put whereas.* *T: That's okay. But if you're going to do that, you need to finish it off.--- Whereas, something is said about a Panjabi speaking person, something else is said about a Creole speaker. And that' s all in the structure.*

Talking about texts/writing contd.	
	M: Ah I understand *T: So what do you need to get rid of?* *M: But.* *T: Yes. And the full stop.*(T re-reads section) *M: But why shouldn't I put 'but'?* *T: Because it's the same thing. You've already got whereas. If you got rid of whereas, you'd put but in to join them up.* *M: But that' s a join, it's just at the beginning.* *T: Absolutely.* *M: And I've put another join in the middle again.* *T: Yes. Can you see that then?* *M: Yeah, now I can.* (Me2disfd:422)
C Extract from talkback sheet	Can you see problems with the way these clauses come together? Are these examples of what you mean when you say you have problems with syntax?
D From discussion of point in talkback sheet	*Yeah, I think that's what it is. I don't know. I think it's punctuation, I'm not quite sure when to use it, I don't know.* (Me2disf: 195)

Here I think our talk is helping to move Mary away from an overwhelming sense of having crap grammar in general, towards naming particular aspects of written standard English, that is punctuation and use of conjunctions, as a problem. In another discussion, an extract of which is given below, we focus on the meaning of conjunctions.

Strand 2 meanings of conjunctions

Time

Talking about texts/writing	
A Extract from draft	In fact all types of West Indian Creoles should be viewed along a continuum. However, there is a large number of Creole speakers, but no one speaker uses a creolized speech to the same extent. (Me2d3:14)
B From discussion of draft of essay 2	*T; Why have you used 'however'?* *M: I thought, I'm starting a new sentence. If I like, go straight, say 'there' straight away, to me it doesn't sound right.* *T: So you need something in there?* *M: Yeah.---* *T: Well, however introduces a new dimension, whereas you're adding on, continuing. What about 'for'?* *M: I don't like that.* *T: We'll come back to it.* (Me2disd3:12)

Talk about texts/writing contd.	
C From discussion based on talkback sheet. me2disf	*T: You took however out in your final draft. Why?* *M: I took it out because I didn't know what the hell was going on. So I thought, forget it. Get it out. I thought however meant another change of thought.* *T:It does, but it means a change of direction of thought.* *M: I thought it meant the same direction. Oh, a completely different idea?* *T: It's like, say, I like shopping however I'm not going today.* *M: Whereas I've been saying, I like going shopping however I'm going to buy some.*(Laughs). *T: Exactly.* ---- *M: It's serious. And I just used it casually like it was nothing, but it's very serious.* --- *M: I'm glad you've shown me that anyway.* (Me2disf.258)

Mary seems to have viewed *however* as a linking device, empty of any particular meaning. Although we focus on it in one discussion (B), my brief attempt at explanation was of no use; it is not until a later discussion, prompted by me asking why Mary hadn't used it, that Mary seem to make sense of the meaning indicated by *however* (C).

A second dimension to Mary's use of conjunctions is punctuation. From the discussion below, it emerged that sentence length was what was guiding her choice of punctuation:

Strand 3: conjunctions, punctuation and length of sentence

Talking about texts/writing	
A Extract from draft	Marx analyses the structure of class from both extremes (ie proletariat and bourgeoisie). Whereas Weber argues that ownership alone does not necessarily determine class. (Me4d1:184-188)
B Discussion of draft of essay 4	*T: So that's got to be a comma, whereas Marx.* *M: Well, won't that make my sentence too long?* *T: Well, we're back to the business about, we discussed it a bit before.* *M: [I'm never going to get it right.* *T: Yes, you are. Sentences can be as long as you like if, as long as they are sentences. You can have a sentence, a kid's sentence like I went to the shop and I bought some sweets and then I went home and I watched the telly. It's all one sentence cause they've joined up those clauses with and. But, we tend not to make sentences too long. But what I'm saying is , you can't just decide whether you need a full stop on the basis of how long it is.*

Talking about texts/writing contd.	
	M: I know that. And I tend to find myself, when I'm writing a sentence, finishing it off, so that's a complete sentence, putting a full stop. I don't want to drag it on for too long. For some reason I'm frightened of that. *T: Well okay, if you want to keep it shorter, what you need is a different word.* (Me4disd1)

Other student-writers in this also expressed great concern about the appropriate length of sentences and had been advised to keep sentences short in order to avoid making errors. One student-writer, Tara, had had been told, 'KISS'-keep it simple stupid- the assumption being that if you keep it simple and stupid you will avoid syntactical mistakes. But, as Mary and I discussed, sometimes you need longer sentences to express what you want to say. In our second year of discussions, we talked about her need for conjunctions in order to be able to construct longer sentences in order to say what she wanted.

Continuing with conjunctions and punctuation.

A Extract from draft	Weber argues that ownership alone does not necessarily determine class. Since the skills possessed by the propertyless can be valuable to the market. (Me4d1:86-88)
B Discussion of draft of essay 4	*T: Let's sort this out. You're using conjunctions in the right place. But the only thing that you're doing wrong then is, say, your punctuation. That's the story with these* --- *M: What if I didn't use them? It'd be a bit rubbish, wouldn't it?* *T: Well the problem is that you are using them because you're dealing with these complicated ideas, aren't you?* *M; I need something.* *T: You need them.* *M: I do need them, yeah.* *T: Don't worry about them too much. You're using them.* (Me4disd1)

By the end of our second year of talking , sometimes we still talked about where full stops were needed, and I still pointed to errors. But there are also examples of Mary deciding how she wants to use conjunctions and punctuation within the boundaries of acceptable academic discourse.

Beginning to make choices

Talking about texts/writing	
A Extract from draft	The underclass does exist but not in relation to Murray's idea of it being a cultural phenomenon; instead, it's a social group which is the 'victim' of social inequality as suggested by Alan Walker. (Me5fd:249-253)
B Discussion of draft of essay 5	*M: Because to me, putting a full stop cuts them off* *T: [Okay* *M: [What* *I've got to say in that last sentence. They've got to be together* (Me5disd3:)

Here Mary is making a firm decision about how she wants to use punctuation to say what she wants.

8.6.1.2 Voices in the text

The question of how to write about the ideas of others without using their words was another of Mary's concerns in the writing of her first essay, on Bernstein's restricted and elaborated codes. This arose from a discussion we had about an extract from Mary's first draft, shown below alongside Bernstein's original text:

Bernstein text	**Mary's draft 1**
On a psychological level the codes may be distinguished by the extent to which each facilitates (elaborated code) or inhibits restricted code) an orientation to symbolize intent in a verbally explicit form. (Bernstein 1971: 124)	On a psychological level the codes may be distinguished by the extent to which each facilitates (elaborated code) or inhibits (restricted code) an orientation to symbolize intent in a verbally explicit form. (Me1d1:15-18)

Throughout her draft she had drawn extensively on Bernstein (1972:125) without providing references and which we discussed in terms of the university regulations on plagiarism but also, and primarily, in terms of owning voices within the text, as is shown below.

Extract from text	Talk about text
This does not mean that a restricted code speaker is incapable of learning. They can but it tends to be mechanical learning. (Me1d1:178-183)	*T*: (Reads) *Now who's saying that, Bernstein or you?* M: *Bernstein's saying that. Not me.* *T: You need to make clear whose voice is being used. You need to hang on to your own voice for the purposes of arguing.*(Medisd1:241)

Mary commented on the difficulty of writing about somebody else's ideas without using their words and this became a focus for the talkback and further discussion as shown below.

Separating the voices

Time ↓

Talking about texts/writing	
B Extract from talkback sheet.	**1. Using your words to talk about somebody else's ideas.** You said that you found it difficult to talk about Bernstein's ideas without using his words. How are you trying to deal with this problem in your next essay?
C Discussion of talkback sheet 1	*T: How are you trying to deal with this problem in your next essay? Are you approaching this essay differently?* *M: I've tried to use my own words a lot more and I've tried to use my own structure as well. But obviously if I'm writing someone else's ideas, its going to be based on what they said. And there may be some key words that need to be used. Not any, not academic, like, like academic terms, they're just words that need to be used really to get my meaning across.* (Me1disf:269)
D Discussion of talkback sheet 2	*T: Do you understand what I mean about the need to separate the voices?* M: *And I find pleasure in it now you know... because I like to be able to distinguish between what I'm saying and what's been said by someone else. When it comes together, it's not good at all, cause you're not making yourself clear. You ought to let the person who's reading the essay know what you are, what you're saying. I think that's very important that. Separating the voices is one of the best, I think it's one of the best things I've ever...(*Me2disffd:134)

Using *voices* proved to be a useful way for us to talk about the institution's position on student 'plagiarism' as well as talking about developing control over voices within her texts. It is also an example of shared metalanguage that we seemed to have successfully developed in order to begin to discuss intention, meaning and wordings in Mary's written texts.

Getting at the voices and making the voices in the text explicit is a complex task as it involves not least, getting at the writer's intention, which may be clear before she comes to write, or partially clear or may be forged, that is worked at, in talk about the written text. This is an area of tension and possible conflict as I now illustrate.

In discussing the first section from the first draft of her essay 5 below, I was trying to work out whether the text accurately represented Mary' s preferred meaning. The key question for me was whether the convergence of her voice with that of Charles Murray, writer of the source text, was intended: in the text -at line 37 for example in the extract, she doesn't remind the reader that the text represents Murray's views, either through referencing or mentioning his name, and she uses categorical modality. She was obviously angry with my questioning and stayed silent, as is indicated by the text marked in bold where I struggle to keep our talk going. On reflection, I think I was using the notion of 'voice' too simplistically at this stage of our talk, not allowing her the possibility for alignment with some aspects of the other writer's 'voice' whilst rejecting others.

Working at clarifying the voices in the text

Talking about texts/writing	
A Extract from draft 1 of essay 5	Moreover, Charles Murray a social scientist and writer in the USA claims that the concept of 'underclass' is used to describe the severely disadvantaged--(line 37) However, one decade later the USA began to experience a change in poor communities. The emergence of drugs, crime, illegitimacy, unemployment, and underachievement in educating became social norms. (Me5d1:21-)
B From discussion of extract	*T: I think you have to make it very clear about who's saying what then because, let's have a look at this.* (T reads). *The members of the underclass have a distinct culture that has its own value system which will have a negative impact on the lives of other Britons who cannot escape its unfavourable existence. Now you've put a reference there* *M: [All that's, right* *T: [but somehow I think you*

Talking about texts/writing contd.	
	need to make sure you get these in (T points to according to Murray) *M: Oh yeah, yeah, right.* *T: To make it very clear that you're not only drawing on him, this, these are his ideas. Because then it'll make it much easier to say* *M:[you don't want to make it look as though it's me.* *T: Well not unless it is you.* *M: No it's not me.* ***T: That's what I'm just trying to clarify that, you see, so if you make it very clear that you've got, Charles Murray arguing this that and the other. Some bits of which you may agree with, some bits you may not. It'll make it much easier for you then to start here to say, er, however so and so has challenged one of Murray's key ideas which is blah. Do you see what I mean? Because that's what you said you're going to be doing aren't you? You said you were going to use other people and bring them in here to see what they say about different bits and then towards the end you'll be making your own conclusion, won't you?*** *M: Mmm* ***T: So my only concern is that you make it very clear who's saying what.*** *M: What ** ***T: But you clearly found that* (Murray) *really useful You liked that.*** *M: Yeah. Yeah.It hits the hammer on the nail, if you ask me* (sounds fed up). *T: So you do agree with his fundamental thinking?* *M: No. I don't agree with his fundamental thinking* (exasperated). *What I mean is, the material directly focuses on that, cause it says, 'is there an underclass in Britain ?' is the essay title. He says 'the emergent British underclass'* (showing the book cover). *T: So it's directly relevant to what you're trying to look at?* My emphasis. (Me5disd1:)

After our discussion of the first draft above, Mary rang me to say that I was right about the need to separate her voice from Murray's and she changed her final draft, shown below, to place Murray within one perspective on the underclass.

There are two main perspectives to the debate on the underclass. One of them is associated with the political right which views the 'underclass' as a 'cultural' phenomenon. The other is associated with the left and claims that the underclass is a concequence of the structural phenomenon which involves social and economic changes. Charles Murray an American political scientist advocates the cultural phenomenal approach to the understanding of 'underclass'. (Me5fd:27-33)

However, she was still angry with me when we discussed this in our talkback discussion, some weeks later.

T: Do you feel I pushed you to say something you didn't want. Did you only separate your voice because I put pressure on?
M: I wanted it to be like that (draft 1) *and then slowly I would chop him down...he'd just look like an idiot because all the evidence and arguments I'd bring on him like a ton of bricks. But you thought I wasn't separating the voices.And I hated the fact that you saw it for that.*
T: For what?
M: You sort of like jumped to conclusions. You didn't know how I was going to finish it. (me5disf:)

This led us into discussions around a range of issues about our discussions for the past two years: how I approached drafts of texts, the extent to which Mary felt obliged to do what I suggested even if she disagreed, whether she had greater freedom when I was no longer her tutor-assessor, whether it is more useful to discuss writing with the relevant subject specialist rather than a 'writing-tutor' and the extent to which talking with either might help or constrain the student-writer in her meaning making. In short, Mary's openly expressed anger and dissatisfaction with my response to this section of her text provided the opportunity to reconsider our working relationship in a way which had not been possible before. The nature of our talking relationship at this point significantly altered, with, I think us closer to collaborative, more openly questioning dialogue than when we began talking.

The importance of developing a long conversation, as illustrated from extracts of talk with Mary, can be summarized as follows. Through such conversations,

- the tutor can come to a greater understanding of the interconnected nature of seemingly discrete and unconnected student-writer concerns around writing in HE
- the student and tutor can work at making language in relation to meaning making more visible
- the student participates in naming and reaching an understanding of 'problems'
- the tutor can learn of aspects of language in relation to meaning making which are of specific significance to the student-writer

- the tutor and student-writer can work together to collaborate around constructing the writer's preferred meanings in her texts

8. 7 Conclusion

There are inherent tensions in a tutor-researcher's attempts to facilitate individual student meaning making in writing in HE. The tutor-researcher occupies an institutionally sanctioned position of power in relation to the student-writer who, at the levels of both contexts of situation and culture, may feel under considerable pressure to construct dominant meanings within her texts. Thus, at the level of context of situation, the student-writer may construct meanings she feels are acceptable to the individual tutor whilst at the level of context of culture she may be concerned to construct meanings associated with dominant perspectives and values within the university and society.

However, the specific instances of talk discussed in this chapter suggest that even whilst working within the confines of the dominant context of culture of HE, it is possible for the tutor to support the student-writer in taking control over her meaning making in the following ways: by foregrounding the preferred meanings within the student-writer's text; by identifying the different voices within the student-writer's text and exploring which voices the student-writer wishes to construct; by identifying areas of uncertainty around meaning making as suggested by wordings in the text.

The instances of talk also suggest that the tutor can challenge the transparency notion of language, by working at making language more visible and thus supporting the student-writer to work towards *populating texts with intention* (Bakhtin 1981:293/4). I did this by foregrounding particular wordings and problematizing them as follows: a) in relation to what I knew- from spoken and written texts- or assumed about the student-writers' preferred meanings; and b) by drawing on my understandings of dominant discourses to signal specific wordings as problematic.

A student/tutor talking relationship can provide the student-writer with the opportunity to participate in the struggle around her meaning making in HE and enable both student and tutor to learn more about the workings of discourse. Through

talk, tutor-researchers can actively seek out the relationship between wordings and intentions, and can explore which wordings and voices the student-writer is using, which she wishes to use and which she wishes to challenge. In order to glimpse the workings of discourse in this way, we need to come to some understanding of the writer's evolving intentions in relation to wordings she is using. This is a complex socio-discursive space to navigate and can be fraught with tensions, not least because of the power differential between student and tutor . The tutor (even when talking as *knowledgeable insider,* rather than tutor assessor) has considerably more power than the student-writer and hence, the student-writer is under considerable pressure to take on the tutor-researcher's comments and perspectives rather than to pursue her own, as indicated by Mary's comments in 8.6.1.2. This is still the case even when student-writer and tutor-researcher have been talking together for some time, if, as in this project, a principal aim is to construct meaning in writing which will be considered appropriate within the dominant context of culture of HE.

However, the instances of talk in this chapter, where Mary begins to openly express anger about the ways in which we are talking meaning into her writing, and the exploration of the student-writers' experience of making meaning in HE as currently configured, in chapters 5 and 6, suggest the possibility of a different socio-discursive space. This space would be fraught with a wide number of tensions which are currently made invisible, but as Lu argues, would also be an exciting place. In attempting to construct a contact zone (see 6.2.2.) in her composition classroom, she draws on her reading of Pratt (1991) to say the following:

> *...life in the contact zone is by definition dynamic, heterogeneous, and volatile. Bewilderment and suffering as well as revelation and exhilaration are experienced by everyone, teacher and students, at different moments. No one is excluded, no one is safe*. (Lu. 1994:456)

However, in terms of the experience of the student-writers in this project, the construction of higher education as a *contact zone* seems a long way off.

NOTES

[1] Bakhtin 1981:293
It (language) becomes 'one's own' only when the speaker populates it with his own intention, his own accent, when he appropriates the word, adapting it to his own semantic and expressive intention.

[2] The extent to which an individual tutor will encourage oppositional practices depends, not least, on her status- a part-time lecturer, for example, may feel obliged to follow dominant practices - and her political/educational interests. This last involves an individual making decisions about the extent to which she is prepared to justify her practices to the instituition, for example, to an exam board. Although not the focus of this study, I would suggest that an exploration of the specific ways in which individual tutors attempt to problematize what the institution views as acceptable student writing practices would be an important area for study.

[3] For examples of the debates around Section 11 funding and the implications for both learners and teachers, see *Issues in race and class*, volume 50,1987; Levine ed. 1990; *Multicultural teaching. To combat racism in school and community*, volume 12,1 1993.

Chapter 9

STUDENT-WRITERS' VIEWS ON TALK

9.1 Introduction

The aim in this chapter is to focus on the student-writers' views on the value of talk between themselves and myself as tutor-researcher. Although on some occasions I specifically asked their opinion on the usefulness of our talk about their writing, most comments included in this chapter were made spontaneously by individual student-writers. The attempt in this chapter to represent their views is inevitably partial. The student-writers made comments at different points in our talk and in different ways; their comments will have been influenced in a range of ways by being addressed to me, the tutor-researcher. The comments do provide an insight, however, into the range of feelings about talk between student and tutor and on the potential usefulness of talk between student-writers and tutors around writing.

9.2 Talking as participation in HE

It is important to acknowledge first of all that the student-writers' desire for talk about their writing is part of a wider desire to participate in HE. This desire is difficult to locate in specific comments made by the student-writers but it is reflected in their repeatedly expressed dissatisfaction with the lack of opportunity to talk with tutors as well as their decision to meet with me to talk about their writing. Because most of the student-writers in this project were the first generation in their families to go to university, and often alone in this pursuit within their social group, the possibility of talk takes on a greater significance than learning the conventions for student academic writing or sorting out ideas for a particular essay. It is about surviving in a strange and new physical, emotional, socio-discursive space about which they have ambivalent feelings; not least that they want to learn, yet feel uncomfortable within the institution.

It is important to note that the student-writers in this project, for the main part, chose not to talk with student-writers who were in a similar position to themselves, that is, those who felt unfamiliar with academic writing conventions/university study. They wanted to

talk with somebody who they felt was already familiar with dominant practices, a *knowledgeable-insider* (Harris 1992).

Nine of the ten student-writers in this project explicitly expressed a desire for talk with a tutor about their writing. One student-writer, however, felt that talk between the students and myself as a tutor was wrong. Reba felt that the practice of talking with a tutor about her writing was cheating. After we had discussed points arising from the talkback sheet which was based on her first essay, Reba stated:

R: I only came here for your thing (my research project).
T: Didn't you want any help?
R: I don't know. I don't like help.

T: Don't you think it's the role of a tutor or a lecturer to help you improve on your writing?
R: Yeah, but if you're at an academic level, you should sort of be up to that level anyway.(Re1disfdf:)

When I asked Reba whether she thought that it was cheating to talk about her academic writing, she said yes. In a spontaneous discussion amongst several of the student-writers about Reba's views, her position contrasts with the views of other student-writers, as is illustrated below.

Extract from spontaneous group discussion about whether it was right to talk with me as tutor about their writing. T=me/tutor: S, A, R= student-writers

S: You're learning throughout the whole of your life.
R: But academic work's different. You should know how to do it in the first place.
T: Why? Who's born doing academic work?
S; You're always learning. Every single day you learn something, don't you? It's just a process. You can't suddenly stop and think, right, I've got to do it myself.
A: That's why you're studying here as well.
S: That's why you're studying, you're learning

A: I think nobody can do anything without help.
T: I agree with you there.
A: Everybody needs help. (Re3disd1:195)

Whereas Sara and Amira see the talk as helping them to learn something they don't know, Reba feels that she should already know how to do it and, at another point, expresses the view that if she can't do it, *at least I know I'm not good enough then*

(Re3disd1:19). Sara challenges Reba's view, by referring specifically to the value of talk for her writing of the first assignment (see 7.3.1) but other assignments too. Here she is addressing me:

I was just telling Reba. With my first assignment, I didn't know what I was doing. And if you (addressing me, the tutor) *hadn't told me, I'd have carried on doing that for my other assignments as well. I'd have gone the wrong way about it. I couldn't have got a good mark. I think it's really important that the teacher teaches.* (Re3disd1:122)

As is briefly indicated here and mentioned in 7.3.1, Reba and Sara held very different views about the appropriateness and usefulness of talking with me as tutor-assessor-researcher. This obviously had an impact on their decisions to meet up with me and the potential impact of our talk on their texts. Sara actively sought out talk with me about the writing of her texts, as is indicated by the time spent in taped sessions, 426 minutes, as well as time, not recorded, in telephone calls , quick comments and questions. Whereas Reba, although she decided to meet up with me 4 times and spent 170 minutes in talk with me, clearly had mixed feelings about whether she should be talking to me at all.

When talk with a tutor (and/or me as tutor-researcher) was not possible, some student-writers, Siria, Sara and Diane, found a friend who was more experienced in academic writing than themselves to look at their writing. But such talk was brief and in all cases occurred only once. Others commented on wanting to talk but having no-one to talk to: in this context Nadia decided to talk aloud to herself. She felt so strongly that she needed to have someone to talk with at the moment of writing that she decided to try talking aloud to herself on a tape recorder, when she could not talk with me (as tutor):

N: I need to talk it through with somebody but I haven't got anybody, so I talked here (aloud on tape recorder).
T: Is it a good idea? Does it help?
N: It does, but it's still a bit hard because I haven't got that person with me.
T: So you really feel that to try and make sense, you need somebody there?
N: Yeah
T: To do what?
N: To, guide me. But I know that person isn't going to be there, yeah, whoever it may be. I've got one of these (tape recorders) *so it's an advantage, yeah. But sometimes I might get carried away.* (Ne1disf:151)

9.3. Talking to learn the rules of the game

As indicated by Sara's comments above, a driving force behind the student-writers' desire to talk with me as *knowledgeable-insider* in addition to, or more often, in place of their tutor (see 3.2 for my roles) was the need to find out what they were being expected to do, as illustrated in chapters 5 and 7. This opportunity to talk with someone about their writing seemed to be a rare, and interesting, opportunity. Mary stated this clearly:

I've never experienced talking to anyone about my about my essays before, so I find it very interesting and I appreciate, maybe other people in the class don't (Mary and Theresa laugh). *I do, I do cause I can see the benefit of it. Nobody's ever sat down and talked to me about my essays. They've just said oh, 'hard to fathom at times'* (Mary and Theresa laugh) (Me2disf:113)

In general, comments made on the usefulness of talk centre on the importance of talk with the tutor for learning essayist practice. Sara indicates that talking to an insider-someone who is familiar with dominant conventions- is useful. She refers specifically to learning what counts as relevant to the essay question:

T: *So I'm just thinking about...How important is it for people to talk about their writing?*
S: *I think it's very important, definitely. Because if you don't talk about it you probably think, it probably makes sense to you but if someone else reads it, it won't make sense to them. For instance, the question is this, but you're writing something totally different and it's not relevant to the question. But it won't dawn on you till someone actually tells you, you see. So I think it really is important to talk to someone about it. I think if I didn't talk to <u>you</u> about it, I would have done it completely wrong.*(Se2disfdf:146)

Diane makes similar points:

T: Do you think talking's useful?
D: Yeah, course it is.
T: But <u>why?</u>
D: Because you get different ideas and you know if you're on the right track. It saves time too, trying to figure it out on your own (laughs) (De1f2d1:)

Several student-writers comment on the potential usefulness of the talkback sheet in conjunction with the talk. Thus Tara says talking helps:

T: It does, it is easier. Like I say, this sheet (talkback) *will be good for me. I can put it up on my wall and look at it again.* (Te1fdf:)

Mary expresses the view that the most positive aspect of our talk has been to enable her to learn the dominant conventions:

Through our talk, I feel that I have learnt more about standard conventions and I feel positive about that. I want to be able to communicate my ideas in a way that will be understood by those who are reading my writing. And because they follow, and expect me to follow, certain conventions I have to do so too. (Lillis and Ramsey: 1997: 18)

Some student-writers make comments at the moment of talk which indicate the usefulness of talk in relation to learning dominant conventions. For example, Nadia says during our discussion of her final draft of her first essay:

It's quite good though, I'm recognizing my mistakes. (Ne1disfd:385)

and in response to my question about whether she has included any sentences she cannot understand in a draft for her second essay:

N:No.Not now that you've pointed it out to me. But I think, if you didn't point it out to me, then I think it would have been there.
T: But you said to me that you wouldn't be able to pick these things out on your own.
N: No, because you made me aware. I think by, because of you telling me that, yeah, I've been able to come here, yeah and look. Like if I don't know a whole paragraph, then I'll know.(Ne1disfd:89)

Sara makes comments which centre on her learning of unity within essayist literacy (see chapter 7). When I ask her about the impact of my talk, she compares her writing of her second essay with her first:

T. . Do you think I pushed you away from what you wanted to say..or was what you've got in your final draft what you intended?
S: *It was actually. You know like with the first one. I was sort* ***of going off the mark*** *and* ***I wasn't really answering the question****. I think the same thing happened with this one as well.But when you sort of pointed out to me I realised that* ***I am going off the track again. I need to concentrate more on the question,*** *because I kept moving away from the question.*
T: *So somebody talking to you about that, did that make a difference in trying to focus on what you were saying?*
S: *I think so, it made a big difference.* My emphasis (Se2disfdf:146)

The wordings that Sara uses, marked in bold above, indicate that she is learning the importance of constructing a principal focus in her text in order for it to count as acceptable within essayist literacy. This is also the case in Siria's comments below:

As I've gone on, I'm not sure whether you'd agree with it, but I think I've been a lot more ***clearer*** *in what I'm trying to say in some parts, you know,* ***in detail****. It's* ***not very ambiguous*** *as my first, much clearer. And I've got that as you say* ***who? what?*** *I've not made very stereotypical judgments sort of like say people think that we should do this. I've said some people say this and others have a different view. I've sort of tried to outline.* (Sie3disfd:90)

Siria's wordings above marked in bold, as in the Sara's extract, indicate that Siria is talking herself into the practice of essayist literacy, with its emphasis on providing all relevant information in the text. Siria also specifically points to learning an important aspect of the practice of explicitness peculiar to essayist literacy:

I'll tell you what happened on my last one, I didn't always put here's why I'm putting this. I'm going to write this out, with this, probably put a small paragraph saying, this is why I've included this section. (Se2disd1:170)

It is important to acknowledge that talking and, in particular, listening to comments on texts, can be a painful experience. Thus, whilst Nadia seems positive above about listening to criticisms of her text, she is hugely disappointed after our discussion on a section of her second essay, even though she had pointed to the irrelevance of a substantial amount of text:

N: *So I need to put more work into this?*
T: *Is that bad news?*
N: *No* (but doesn't sound convinced).
T: *Did you think I was going to say it was okay?*
N: *Probably did yeah. But I'm glad you've told me.*
T: *Do you feel disappointed?*
N: *No* (sounds disappointed) *cause I'm glad you told me cause if you didn't, then I would have got a crap grade anyway.*(Ne2disd1)

Nadia's mixed feelings about both wanting to learn the specific ways in which her writing will/not be considered acceptable is common across the student-writers' experience. More unusual was the general dislike of talk in any context reported by one student-writer, Kate. Kate initially found it extremely uncomfortable to talk, and listen

to me talk, about her writing. She had stated in the literacy interview that she felt more comfortable communicating in writing rather than in face to face talk in general. In our second meeting, she pointed out that she had not enjoyed our first discussion:

I didn't enjoy it. I found it very embarrassing... It was awful (ke1disd3:362)

although she also stated that she had found our talk useful in helping her to clarify the argument she was making (see her evolving text in 8.4.1.1). Given her obvious discomfort, I suggested that perhaps we shouldn't continue to meet to talk, but Kate insisted that, after the initial talking session, she was finding it interesting and enjoyable.

9.4. Talking to collaborate around meaning making

Whilst much emphasis in the student-writers' comments is on the way in which tutor/student talk enables them to learn dominant conventions, there is also some indication from both general and specific comments that talk contributes in other ways on the student-writers' experience of writing. Sara, for example, points specifically to the usefulness of having an actual addressee-reader for making meaning in writing:

If you don't talk about it, you probably think it probably makes sense to you, but if someone else reads it, it won't make sense to them. (Se2disf: page 8)

And Siria points to talk as opening up possibilities:

It's like going through a narrow corridor, when somebody else looks at it, they probably open a door or window, or turn left, turn right. That's what I think happens (in talk). (Sie2f:169)

Mary makes many comments on the usefulness of our talk for her meaning making, rather than simply for learning dominant conventions: she does this in relation to conjunctions (see 8.6.1.1) lexical items (see 6.4.3). She also makes clear that our talk helps her to foreground points she is struggling to make. In the extract below we have been talking for some 8 minutes about how she is analyzing extracts from Creole speech. Mary says she might draw on Halliday

T: with Halliday, it's the business of analyzing language in functions and also in terms of
M: [in contexts and situations. Oh thanks, you've just said that, you've just brought something to my mind that I wanted to say. Oh how could I forget that? I was saying that the main thing about my interview is situation and context. That's the core, that. (Me3disd2:7)

Comments by Mary elsewhere also indicate the usefulness of coming to share a way of talking about and making meaning, as indicated below in her comments on focusing on voices within her text.

T: Do you understand what I mean about the need to separate the voices?
M: *And I find pleasure in it now you know... because I like to be able to distinguish between what I'm saying and what's been said by someone else. When it comes together, it's not good at all, cause you're not making yourself clear. You ought to let the person who's reading the essay know what you are, what you're saying. I think that's very important that. Separating the voices is one of the best, I think it's one of the best things I've ever...I never really thought about the voices before, separating them. I didn't realize I was making them converge, making them link in. I didn't realize it.(*Me1disfdf:134)

Siria too comments that through talk she feels that she has constructed her preferred meanings in her text. Of her final draft for essay 1, she says

it's a lot clearer and it's focused ***on what I want to say*** *whereas the other one was notes taken from other people.* My emphasis (Sie1disfd: side 2:395)

Tutor/student collaborative talk is explicitly signalled as an ideal by one student-writer, Sara. Sara's comments suggest that whilst she feels obliged to engage in meaning making- in talk and in writing- in ways which mask much of her sense of identity (see 6.4.7), she would like a more open, accepting talking relationship around meaning making. Of the need to hide things from tutors, she says

--that's really sad because if you want to be on the same level, to be friendly with a person, you want them to be totally open with you and express their feelings to you, so you can understand each other (Se2disfc:132).

9.5 Talking to reflect on meaning making

There is some indication that the opportunity for talking and listening promotes reflection on what individual student-writers are engaged in. This occurs at the level of problematizing aspects of writing in relation to learning in the specific context of HE,

as with Bridget and her punctuation. When I told her that in her sociology essay there had been 9 instances of problematic punctuation and only 3 in law, she had this to say:

I wonder whether it's something to do with the subject and the fact that I understood more (law). *I could relate to what I was talking about more than I could with sociology. The information wasn't as clear to me in the sociology, so I wonder if that's why my thoughts didn't go down as well.* (Bw3pu: 410)

She also indicates that she is becoming more aware of the importance attached to punctuation by some tutors and hence of an aspect of tutor practices in HE:

It's like another major thing this, that you've got to remember to get your point over. So if they're marking you on it, it's not what you know, say the content of psychology, it's the way you're writing it down. (Bw3pu: 216)

Problematization also occurs in relation to meaning making, personal and social identity and participation in HE as illustrated by many of the comments discussed in chapter 6, and illustrated briefly here by Sara's comments on being a Pakistani woman making meaning in HE (see 6.4.7). She says that she has to imagine she is English for the purposes of writing the essay:

T: So is this your English point of view?
S: No it's not, but it's like, I don't know, it's like thinking, it's not an English point of view but I'm thinking, well, I'm pretending that. It's difficult to explain, I can't explain it. (Se2disf:192)

Having the opportunity to talk about meaning making in writing thus seems to facilitate individual reflection on what is involved in meaning making in academic writing.

9. 6 Conclusion

Most of the student-writers, nine of the ten, expressed a desire to talk with tutors about their writing. I have suggested that such talk provides an opportunity for the students to begin to participate in HE, as much as enabling their learning of academic conventions.

Whereas most student-writers felt that the only way they could learn about and engage in the conventions surrounding student academic writing was for a *knowledgeable insider* to tell them, one student writer felt that talk between the student-writer and tutor

was cheating; she felt that if she, and by implication others, did not know what or how she was supposed to write, then maybe she shouldn't be at university. This student-writer did meet up with me the tutor-researcher several times over the year; whether this was only because of a sense of duty (as she indicates in her comments above) is not clear.

Feelings around the actual experience of talk vary; individual student-writers felt both enjoyment and discomfort, with some experiencing much more of one than the other.

The student-writers' perspectives on the usefulness of tutor/student talk can be outlined as follows.

- Their comments on usefulness of talk are framed mainly in terms of learning about and engaging in dominant academic writing conventions.
- There are indications that the desire for tutor/student talk is closely bound up with the possibility of participating in HE.
- There are some indications that student-writers feel talk opens up possibilities for meaning making.
- There are some indications that tutor/student talk facilitates reflection on practices of writing in HE.

Chapter 10

CONCLUSION

10.1 Introduction

In this final chapter, my aim is as follows: in 10.2 to outline the ways in which this study makes a contribution to the emerging field of academic literacies in higher education in the UK; in 10.3 to discuss the methodology and the extent to which it has met the initial and developing aims for research and pedagogy within this study; in 10.4 to suggest future possible areas of research indicated by this study; in 10.5 to outline the implications of this study for practice in HE; in 10.6 to offer a brief personal reflection on my experience of writing this thesis.

10.2 The contribution of this study

This study contributes to the small, but growing, field of academic literacies in the UK, in several ways as I outline here.

Firstly, it provides substantial data-experience about non-traditional students, that is ten mature women student writers from a range of linguistic and ethnic backgrounds, and their academic writing. It thus enhances the current limited availability of case study material for those wishing to pursue further study in this area. This is evident across the thesis, where I have included numerous examples of both written and spoken texts.

Secondly, by focusing on the data-experience of a particular group of students, 'non-traditional' students, this study enables us to glimpse the specific workings of institutional practice in relation to a group historically excluded from HE and raises questions about the nature of their current participation in HE. Whilst allowing greater access to students from social groups historically excluded , I argue that institutional practices work towards marginalizing them. This is evident in chapter 5, where I illustrate through specific examples, the workings of an *institutional practice of mystery* whereby the institution fails to teach them the conventions of essayist literacy which it demands. The study thus provides case study support for claims made in small scale research studies in the UK (see Karach 1992) and more theoretically driven studies (for

example Bourdieu 1994) which indicate that higher education continues in its elitist and exclusionary practices.

Thirdly, in relation to meaning making, the study responds in a small way to Ivanic's call for further studies on the ways in which *specific textual features become imbued with social meanings* (Ivanic 1993: 472) by focusing on the relationship between specific wordings, individual preferred meanings, personal and social senses of identity and institutionally privileged meanings, within the specific context of student writing in higher education. This is evident in chapter 6, where I show specific examples of how the meanings student-writers make are regulated by dominant conventions, at the levels of both *context of situation* and *context of culture*. At the level of context of situation, some direct regulation takes place as when, for example, the tutor tells the student what she can/not say in her text. But indirect regulation is more common; this occurs, for example, when a tutor prohibits specific grammatical forms, such as *I* and contracted verb forms, but the use (or not) of which contribute to the meanings being made in the text. Regulation at the level of context of culture occurs. As student-writers struggle to construct what they think may count as knowledge within academia they draw on dominant discourses from their previous and current personal, educational and professional experiences. This involves drawing on their general understandings of wordings and ideas which they feel are (or not) privileged within HE, as well as listening out for the specific wordings from actual speakers who they know to be of higher social status than themselves because of a combination of the factors, such as of occupation, social class, 'race' and gender. The extent to which individual student-writers' invention of the university corresponds to that of tutors varies, indicating the complex nature of authoring within the socio-discursive space of HE. Listening to student-writers allows us, as tutor-researchers, to learn about the ways in which they feel specific wordings set up specific subject positions for them at specific moments in their writing. Learning about individual student-writers' relationships with specific wordings at any one time should help us to avoid reaching dogmatic conclusions about the workings of discourse that Fairclough warns against (Fairclough 1995: 231).

Fourthly, this study provides an analysis of talk surrounding making meaning in essayist literacy between student-writer and tutor-researcher, which , as far as I am aware has

not been carried out before in the context of HE in the UK. Moreover, this study contributes to studies on tutor/student talk in North America by focusing on such talk in relation to a specific dimension of essayist literacy, that is, the construction of essayist unity. This is evident in chapter 7 where I pointed to the benefits of tutor/student talk in that it allows student-writers to engage in a literacy practice whilst being unfamiliar with it, providing substantially more support to the student-writers than that described by student-writers in chapter 5. However, I also pointed to the problems in such talk; a) some student-writers may not recognize what tutors are doing in their talk; b), the tutors' 'doing of literacy' in talk with student-writers may differ from their assessment of the student-writers' final product; c) and more radically, talk as socialization involves the privileging of certain meanings above others, thus working towards excluding alternative meanings, such as those glimpsed in chapter 6. In chapter 8, I picked up this last question, by focusing on the ways in which collaborative talk between student and tutor may contribute to facilitating individual control over meaning making. I argued that a collaborative type of tutor/student addressivity stands in contrast to the dominant monologic type of *addressivity* within HE, not least because it shifts the emphasis away from student-writers as sole producers of finished texts towards collaborative meaning making where the following can happen; the student and tutor can work towards realizing the student's preferred meanings at any one time in the text; through talk uncertainties, from both writer and reader perspectives, about meanings being made in the text can be explored. Essential to this process are attempts to make language visible in order to challenge any straightforward transparency notions of language. For, whilst the student-writers are aware of the socially situated nature of academic discourse in particular ways, at the same time they tend to work with a transparency notion of language and a romantic notion of authoring.

10.3 Reconsidering the methodology

In this section I discuss the extent to which the methodology used in this study facilitated the initial and evolving aims of the study.

10.3.1 Successes

The principal aim of this study was to explore the experience of meaning making in academic writing of a group of 'non-traditional' students. The methodology used was useful in meeting this aim to the extent that it has produced substantial data-experience in the form of written texts and talk about texts which provide some insights into their meaning making in academic writing.

The specific method of carrying out a literacy history interview at the beginning, or towards the beginning in some instances, of our meetings to talk about writing was successful in that it, a) provided rich detail of the individual student-writer's experience and feelings of schooling, language and literacy; b) it established a more open framework for discussing writing in the more text focused meetings.

The cycle of talk about texts involving tutor evaluative talk about the product as well as more exploratory talk between student and tutor, evolved out of the actual research setting and proved to be a useful way of meeting our predominantly divergent interests: the student-writer wanting to know how to follow dominant conventions and my interest in exploring their experience. The talkback sheets which I constructed were particularly useful in working towards more exploratory talk about their experience in the following ways: a) they enabled us to return to points not fully discussed; b) they provided a concrete means of building a shared record of our talk; c) they acted as a catalyst for further discussion about feelings and ideas which might not have emerged otherwise.

The methodology, by providing much talk about texts, also inadvertently contributed to the foregrounding of the importance of talk for learning and making meaning in writing in a way I had not envisaged at the outset. For whilst I was familiar with, and interested in pursuing, the practice of critical language awareness where the importance of talk is implicit , I only became aware of the lack of explicit analysis of the talk necessary for critical language awareness as the study progressed. The absence of such analyses, combined with the substantial talk data-experience from the study and the student-

writers' repeated emphasis on the need for talk with tutors, led me to focus explicitly on our talk.

The number and nature of those student-writers participating in this study seemed to be about right in practical terms. I was able to maintain the cycle of talk about texts within a meaningful time frame for the student-writers. That is, we generally managed to engage in both evaluative and exploratory talk about one text before the student embarked on another. This was important for providing space and time for the student-writer to reflect on points arising from the writing of one essay before moving on to the next. I think it would have been extremely difficult to manage this cycle with any more participants.

The number involved in the study and my justifications for treating them as a group, has also allowed me not only to present a descriptive account of their individual experience but also to construct arguments about the experience of non-traditional students in HE. I can make no strong claim to generalizability within the dichotomized framework of qualitative versus quantitative research methods, on the basis of a study of ten student-writers. However, I feel justified in taking up particular positions, for example that there is an institutional practice of mystery, on the basis of the strength of commonality across the experience of the ten students.

10.3.2 Limitations

The methodology adopted for the study was successful in the ways outlined above. However, there are limitations to the methodology as I outline here.

The decision to carry out research within an overarching framework of research/pedagogy was bound up with my life (past and also current at the time of meeting with the student-writers) as a teacher. Given the great need for support expressed by the students in their writing, I felt I could not engage in research which would enable me to observe yet not participate in the students' experience of writing in HE. I felt that I would not have been able to take from them their experience without helping them in some way to engage in academic writing. However, I recognize that this

commitment to some form of practical reciprocity within the specific context of HE, led to a methodology which limited the extent to which I could explore individual meaning making.

Thus, a significant shortcoming in the methodology within this framework was the limited extent to which it facilitated collaborative problem posing. My aim was to work at constructing a collaborative space and although there is evidence of students directing the agenda at specific moments of talk, I have directed much talk. This is primarily a result of the framework of research/pedagogy we were working within and the consequent differential power positions as student and tutor/ *knowledgeable-insider* (Harris 1992). I am treating these as coterminous here because I do not think there was a significant difference in the nature of individual student contribution relating to whether I was tutor-assessor or simply knowledgeable insider: there is no indication that the students with whom I was also assessor were less open with me. My power as tutor/*knowledgeable-insider* was mitigated in some instances by virtue of age and personality. Those of similar or older age than myself seemed able to explicitly question what I was doing and why as well as offering support for this study. Mary who, from the outset, was very interested in the questions that we raised and seemed to feel comfortable in expressing her views.

However, my status as *knowledgeable insider* will inevitably have influenced what and how student-writers shared experience with me, as will who I am. Most obvious are the facts that I am not a speaker of any of the minority languages spoken by some of the students and I am white. A researcher who was also a speaker of Panjabi-Urdu may have had discussions about feelings about literacy in several languages with the Panjabi-Urdu speaking student which I could not have. A Black researcher may have made and received different contributions, particularly around identity and institutions.

I feel that it is only now, after meeting with some student-writers for between two to three years, that we are in a position to engage in the type of collaborative relationship that I envisaged us working towards in our first year. I therefore think that in any attempt to construct a collaborative research project, we need to acknowledge that this is something to work towards and which may only result after years of contact.

A further shortcoming in the study was the limited range of detailed analyses carried out of the student-writers' texts. In Part B my analyses of extracts from written texts were driven by our talk about those specific extracts. Whilst I think these are useful for illuminating the student-writers' experiences around meaning making, I had also intended to carry out text analysis independent of student-writers' comments about texts. Indeed, I have carried out some analyses not included in the thesis which I would like to have pursued across all texts. For example, I traced one student-writer's use of grammatical subjects in relation to agency across all her drafts which seemed, and I think is, worth pursuing. Such analyses will, in the future, enable me to further explore the relationship between individual meaning making and wording.

I am aware of a contradiction at the heart of my methodology in terms of analysis. Throughout I problematize the relationship between wordings-meanings-intention in the students' written texts. In order to work at seeking out the relationship between them I draw on the student-writers' talk about their texts. Yet this talk about texts I tend to treat as transparent, except for particular instances in chapters 7 and 8. Thus, when a student-writer says she feels ---, I tend to accept. Given my emphasis on the provisional and problematic relationship between wording, meaning and intention, I can only justify this by pointing to my need to fix meaning in some way for, at least, two practical purposes. Firstly, the principal focus of this study is making meaning in **writing**- there is a limit to how much can be problematized in carrying out a research project and writing is the focus of this thesis. Secondly, dialogue with the student-writers is central in this study. In order to engage in dialogue (with anyone) I needed to work with a notion of their (our) selves as real. To do otherwise, to always challenge whether what the student-writer said was what she 'really meant' would have made an on-going meaningful and respectful talking relationship impossible.

This study provides only glimpses of the experience of meaning making, based as it is on talk about texts. In exploring student-writers' feelings about specific wordings, for example, I was dependent on individual student-writers pointing to wordings which they felt new, difficult, uncomfortable. Yet, on several occasions, student-writers were only able to state that in a general way they felt, for example, uncomfortable about some wordings, which they had decided against including, but could not remember which

ones they were. Although they agreed to keep a record of such wordings for the purposes of the study, they did not do so, because I think of the elusive nature of such momentary feelings and thoughts.

In order to get anywhere near learning more about how people learn to mean as they do, as well as their desires for meaning making in different contexts, a collaborative ethnographic study would have to be carried out. In the context of PhD research which is usually a solitary activity in the social sciences, this could take the form of a detailed case study of the two participants involved. Through mutual observation and reflection on the individuals' engagement in a range of different life contexts, the researchers would be able to explore the ways in which they make meaning, orally and in written texts, and the ways in which entering a new socio-discursive space shapes, converges and diverges with ways of making meaning in other contexts. Of particular interest in relation to this study, would be an exploration of how participating in a new institution with its specific and dominant ways of meaning making contributes to meaning making within that institution and elsewhere. It would be important to focus on the extent and direction of leakage between contexts , how conscious the individual is of such leakage and jostling (Gee 1996:164) and how she feels about this.

An ethnographically framed collaborative study might make more clearly visible the connections between people's lives, senses of personal and social selves, language(s) practices and the oral and written texts they produce.

10.3.3 Gender and student academic writing

At the outset, and as discussed in chapter 3, I hoped to be able to contribute to an understanding of the experience of women and their (our) meaning making in academic writing. This study does contribute to an understanding of the experience of women making meaning in HE: it is, after all, a study about the experience of ten women students. However, the extent to which gender as a category has been foregrounded in this study is limited. The principal reason for this is that I have worked at foregrounding what the student-writers themselves have emphasized. Thus ethnicity and social class were highlighted by several students in relation to what they felt allowed to say and who

they were allowed to be. Social class/status, as well as ethnicity, were emphasized by several students in relation to how things could be said, pointing to social status and hence acceptability of wordings within HE. The categories of social class/status and ethnicity thus seem to be salient in the student-writers' minds and are relatively easily linked to specific aspects of the text. However, gender as a social category linked to the text is only raised by one woman student, Kate, who is also the only student studying Women's Studies. In contrast, there were plenty of comments made about the daily lives in which studying took place which implicitly pointed to gender as a significant category. These included the women student-writers as having principal responsibilities for childcare, difficulties around marriage and violence in marriage, life choices being linked to their existence as women in particular socio-cultural contexts. The ways in which their academic writing is situated within their specific life experiences connects with Rockhill's work on gender and literacy practices (1987, 1993) and is a dimension I hope to explore by continued contact with the women student-writers who have participated in this study.

With regard to meaning in texts, whilst I do not want to construct gender difference, I do not want to contribute to its invisibility either. Given that I accept that gender is an important structuring influence on women's lives, and hence I assume on the texts they (we) produce I think there are two main questions which I would aim to work at addressing in the future. I outline the questions below with my reflections on possible answers.

- Is it possible to find traces of gender in texts? Although there is much work available on differences between men's and women's talk, little is available on differences in writing. One step might be to pursue particular linguistic forms identified as being present in women's spoken language, in women's texts; for example, different types of modality. But this would fall into the trap, criticized in more recent years, of equating form with function rather than recognizing multifunctionality in meaning making (see for discussion Cameron, McAlinden and O'Leary 1988) . There is a need to explore the findings arising out of substantial work on women's spoken language and to tease out the possible implications of such research for exploring gender and academic writing.

- At which level of the text might it be most useful to start? Kate's comments in this study connect with feminists' critiques of academic writing as being logocentric and indicate that we need to look to larger dimensions of text than, for example wordings, for making gender visible. It might be useful, for instance, to explore the evidence pointing to women being successful conversationalists (see West 1995 for re-evaluation of women as successful conversationalists). This suggests that the monologic form of essayist literacy may be editing out the ways in which women writers might distinctively make meaning if dialogue rather than monologue were valued. However, I would want to caution against any essentialist notions of gendered meaning making and would want to pursue instead connections between Connell's notion of hegemonic masculinity (1987, 1995) and essayist literacy, exploring the ways in which these constrain potential meaning making of both men and women. *Potential* here is important because it involves acknowledging the notion of individual desires around meaning making and the ways in which these converge and diverge from dominant practices. Cameron has pointed to the need to focus on actual practices, what women do, as well as their (our) desires, that is, what they (we) would like to do, in spoken interaction (1992:53). There is a need to do the same in relation to academic writing practices.

10. 4 Suggestions for future study

I have already indicated possible areas for further study in the above section and I summarize them here. Some relate to particular dimensions of the data-experience from this study which I could pursue; others relate to future and different studies.

10.4.1 Pursuing analyses of available data-experience

From the already existing data-experience from this study, I would be interested in pursuing the following areas.

- Carry out detailed text analyses focusing on specific features, for example, grammatical subjects in relation to the type of agency being constructed in the text

- Re-examine the data-experience in order to explore meaning making in relation to gender, drawing on Connell's notion of hegemonic masculinity

- Re-examine in more detail existing individual texts- both spoken and written-, as well as carrying out follow up interviews in order to trace shifts in meaning making in academic writing.

10.4.2 Further studies

On the basis of my experience in this study, I suggest that the following studies would be useful for extending our understanding of how student-writers come to make meaning in academic writing as well as the relationship between meaning making in academia and other areas of their lives.

- Carry out ethnographically framed collaborative studies focusing principally on one individual in the range of socio-discursive contexts she inhabits. In this way we might get closer to exploring the following: a) the ways in which meanings in wordings are used across and/or within particular contexts; b) the nature of the leakage and jostling across contexts by examining specific wordings; c) the individuals' feelings about making meaning across contexts.

- Using the methodology developed in this study, explore the experience of different groups of writers engaging in academic writing; for example eighteen year olds from middle class backgrounds who have been successful at school, academics with successful publications records. Although there are some studies on the former group at advanced stages in undergraduate/postgraduate (see Flower 1994; Clark 1990) and on this latter group (Berkenkotter, Huckin and Ackerman 1988), there is still a lack of studies which attempt to explore the relationship between meaning-intention-identity-institutional practices. Such studies would generate further data-experience which would allow comparisons to be made between groups and individuals in the making of meaning in academic writing.

- Most studies available in the area of academic literacies focus on people writing and speaking in English. Scollon and Scollon (1981) posited a particular underlying

literacy practice dominant in Western academic meaning making, *essayist literacy*, which has been central to my exploration of the student-writers' meaning making . It would be useful for studies to be carried out in languages other than English in order to explore the extent to which the notion of *essayist literacy* is useful for exploring meaning making in academic writing in a range of linguistic and cultural contexts.

10.5 Implications for practice

This study points to particular implications for teaching and learning writing in HE relating to two aims: the aim of socializing student-writers into current and dominant ways of meaning making; the aim of working at facilitating greater student-writer control over their meaning making, with a view to constructing a different socio-discursive space. In the table below I present the implications of this study in relation to these two aims.

Comment from study	**Implication for practice**
It is useful to emphasize that there is a dominant underlying literacy practice in HE, essayist literacy, the myriad conventions of which students from social groups traditionally excluded from HE, in particular, may not know.	*Institutions and the departments and tutors therein need to re-examine the notion of Access to extend beyond providing physical access to institutions. This should involve discussions considering ways in which to actively provide access to the symbolic resources and demands of the institution.*
Current practices surrounding the setting and assessing of essay questions work towards confusing rather than illuminating the conventions student-writers are expected to work within.	*Tutors need to become more aware of the many possible points of confusion, some of which are the direct result of their(our) own wordings and actions and some of which result from the more abstract context of culture of HE.*
Student-writers desire talk with tutors in order to learn the dominant literacy practice. Talk between student-writers and tutor enables student-writers to engage in this practice whilst still unfamiliar with it.	*Written guidelines have only limited value and should not be seen as the primary means of teaching and learning essayist literacy. Written guidelines tend to become meaningful when students are already familiar with this practice. Talk with a knowledgeable-insider will help individuals to engage in this practice.*

Comment from study	**Implication for practice**
Social and personal identity are bound up with ways of meaning making in specific ways	*In making meaning student-writers are making conscious and unconscious choices about who they are, want to be and don't want to be in their texts. Making comments on specific features of texts, for example on 'grammar', as if these were: a) transparently meaningful; b) somehow independent of the writer's sense of selves; c) related to any straightforward notion of ability, ignores a significant dimension to why and how meanings are constructed as they are.*
Meaning making always takes place within a context. In making meaning within academia student-writers are bound to the practice of essayist literacy. However, within this practice there is potentially the space whereby tutors can facilitate greater individual control over meaning making, which in turn, may work towards pushing the boundaries of what counts as meaning within academia.	*There needs to be a shift away from the dominant type of addressivity within HE, where there is a denial of actual participants and where there is emphasis on the student-writers as individual producer. This would involve a significant transformation in the dominant culture of HE, with tutors working at doing the following: a) becoming more like adult educators in terms of getting closer to the struggle to write (Gardener 1992:10) ; b) working with complex notions of the relationship between wordings, intention and identity.*

10. 6 Writing this thesis

In writing this thesis I have been conscious of the many ways in which I have shaped the text as knowledge being presented here. I feel I have faced and taken decisions at every turn both in relation to what I have said and, to a lesser extent, how I have said it. In relation to content, for a long time I could not decide whether to explore and present individual case studies or whether to explore and present common themes. Ideally I would have liked to have done both, but I knew that this was impossible within the time constraints of researching and writing for a thesis. I finally took the decision to write on commonality whilst attempting to maintain a focus on individual difference. This decision was taken on the basis of which of the many student-writer stories seemed to me to be the more important to tell. Telling of their common experiences within the institution of the university seemed important as I felt, and still feel, that such experiences need to be heard, particularly at this moment in time when there seems to be the socio-academic space to reconceptualize our views of what the university should, and could, be. However, my emphasis on commonality means that the details surrounding individual student-writers are not presented in this thesis in the depth they could have been.

In relation to how I have written the thesis, I had to decide whether, and the extent to which, I would write in a conventional way. By 'conventional' I mean a whole range of dominant practices, including use of wordings, use of what counts as evidence/ authorities, general structure. I took the decision to work predominantly within a conventional framework, whilst occasionally indicating to 'the reader' the constructed nature of the thesis, by including personal reflections/explanations on decisions I took in writing the thesis. However, this business of writing for 'the reader' has been a continued source of difficulty in writing this thesis in relation to a whole range of issues. I found it easiest to write when I was still meeting with those I thought of as my 'real readers', that is, the student-writers. Although I had less time for writing, I felt more confident that it was worth the effort, that it was meaningful. However, when regular meetings with most student-writers came to an end I found it almost impossible at times to force myself to sit at a table to work. This suggests a number of things about the relation between my own sense of identity and the process of knowledge making.

Firstly, having spent some 15 years as a teacher in a variety of settings I am more comfortable in making knowledge which seems closely connected to my work as a teacher. Secondly, and relatedly, I still have ambiguous feelings about studying in HE: as always, I love the possibility of learning, but hate the elitism that is academia. As such, sitting down to write a thesis for a PhD when I was no longer in regular contact with the student-writers was something I found extremely difficult to do. I'd lost my 'real readers', my purpose for writing. It was at this point that finding other readers helped me to continue: these included my supervisors, my academic advisor, groups such as the Academic Literacy Research Group, whose members are practitioner-researchers. But it still left with the constant problem of who my real readers were and thus what and how I should, could, would write. Unresolved.

As to 'the reader' in terms of academia, I found it difficult to locate the study within an academic discipline. Not being able to locate a study easily within one discipline area has its advantages: it means I (we) perhaps approach the data-experience in a more open way, willing to pursue ideas and writers from a number of academic areas. However, it can also lead to the accusation of 'gaps' from those working within the different areas of, for example, education, applied linguistics, literacy, writing, communication studies, anthropology, feminist research, cultural studies...However, I feel that there is a need, and increasingly there is institutional recognition of this need, to work across boundaries in any attempt to make sense of ourselves and our surroundings. What I (we) may sometimes lose in terms of the myriad detailed debates within an established discipline, we hopefully gain in terms of openness in exploring our data-experience.

And finally.

Writing this thesis has opened up for me the possibility of writing. That is, I have come to learn that, however difficult, I can sit for extended periods of time attempting to make meaning in writing. And I am working at taking greater control over decisions about how I write. The challenge I see for the future, is to work at opening up the possibilities for practices around meaning making in academic writing in order to work at constructing a more inclusive and dynamic university.

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[1] I decided against using the unnecessary *op. cit.*. Instead, where I refer to a chapter from a collection of works, I refer you to the collection, by stating, In---ed.. In this case In D. Barton and R. Ivanic eds..

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APPENDICES

Appendix 1
Written information given to students

1. Information given to students January 1995

FROM THERESA LILLIS TO UNIVERSITY CERTIFICATE STUDENTS 9/1/95
RESEARCH PROJECT ON WRITING ACADEMIC ESSAYS

Background information.

As I think most of you know, I am currently a student at Sheffield Hallam University. I've got a grant from the Learning and Teaching Institute to carry out a research project for three years which should hopefully lead to a PhD . One reason for applying to do this work is my interest in language and learning in general -I've spent 10 years teaching English as a Second Language in Sheffield. In more recent years, I've also been working with adults both in basic adult education and in Higher Education courses, such as the University Certificate and various courses at Doncaster College. In working with adults on Higher Education courses, I have become aware of the difficulties many students have with academic writing. What I'm interested in finding out more about, is how mature students manage to learn to express themselves in academic essays over a period of time. So I would like to work closely with some students throughout the rest of this course in order to try to explore the difficulties and struggles that you face when writing an academic essay and to examine how you manage to succeed to create meaning in your writing.

WILL THIS PROJECT HELP YOU IN ANY WAY?

I hope that it will and if it doesn't, then I think there must be something wrong with the project itself. So I would want anybody who gets involved to be honest about its usefulness. My aim is to explore how you go about developing meaning in your writing and the main way in which we will do that is to have detailed discussions about your writing. I feel sure that such discussions should be of use to you whilst at the same time allow me to explore, that is to research, the writing process. However, some of the things I would like to do, like interview you about your linguistic and schooling background are more for my benefit than for yours. But I feel that such information-**confidential of course**- will help me understand more about why you write the way you do.

WHAT WILL IT INVOLVE FOR YOU?

I am quite happy to discuss different ideas you may have, but at the moment this is how I think we should start.
1. A group meeting of all involved so that we can establish ground rules, for example confidentiality, open discussion about the usefulness or otherwise of the project. Perhaps an hour would do for this.
2. Individual interviews. Perhaps between half an hour and an hour initially where I would ask you questions about the languages you speak and write in, your experience of schooling, your feelings about reading and writing.
3. Individual discussions about your essays. I think the number and timing of these discussions would be different for different people. But it would be useful to discuss the different drafts of your essays with you so that we could think about what changes you make and why. I would want to read your essays closely before the discussion.
4. This is optional, but I would be interested in a couple of students trying to compose out loud to see whether this helps to provide any useful information about how you write. I'll explain this in more detail at the meeting.

I hope this gives you some idea of what I'm interested in researching. I'll obviously be happy to talk to you about any questions, ideas or concerns you may have. Let me know what you think.

Theresa Lillis

2. Information given to students June 1995

FROM THERESA LILLIS.
MATURE WOMEN STUDENTS AND ACADEMIC WRITING 13/6/95

General information

For the past twelve years I have been involved in teaching and learning related to issues of language. I spent ten years teaching English as a second language in a comprehensive school in Sheffield and, in more recent years, I have been working with adults in both FE and HE on various courses including adult ESL and literacy, B.Ed courses and an M.A. in language and education. For a long time I have been interested in how language, spoken and written, affects and shapes learning.

I am currently a research student at Sheffield Hallam University. I've got a grant for three years carrying out a research project which will hopefuilly lead to a PhD.
The focus of my study is the academic writing of mature women students and I have been working with a small group of women this year. What I am interested in finding out more about, is how mature students learn to express themselves in academic writing over a period of time. For example, how confident do they feel about using their own language to write at university? Do they feel they have to use different words at university? What effect does the decision to use new words have on what they want to say? How do they find out what lecturers want? These are just some of the things we've been discussing. The other aspect of my project is to try to work out how useful students find the discussions we have, in helping them to improve and gain confidence in their writing.

What it involves

The way we've worked this year has been as follows:
1.One interview...I have interviewed (1-2 hours) students individually about their experiences of schooling ([particularly about reading and writing)and their feelings about the type of language they use.
2. Drafts/final draft of essays..students have given me copies of three essays and their rough drafts which I have looked at and made comments on..
3. Discussions about the drafts/final draft... This is where we've spent most time and where I ask the student about all different aspects of a piece of their writing. This year, because I was the tutor of the students I was working with, we met many times over a period of 6 months. If you were interested in being involved in the project then we'd have to talk about what it might involve for you. I suppose ideally I'd like to meet up for every three weeks or so.

Will being involved in this project help you in any way?

I hope that it will and if it doesn't, there is something wrong with the discussions we have. My aim is to explore how students go about developing meaning in writing and the most useful way of doing that is through discussions on essay drafts. Such discussions should be of use to you. Discussions we've had this year have focussed on a whole range of things, from aspects of grammar to ways of working out how to say exactly what students want to say. Of course, all discussions are confidential and when I write the project findings up, students will be anonymous.

I hope this gives you some idea of what I'm doing. If you are interested in finding out more and/or being involved, please contact me Tel. 2558369, or let Judith know how I can contact you.

3. Information given to students for discussion in June 1995

To give you some idea of what our discussions will probably focus on.

My aim is to help you with your writing and at the same time try to explore with you why you write as you do. So really I'll be trying to working with you as an 'academic writing tutor', and a 'researcher'. We can discuss anything you like to do with your writing-concerns, ideas, format etc..but the list below summarises the sorts of things we have discussed this year and that I'd like to explore with you.

ME ACTING AS

ACADEMIC TUTOR

(semi-institutional view)

global structure: argument,`` linking paragraphs

local structure:grammar, spelling.

referencing conventions including when, who and how to draw on authorities.

making meaning clear

RESEARCHER

(my research interests, particularly that writing is a social act)

past and present experiences of schooling and literacy.

how you present yourself in your writing, who you are.

who you decide to draw on and why.

how you use language to say what you mean and the extent to which your writing ***does*** *say what you mean.*

what you feel you are allowed to say.

how useful our discussions are in helping you to say what you want to say.

Appendix 2
Literacy history questions

QUESTIONS. AIM: PROFILE OF SPOKEN AND WRITTEN LANGUAGE USE AND LITERACY PRACTICES PAST AND PRESENT.

1. LANGUAGE BACKGROUND.
a. Which languages do you speak?
b. Can you describe when you use them..to whom...common to codeswitch?
c. Is it possible to estimate how much you use them on a day to day basis? One more than the other, about the same..?
d. How would you describe your competence in the languages? Do you feel more comfortable with one more than other? Competence in speaking, listening, reading writing?
e. How do you feel about the fact that you use x languages? Positive? Issues?

2. SCHOOLING AND LANGUAGE USE.
a. Where did you go to school. England/x?
b. Which languages did you use before going to school?
c. Which languages were used at school? How difficult/easy was the transition from x language to the school language?
d. How did the school-teachers, other kids-feel about your knowing/speaking x languages?
e. How did you feel about using x languages?
f. Was the English that you used and learnt the sort of English you need for school?
g. If schooling in another country, when did you begin to learn English? Difficulties, issues, concerns.

3.SCHOOLING AND LITERACY.
a. Which language/s did you first learn to read in? Age?
b. Can you remember how you felt about learning to read?
c. Which language did you first learn to write in?
d. If learned to read and write in another language before English, how easy or difficult was it to learn read and write in English?
e. If learned to read and write in English first and home language is other, can you remember what it was like to learn to read and write in English?
f. Can you remember anything about your writing at school..enjoy it/way teachers approached writing.
g. Did you think of yourself as a good reader/ writer? Why? Why not?

4. POST SCHOOLING AND LITERACY.
a. Have you done any other courses, studying since you left school?
b. What sort of reading and writing did you have to do for this course?
c. How did you feel about your writing..problems,i ssues, concerns?
d. Have you had any jobs-voluntary, paid, community, home responsibilities- since you left school?
e. What sort of reading and writing did/do you have to do as part of this work?

f. How confident and competent did you feel about the reading and writing related to these activities?

4. LITERACY AT HOME AND IN THE COMMUNITY.

a. When you were little, did people at home-adults, children-at home tell you stories, read to you?
b. Did people-adults, children-read at home? Which languages, what sort of reading?
c. Did people at home write..letters? notes? study?
d. Did you feel it was important to read and write as a child?
e. Were there events in the community where reading and writing was important...religious festivals, mother tongue classes..?

5. CURRENT READING PRACTICES.

a. What sort of reading do you do now..at work, home, courses/languages?
b. Which languages do you read in..one more than the other?
c. Do you like reading? What?
d. How confident /competent would you describe yourself as a reader of x language?
e. How difficult have you found the reading you've had to do for this course so far? Worries, concerns.

6. CURRENT WRITING PRACTICES.

a. What sort of writing do you do now...at work, at home, courses, language?
b. Which languages do you write in..one more than the other?
c. Do you like writing? What?
d. How confident/competent would you describe yourself as a writer of x languages?
e. You'll be starting your first writing assignment for this course soon. How do you feel about that? Worries, concerns?

7. MOVING INTO HIGHER EDUCATION: SELF AND OTHER EXPECTATIONS.

a. You're hoping to go on to/continue at university. Is this something you always wanted to do?
b. When you were at school, did you think that you were capable of getting into university?
c. What about your family, friends: have people in your family been to university, friends? Was it something that people around you thought you or they could do? Why/why not?
d. What do you think about university now: who do you think goes there, should go there and why?

8. MOVING INTO HIGHER EDUCATION: ACADEMIC ENGLISH.

a. Do you feel that the type of English that is used for studying at university is different from the type/s of English you use in the rest of your life? How?

Some people might talk about academic English-are you familiar with that? What does it mean?
b. What about the type of English I use when I'm teaching on this course? How easy or difficult do you find it to understand what I'm saying when I teach on this course? If it is difficult is that because the ideas are new or because of the way I explain them? Is the language I use difficult/okay? Academic English? Do you stop me if you don't understand what I'm saying?
c. What about the type of English used in writing essays-is there a certain type of English that you think you should use? Is this the type of English you would use on a day to day basis..problems for you in trying to write in this way?

9. ATTITUDE TOWARDS KNOWLEDGE.
Discussion of texts provided in Belenky and others..

Appendix 3
Transcription/notes of talk with Mary about essay 2

Meldisf/but raises issues from e2

Notes made: 5/4/95

Tape No	Essay No	Notes/Focus	Initial comments
		T asks whether M could remember the points discussed. M. of course.	
		(1) M asks how M. has tried to deal with problem of using own words.	
269		M: *I've tried to use my own words a lot more and I've tried to use my own structure as well. But obviously if I'm writing someone else's ideas, its going to be based on what they said. And there may be some key words that need to be used. Not any, not academic, like.... like academic terms, they're just words that need to be used really to get my meaning across.*	M-words abd structure..'own'.
277		T asks whether there is a difference in this e2 in that M doesn't feel using others' words all the time.	Using others' words.
		M: *B's class and control, the language was very complicated. Somehow, when you writ it in your own writing, you was wondering whether you was giving across the same ideas. Because sometimes words have different meanings and you can use words that you may think to yourself mean the same thing as what he's saying but it might not*	M. Difficulty of changing language used to express specific concepts.
282		*necessarily be so. And I didn't want to distort the meaning you see. That's what got me. but with Skutnabb and Kangas, the language is much more simplified it's more simple and I can use my own words, cause when it relates to*	
286		*my own experience I can use my own words, which I did with Bernstein anyway.* But M insists her structure is *awful.*	M. unhappy with sentence structure.
		M: *It's very limited, I can't like do varying structure, when I do a sentence, it's got a similar sort of pattern, I can't explain it...*	
295		T says will look at her writing.	
		(2) T asks whether M. using Thesaurus with current essay. M. laughs a lot.	Need to discuss sentence structure variety.
		M: *No, not at all. The Thesaurus is deadly, right, because you can use it and you'll like have one word then you'll have all these other words that probably are supposed to have similar meaning but not the <u>same</u> cause that, what do*	
299		*you call it? Collocation, certain words sound better together than others and I find that with the Thesaurus.*	M. on dangers of Thesaurus.
		T: *So are you not using it at all?*	
		M: *Sometimes I do use it, when I say like what word can I use for this*	
303		*instead of this, or that don't sound good, I need something else. Once I've made a choice about which word I'm going to use, I'll look up in the Thesaurus and then I'll look up in the dictionary. The best thing to do if you're using a Thesaurus is to look up in the dictionary afterwards, cause if you don't you might find yourself in a bit of a mess (laughs)*	Evidence of learning? Using dictionary to check on words selected in Thesaurus.

		T asks whether M would be able to show her a word she'd looked up and used in her essay. M. says wanted to find alternative to elementary 'elite bilinguals usually have some elementary knowledge about the language' (TL. SK? check)	
		M: *I thought oh it's going to look too much like I'm copying. So I thought*	M. looking for synonyms..(T. dangers!) Different reasons for looking for alternative word-to aboid copying, uncomfortable with term.
319		*primary sounds okay, some primary knowledge beforehand and I've used beforehand because he used prerequisite didn't want to use that either...*	
		T: *So you didn't want to use elementary because it would be copying and why didn't you want to use prerequisite?*	
326		M: *(laughs) Because I wasn't quite sure, I've never come across that word before. And I didn't feel comfortable with it, I know what it means but it just doesn't feel natural.*	
329		T: *So, although you're looking them up, you do tend to go forwords which you feel comfortable with?*	
333		M: *Yeah because I can't see myself sitting down and saying prere - what? prerequisite (laughs). No I can't see myself, I can't see it, I've got to use the language that's within my domain you see.*	Identity and wording.
		T: *So why isn't prerequisite part of you and your...*	
		M: *No because I don't speak words like that and even if I went to University, I'm not going to.*	
337		T: *Who speaks words like that then?*	
		What kind of a picture would you have?	
		M: *A sort of stereotype I would have would be people who would use words like that are real academics and people sit down and talk about prerequisite (laughs). Over coffee and tea (laughs) and I just don't experience those kinds of things so why should I... I could be left out from my own community, why am I talking like that for?*	Wording-identity-relation of use of words to lived experience. Dangers involved in using 'others' words..left out of community.
342			
		T: *And you don't want to be part of that community?*	
		M: *No cause I don't fit in cause I'm black. How can I fit in there? No way, no matter how qualified, how much qualifications, there'll still see me as black and that's it. And I don't relate to those people anyway, no, no.*	Words not passport to group-institution.
		T returns to issue of Thesaurus and states that M is being more cautious in this essay. M. says being very careful. T summaries - Thesaurus - dictionary - how comfortable M feels.	
352		M laughs and agrees. T. says that it's hard work then to find word. M says it is hard work - sometimes takes 1 hour to get 6 lines written.	
		M: *And that's why I don't think it's maybe not natural (laughs). I have to work too hard for it.*	M. on amount of effort required to write essay/get to university.
		T. says she's been thinking about the conversation they had about M. feeling so fed up about going to University, how hard it was to write essay. N. too hard talked of the incredible effort involved.	
		T. asks whether the sheer amount of effort involved puts M off.	
		M: *You see I can work out my argument in five minutes, but to get it down and , it's really hard work for me. Like*	
369		*two sides sometimes takes a very long time.*	
		T asks whether M thinks it is harder for her than others or hard for all. Is writing a hard thing to do in general.	

		M: *I don't know. Maybe other people will experience it as well, but say, I don't want to use anybody as an example,*	M. on academic performance and levels of L1/L2.
376		*but say for instance, somebody in our class, like G--- can speak his first language very well, that's the impression I've been given, so maybe he can speak English very well as well. He can write it very well, maybe, that's the impression I get, I might be wrong. But because I can't speak either language very well, I probably, that's probably why I find it so difficult to write standard English. Because I've got like a mixture of dialects, haven't I, the Yorkshire dialect and*	
385		*then I've got Creole, you know. The reason why I don't speak Creole to people... I'm not ashamed of it at all, I love it, but the thing is*	
388		*with my Yorkshire dialect and that, I've got no standard in a sense, so when I use standard English I find it very difficult to get ideas down properly, I know I can do it and if I hear something that's ungrammatical in English, I can pick it out. But to produce it, get it down in a quick time, takes a very long time. It takes a long time, I have to think about it as well. At one time I used to have problems with the past and present tense. I didn't see it as important because in Creole they don't stress tense. so I used to have a problem when I wrote in English, I'd write <u>wasn't</u> there and <u>is</u> in the middle of a paragraph when I was talking about the same subject when I should use the same tense all the way through. But I don't have that problem so much now. I've conquered that. But it's like each time I start a course or I do some kind of written work I conquer something...*	M. no standard language. M. constant demand to change language to fit standard/institution.
		T: *Well it sounds like you're moving forwards.*	
397		M: *Oh I'm not going backwards, no way.*	
		T. explains that she feels that a lot of us think that writing is difficult for us but easier for others. However, it takes a long time and is hard work for anybody to produce a good piece of writing.	
		M: *But do you know, I know somebody, she's black and her mum's a teacher and everything and she like went to a good school , you know one of those*	
402		*public school, and she's, an assignment takes her two minutes. My mum says oh she'll go drinking all week and then she'll just sit down and do her assignment and she gets really good grades.*	M. difficulty with writing related to schooling-particularly Standard English.
		T: *Do you think that's to do with standard English?*	
408		M: *Yeah, I think it's the schooling, I think it's very important. And I think if it comes easy like that to you, you won't mind going to University or you won't mind.... but if you have to work too hard for it... some people it stresses them out too much and if you've got like children or other responsibilities, it's almost impossible.*	
		M. stresses that not impossible but a lot of effort. T. agrees but trying to point to more positive aspect, the external examiner a respected researcher on writing had said that M work was definitely comparable with Y1 students she taught. M pleased and surprised.	
415		M: *Sometimes you think you're worse than you are. That's a problem with me, I'm always thinking mine must be awful. And sometimes it's not, it's just like anybody else's*	M. lack of confidence.

417		M. still feels University is not for her. T stresses not trying to convince M it is. M: *I know, but that's the main reason really, I don't feel part, not my ability, I don't think.... it's fitting, it's that and you've got to be honest with yourself. I can't see myself.... I'd like to, I'd like to, I'd like to discuss certain things, especially things related to my community. Cause I'm -interested in that.*	M. on university-not fit in at university.
427		T says that M is very active in discussions in groups. So keen to engage in topic areas. M. says would like to help people, particularly men because they find it so difficult, with their writing.	
430		(3) Showing that you know what you're talking about. T asks if M understands - M: *Yeah, I recognise it more now cause when I'm actually using terms I think oh yeah I've got to say something about this now. It's to show that I'm not writing any old thing and I know what I mean.*	Evidence of learning?--explaining terms.
438		(4) Personal voice. M had said previously that she felt awful using 'I'. M: *I thought it was awful at first because I've been trained to think for a very long time, from junior, not junior school, you could say 'I' then but as soon as we got into secondary school, it was like, 'what's this 'I'? Go away. So I had to adjust to that. so I thought, well if you're not supposed to say 'I' what are*	M. on using 'I'/personal voice/effect of previous learning.
442		*you supposed to do (laughs). Cause they'd say 'What are your ideas about such and such a topic 'and I'm thinking, you can't say 'I'. That's when I used to think English language is a load of rubbish. I was thinking, it doesn't make any sense what so ever. Why can't you say 'I and what I think?' And I think that's because they don't want you to think you see. they want you to take on their ideas and assimilate to them. And forget about what you think. That's the only reason I can think of that they don't want you to put 'I'*	
450		*(laughs) And like, now, all of a sudden, at 21, were being told to say 'I'. (laughs) And I find that really different. I couldn't believe it when you told us that. I thought does Theresa know what she's on about? I was telling my mum about it, even she was shocked.*	
455		T points out that not straight forward. She as tutor has her views but is able to be sure of her views being accepted - on I for example - because she knows the position of the external examiner. So whilst M. may still be told at University not to use 'I' there is debate about that within the institutions. M. surprised to hear that debate against academics about use of 'I'. M: *And I think it's very good it's very powerful that 'I' really, 'me', because it makes you feel a part of it, you do come into it somewhere, it does relate to you. Whereas when you wasn't allowed to use*	
474		*'I', you just you just felt like an outsider really, and I used to find it at first, when I was at secondary school almost impossible to write about myself without saying 'I', or me.* T asks how M has managed the use of 'I' in this essay. T asks how M has managed the balance of stepping back but also bringing herself in.	

479 M: *I've stepped back when it comes to talking about the situation of bilingualism in general, in terms of at large, in terms of society and I use Skutnabb's ideas but I do it in my own writing and my own structure. I've tried to do my best to do that. But when it comes to talking about myself*

484 *and my community, I've put 'I' but I'm talking about 'me' but 'me at large as well...*

T: *You are part of something else*

M: *Yeah not me, me isolated me. To say that my experience is probably very common. And, the next part I'm going on to now, it's talking about*

488 *all this stigmatization that we've been given about the language. You know Creole was seen at one time as if you was thick or something, but like after that I'm going to come in and talk about other ethnic minority groups, that have been, ... discriminated against probably, in the same nature*

492 *but slightly different. So I'm going to go into that now and talk about that and some of the studies that have been done to prove that bilingualism is negative, and then I'm going to talk about positive studies. You know er .. when you saw about 5 or 6 pages the last time, there's only about 3 now, almost 3, because I haven't really got to the core of my argument. Well I don't really*

498 *think there is a core. It's very.... what do you think?*

T asks M to explain what she means by core.

M: *I'm going to talk about Cummins.*

505 T: *So there's a specific focus there.*

M: *I'm going to talk about the teaching methods and what teachers are not aware of about Creole, then go back to myself again. Cause I've only mentioned myself once and I've got to bring myself in once again. But this time, related to what Cummins said about er surface fluency. But I wanted to bring in another argument about another*

509 *surface sort of judgement, where you just hear somebody's language and you think you're just stupid. Cause what I want to say about my community is when they speak and the language*

515 *is, you hear the language and it's the reverse really because when they actually hear them talking amongst their peers, when people were first going to school in this country, you know they probably thought they're thick you know cause how they're speaking, their Creolized speech. Get what I mean?*

521 T says very good because M is talking a framework examining in relation to the experience of a particular community and criticizing it. M. says that if consider Creole speakers' experience, the argument BICS is actually reversed. M. says framework useful as it stands for other members of group

but not for Creole experience. M. goes on to say that has not liked may of the discussions on bilingualism in sessions because a lot of the arguments, she

530 felt, had been lifted from books rather than students thinking for themselves

M. feels this is the case for many working in education, draw on theory but don't think for themselves.

M: *I'm not rebellious. And I don't want people to get that impression of me. And I think they have, they think I've got a rebellious nature. Refers to incident where what G--- had said could have been taken as insult.*

549 They discuss dynamics in group where T explains Yemeni women feel angry with the Yemeni men. For that reason they would prefer M. to argue rather than agree with them.

M: *All women have had it bad from men, all women have suffered in all walks of life. So I think it's silly, I really do. I don't like feminism. It's silly.*

T says it depends what you mean. M says agrees with equal pay. T points out that it is feminist groups who have argued for equal pay, the vote. T points to bad press given to word 'feminism' and feminist ideas - need to stand back and ask what is it we agree/don't agree with about feminism.

M. agrees.

566 T points to range of views within feminism, as within black politics. M. feels

574 black politics has changed - need to focus on themselves rather than always on white appressors. M. says Asian groups came after AC and only recently facing racism. AC more aware. M. says others in group may think she's pessimistic but what she's saying is true.

589 M: *And I think it's a benefit to all of them on this course---, it gives you an insight into what happens in schools especially. And all these things that I've been learning about language, I used to know a little bit from psychology but I think it's been very good. It's got some interesting subjects and they've all been*

593 *oriented to language yet looking at it from a different perspective each time, which I think it's a good course.*

M. says this and psychology courses best courses she's been on. M. says

600 her mum told her that she wouldn't like a psychology degree with all the racism in it. M says told her mum you can't run from it -

M: *But I would hate to go to the class and I'm the only black person there.*

609 *Oh my God!* M. says on her mum's course there were two other black women. M. mother teased M that she would be only black person. M says her mum's beyond stage of worrying about being only black person in group. M. says mother very strong person. M. says her mother was educated

616 before she went, she'd studied other courses and read a lot. M. says she finds it very difficult not to complain if she doesn't like content and then perhaps people will not like her. M worried that people in (at Univ) will have preconceived ideas about black people and that if she complains every week, they will not like it.

623 T says difficult situation - to open mouth and risk alienation or shut up and put up with it. M. says doesn't want to be

627 only one (black person) there. T. suggests that if M. goes for interview she could ask about other black students, whether they'll be on the course.

M. says danger that they will think she is insecure. she is not insecure. T says if M gets as far as thinking of

638 accepting place, they could think of way of getting the information.

They return to essay feedback.

(5) Separating voices. M. says feel she has done this quite well in essay. Sees this as serious problem because of being accused of plagiarism.

		T: *Also, if you don't separate out your voice you don't ...*	
648		M: *Know what your argument is (laughs)...*	
		(6) Grammar. sing/pl. Verb forms.	
		M: *has is present and have is part.*	
		T: *No, they're both present. Has goes with he/she/it..*	
		M: *Oh has is for singular person. Yeah.*	
		T points to of/have should've. T says will give M. a sheet. M. surprised that it is have with should.	T given sheet on of/have. Check whether useful/used.
		T explains but says will give sheet. Have - this links back to M saying 'have is past'.	
686		T. explains 'have is past' when goes with participle - have worked. They look at examples.	
714		(7) Use of headings, T says M had said she liked and disliked headings and asks M what she plans to do in this essay. M. says will use them but only when really needs to and when she has no other way of getting down what she wants to say clearly.	
733		T asks M whether headings help her to work out where she's going or are they for the reader.	
741		M: *I do it more for the reader, especially if I'm discussing someone's framework or something. It's nice to use headings then. But like, to write my own experience I won't use headings. Do people do that, use headings?*	
		T says she started to some years ago.	
		M: *That's because you're a teacher though isn't it? Teachers use headings cause they like to make things clear don't they? When you're doing your writing you're probably so used to writing pieces of work out for your students.*	
		T says finds life easier. Explains how she uses headings to try to clarify what she's talking about. She uses them as headlines for thoughts.	
		M: *That's good. I need to find some strategies that help me.*	
763		T says M can try the headings and see if it helps. T explains how headings evolve as she writes.	
meldisf (a)		M states that really likes her argument. She would love to explain her arguments and get somebody else to write for her.	
4		(9) Conclusion. T asks M if she has left enough time to be able to write conclusion for this essay. M. says will leave enough time. M. concerned about conclusion.	
09		M: *It's alright saying summing up but I must have one last word to say.*	
		T: *Your last word seems to be that you're trying to make sense of the issue from a particular perspective, of a particular community.*	
		M: *Plus I think my summing up is going to come after Cummins. Cause I*	
13		*think he's very important for this essay.*	
		(10) T refers last discussion on el where M seemed disappointed really in that hadn't been able to say what she wanted to say. T asks if M will have enough space in this essay to say what she wants to say.	

M: *You have to a certain extent but I think anybody writing an assignment*
20 *has got the same restrictions. You're not writing a book, are you? It's an assignment (laughs).*
T says important to at least get something in that she wants to say.
M: *I don't know if you should say certain things though (laughs)... like sometimes I want to say things like, about, for instance like, you know, like I was going to say about Creole and talking about standardization, I'd like to bring in you know - it gets me so heated up.*
26 T: *What would you like to bring in?*
M: *I'd like to slag those people off.*
29 T: *You can, but as long as you've got somebody to support you.*
M: *It always has to be supported by someone else. I probably could find someone to support it. It'd take me a long time. But they might not be a person in education as such. They might not be alright. And they're the sort*
34 *of opinions that matter, aren't they?*
T points out that other thinkers can be brought in. Need to find out what tutors and examiners expect but should be able to bring thinkers outside the field in to the essay. T asks what M wants to say.
M: *Like for example when people have got certain theories and you know that it doesn't exactly go like that. You may have got some other argument that you might have heard someone say, not a linguist or someone from education, and it's true.*
T: *Can you think of an example?*
M can't think of one but thought of a comment about human beings in general.
M: *And you just can't use things like that.*
48 T says you can but you need a name, a political thinker can be used. M worried though.
M: *But if I did that maybe it wouldn't be appreciated?*
51 T: *Who by?*
M: *By examiners, I don't know.*
T agrees that there is a need to know where tutors and examiners stand on such issues.
55 M: *Yeah because students want to please tutors to the marks.*
T. Clearly need to know in order not to fail. But T. explains that in this course M. will not lose marks from T or external examiner for bringing in comments from outside the field as long as it doesn't take up half the essay.
M: *Well, I'd be going off the track wouldn't I? Just little three lines is what I mean.*
T says it's important to bring in things that help to get ideas across and to be critical of other ideas and frameworks put forward and students certainly expected to be critical.
M: *Like I said I was going to be with Cummins, do the reverse, this is what*
66 *Cummins has said, his theoretical ideas but for this situation, it's actually the reverse. You know, I was wondering whether you can manipulate other people's theories in that way?*

		T. says fine, what M is doing is showing that she understands what's said, then be critical of it in terms of M. experience as Creole speaker.	
73		M. also says that the definitions of bilingualism are rubbish. T points out that a polite way of saying that in essay is that 'such definitions are limited'.	
77		M: *because they only talk about vocabulary rather than the underlying structure.* T points to definitions which did include structure.	
81		M: *But if they did mention grammar, it was only in relation to that particular language. Bilingualism, two languages is two different sort of codes, grammars. And we don't fit into that category...* T. says that's fine. Need to draw on the notion of a continuum. T explains	
89		continuum challenges notion of two separate grammars, vocabulary. T. explains continuum. Not either/or - much more fluid situation.	
108		M. refers to example given by A--- of English/Arabic development shab. M. says she had thought, well that's a Creole but she had decided not to say anything because people would disagree. T agrees that could talk of English	
113		based Arabic Creole - little examples of what's happening. M. says read the points from feedback.	Check usefulness of feedback points.

ME2disd1
Notes made: 5/4/95

Tape No	Essay No	Notes/Focus	Initial comments
12 18	195	M. says will tell T what she's done, what she's planning to do. M: *The first part I've talked about bilingual people and how they're viewed by society and education.* T asks which question M answering - positive/negative effects of bilingualism on cognitive development. M: *how bilingualism was viewed in early century and how people, you know, general, just talk about it in general, about the negative aspects of bilingualism about how people try to portray bilinguals as having disadvantages, arguments about how progressive it is, just briefly though, but after that I go into Skutnabb and Kangas work where there's four main categories and I've just, like picked out main points, the main aspects of each erm, category, what typifies the .. that's what I've done but it's too many. when ... listen, I've realised that now you know the last category, linguistic minorities, I were going to write a bit about myself and it started here, which is to do with the last category because I associate myself with the last category, I think that really gets my experience, and I talk about Creoles and Patois, they're not official language and then I'm going to go into the situation of schools and what they should do about the people who speak Creole. I mean, I've got a good set up but it's just getting it down.*	M/T dialogue. M. leading.

		T: *But it doesn't sound so far that you're going to answer the question.*	Answering the question. T/M dialogue.
		M: *I am going to, you wait, I'm getting to it. Then after I'm going to talk about myself and talking about some of the research that's been done, the survey* *about literacy and reading about in 1980 ICE did a survey about literacy in schools of African-Caribbean children and about how they're poor readers and things like that and then, I'm going to go into bilingualism and those studies that, those negative studies that portray bilingualism as being something negative and then I'm going to put something about studies about bilingualism which are positive and then I'm going to criticise a framework of, use the Threshold Hypothesis because there was no conclusion, was there? There was all these results which didn't really conclude to anything cause like, was it positive was it negative? Because these studies had shortcomings, they didn't take certain thins into consideration so I want to bring Cummins in and talk about his model, right. And then after that, no not Cummins...* T: *Yeah...* M: *Yeah, his model with them three things and after that I'm going to do the BICS* T: *and the CALP?* M: *yeah.* T: *Right, you've got it all sorted.* M: *yeah. I know what I'm saying but I just can't get it down.* T asks whether due to time.	
		M: *Oh I find writing very difficult, Theresa, very difficult.* T: *But you've written this so far ...* M: *Yeah, and it's not very good. I know it isn't.* T says that the way M has described it the essay plan sounds fine. But, as M. has pointed out, the first section long,	M.writing difficult.
37		given that M has got to get to main part. M: *As a conclusion, you see, I thought I could talk about submersion and immersion programmes, just talk about, I don't know. I can't really think of any conclusion.* T reminds M. that conclusion will only be summary of what was said in essay. T. says that the amount of material that M. has said she is going to include is a lot, her conclusion will be to stand back read her essay through and	
44		summarise in relation to essay question. M. says she has so little time - Tasks why. M: *I'm not lazy you know. I don't know, I just don't think it's for me you know, but I've got to do it.* T. asks whether M. doesn't like doing it. M. says no. T points to discussion they had about first essay, M was really enthusiastic. M: *With this particular essay, I've got to read a lot of books about what they*	
50		*say about Creole and things and I don't like it. That's what it is I think... because all right then, if Creole or whatever, I think people tend to know more about it than Panjabi though.. white people for instance, more than Panjabi or Urdu which are official languages. Because in music you hear it all the time you're exposed to it. If you know people from Afro-Caribbean community, it's not nothing out the norm and I think it's just racism why they're viewing it like this and it's pissing me off.*	Personal-academic. Difficulty in facing task because of academic perspective on Creole.
60		T says that in the books M. been reading they have pointed to racism. M: *Not in the way, no....* They look at the books together. M. thinks Romaine and Skutnabb-Kangas are useful for frameworks and work on intelligence but not for Creoles. M. shows	

69		T book using on Creoles in England. T asks her what she thinks of that book. M: *I don't know, it's too political, you have to brush past too much political issue before you can really get to the effects of bilingualism, you get drawn into that instead of like, sticking to the question (laughs).*	T check book. Political/personal effect on dealing with question.
79		T says difficult to avoid political issues with Creole and suggests that M talk about the political issues. But M. concerned that too big an area. T says need to get some balance between political and language focus. M: *It's too difficult, to tell the truth, I don't think I can cope with this assignment.* T. points out that M has already told T what she plans to do.	
83		M: *But I'm not going to be able to do it as effective as I'm supposed to it.* T says that M. needs to put time in. M. says has - on reading. T says that is clear from M description of direction of essay and that M knows where she wants to go. M: *I know what my route is.*	M. knows route through. Difficulty seems to be having to deal with racism.
95		T asks M if she wants her to write down where she said she wanted to go. T says that wants to discuss points arising from discussions on previous essay. M: *I'm so glad I went on this course though, I'm so glad, it was a god send honestly, even if there's no 2 year BEd* T: *Why?* M: *Cause I've learnt so much on this course more than on any other course I've ever done. Like for instance even the job, I've realised a lot of things I never, I realised them before but not to this extent. Not to this degree. From working*	M. positive on course.
98		*in education and doing a course like this, I've really come to realise what this society's all about. Honestly.*	
100		T: *It sounds as if it's depressing you.* M: *Yeah, it is. (Laughs) I don't want to get any more involved with it. I'm very left wing I think (laughs) and I think teaching's very Conservative.... what time is it?*	M. critical-need to cut. Writing devept. model.
	45	They return to essay. M. explains why used Skutnabb-Kangas categories. Reads 45-50. M: *But I've just gone crazy* T: *What do you mean?* M: *It's too much, isn't it?*	M. refocussing content.
114		T agrees - need to cut. M asks what she should mention.	
116		M: *Was it their choice or not, that was important, to become bilingual.* T. agrees and writes choice, M: *What is the consequences if they fail to become bilingual. That's an important point. Well there are all political, aren't they?*	
119		T: *Yes, they are. Is that a problem?* M: *Yeah because it brings me on to other tracks.* T explains that M can stress the political nature of discussions around Creole but need not explore them in her essay.	T. clarifies nature of task..no need/cannot be comprehensive.
123		T returns to key points from discussion on bilingualism - choice, consequences. M: *Yeah and the kind of education that they receive. That's it that's all we need, isn't it? Oh, sorry and people's attitudes towards them.* T writes down and suggests that M can say all that in two sides. rather than four. T points to the importance of section on linguistic minorities. Says that M can discuss SK types of bilingualism in relation to five important points, in her	

		view. Tells M to list the 5 points. Suggests she may also focus only on elite and minorities and contrast them - in relation to 5 points.	
		M: *Oh just two very different ones, oh and then, oh that's a good idea. Now why didn't I think of that? Well.. I thought I would have to*	
137		*mention them all, you see.*	
		T points out that she can't, not enough space.	
		M: *So what do I do? Let the reader, know that I do know that the other groups exist but I'm going to write about ...*	M. refocussing her content.
		T: *Yeah for the purposes of this essay, I'm going to focus on two types.*	
147		T stresses the importance of cutting the first session.	
		T asks how close to the text is M essay.	
		M: *I've used my own words though, most of them.*	
		T reminds M of the agreement they made	
154		that M was going to use her own sentence structure for this essay so that	
		they could discuss whether it was 'awful as B had claimed.	
156	32	M: *(indignant) This is my structure. Reads 32 - 35. That is my structure.*	
		T says only raising issue which they discussed last time. M. says only word	
		that did keep was 'ideology' because there was no other word that could replace it.	
		T refers back to feedback sheet on M use of B. structure	
	1	M. points and reads 1-3 and stresses that it is her structure.	
		T reminds her that M had agreed to underline anything that she was not happy about.	M's structure....easier to translate into own words.
166		M: *But obviously some words are going to be similar to the book because .. but it is my structure.*	
		T agrees but reminds M. that she had said that she was lifting structures from	
		B. and then changing a few words and that they had agreed that couldn't continue.	
170		M: *(laughs) Yes that's true, but this book, you know, it's not so hard to understand.*	
		T: *So what does that mean that it's easier to turn into your own words.*	
		M: *If you've noticed, the language is not half as complicated as class, codes and control... no, I don't think I'll have any of those problems again, I don't think so, unless I get lazy and I start... I think it's when I'm short of time as well, sort of like...*	
174		T: *So you actually feel then, cause last time you said your structure was awful, is your structure awful or not?*	
		M: *It's not that bad, no.*	
		T: *you must have been having a bad day then. You said your structure was awful.*	
178		M: *It is a little bit. It's a bit boring and repetitive. Do you get what I mean?*	
		It's not very flexible, it's not very interesting. You know when you pick up a book and you read it, they've used all this different kind of structure in them, they've really put a lot of thought into their writing and their writing sounds interesting when you read it, like thingy... but when you read mine, it's sort of da, da, da, da	
			Who? Whose writing does she like?
		T: *Because it's simple sentences.*	
		M: *I think so ... when you read my writing it just sounds so bland - er er er er*	
		(laughs).	
		T suggests that M underline bits that M thinks are boring.	
		M says she's going to buy a pen for writing that you can rub out because	
190		she's not going to have much copying up time.	
		T. says that last time M had said she hadn't had enough time to write the conclusion. Would she have enough time for this essay?	

		M (sounding unconvinced) yeah.	
198		M asks whether T knows of any course she could go on to learn how to write. T explains that shat she's trying to do through discussions and feedback to M is to help her to improve her writing. The points in feedback sheet T suggests are	
204		points M can address. They are based on listening to their discussions and making detailed comments.	T check with M how useful the discussion/feedback is.
		T refers to point about sentence structure. M agrees and states that she wasn't using own sentence structure. Asks if everyone is different (-ie, students on course).	
		T. says yes.	
212		M: *I mean I don't want to use mine at all, if I was to use my sentence structure (laughs). You know when I did my exam in Psychology, I had to write essays you know, and the sentence structure what I used then, it must have been reasonable for me to get a grade C but the sentence structure that I used was mainly what I remembered from the book, honestly, it was like... cause I've got this really good memory for remembering (laughs). I understood what was actually from the book.*	
217		T refers her to sections in e2 d1 where M said it was her structure.	
		M. says it is and it sounds awful to her.	
220	1	T reads and asks why it sounds awful, in terms of the structure.	M. on own structure-less critical of it in this essay.
		M: *The structure's not too bad.*	
		T reads another of M examples.	
224	30	30 -32.	
		M: *That's all right.*	
		T: *Well what's the problem with your structure?*	
		M: *Well when I read that in the book, it was in the same, similar structure but completely different words (laughs).*	
		T: *So you have lifted the structure?*	
		M: *Just a little bit, not a lot. Like if I've got to explain something, like some kind of idea, I do tend to look at ... bit when I do my own writing I don't.*	
		T: *What do you mean, your own writing?*	
230		M: *When I talk about my own experience.*	
	195	T points and reads 195 - 203. Asks M what is wrong with her structure.	
		M: *I can maintain it for a little bit and then I forget that I'm writing to somebody who doesn't know that...*	
		T: *Who doesn't know what you're talking about?*	
244		M: *Yeah (unconvinced). But.. I don't think I'm bilingual though, Theresa.*	
		T says that that is another issue.	
		M has to go to work.	
	End 263		

Me2disd2

Tape made:

Notes made: 10/4/95

Tape No	Essay No	Notes Focus	Comments
127		M gives T first section rewritten and asks for T's comments.	

		T asks where section comes in. M says will do introduction last. T reads.	
		M. says one section very close to text so has put page no. T asks if line 23-24. M yes.	
		M: *I couldn't explain it in my own writing cause I didn't really understand*	Plagiarism/referencing/ 'own words'.
146		*why but I knew it was important to mention it.*	
		M says rest is her own writing.	
	2	T asks what M means by 'unprogressive'	T. asks meaning of word.
		M: *In the sense that you know if you're a bilingual and you speak a minority language and you're learning a majority one through subtractive methods in school,*	
		I didn't want to go into it though, at that point there.... unprogressive in terms of like school, you know, it can be not that all the time, but it can be. Maybe I should put 'it can be'. In the sense of unprogressive in terms of academic achievement.	
		T: *I don't think you can use it like that.*	
158		M: *Why not?*	
		T: *Well I don't think you talk about things being un, progressive.*	
		M: *oh un, I'll take that word out then.*	
		T suggests that M does not need it. The sentence expresses M idea.	T check use of several qualifying terms
		T reads sentence aloud.	instead of one.
166	10	T reads lines 10-12 and queries wording 'This situation could be referred'.	Ivanic
		T rereads 7-12. Says that she understands what M is saying but wording not appropriate. M. asks why.	
		T: *I don't think you 'refer a situation to'*	
		M: *oh 'could be applied to' then... yeah but if someone says I'm referring*	
167		to somebody you know..	
		T: *yeah you can refer to somebody but a situation can't be referred to.. You can refer to a situation but what you're saying here is that 'this situation is referred to Punjab'.*	T wrong! - why is this so badly explained.
171		M: *No, you can only refer a person to a situation.*	
		T: *No, it's who's doing the referring and here a situation can't refer...*	
		M: *Oh I understand what you mean.. a situation is not a person.*	
		T. tells M not to use etc. - Far too vague. M. accepts.	
184		T reads lines 18-20. Queries M use of full stop before 'in' - points out that sentence continues. M. agrees T continues to read 21 'as well as against'. T queries sense.	Structure complex clause full stop/punctuation.
180		M: *I just writ that from his ideas because I thought if I left that out maybe that's important to that. But really what I wanted to say, use was that*	
		T says as it stands it doesn't make sense.	
		M. asks why not. T. rereads 20-21. T asks why the 'against' is there.	

		M: *That 'against' is supposed to be used for erm, you know for instance, when they say the nation state, they mean the government and because they don't want to teach bilingual children to be competent in both languages, it wasn't just, they wasn't just trying to oppress those people, they was trying to oppress other minorities as well that weren't on their side, erm, do you get what I mean?*	
200		T: *So, it's linguistic minorities as well as any other minorities. But this 'against'..*	
203		M: *This against has come in the wrong place. It should be there though.*	
		T asks M to check where it should go. M. rereads.	
	21	M: *and against minorities...*	
		T: *so, as well as minorities who found themselves on the wrong side of some national frontier. So you don't need that?*	
		M: *No.*	
		T: *So it's linguistic minorities.*	
		M: *As well as other minorities.*	
210	28	T checks spelling perceived. T reads 37-38. Queries full stop before since. T rereads for M to hear - linking two Clauses.	Structure complex clause full stop/punctuation.
	39	M reads with different emphasis. First reading 'Since, they <u>are</u> double standards'. But then rereads linking 'since they are	
216		double standards, for instance..	
		M: *I think it should be one of them semi colons, me. What do you think?*	
		T. rereads. Asks if M means 'there' and not 'they'. M agrees. T attempts to read beginning with 'Since' and ending with	
	38	'groups'.	
		But again queries whether 'Since' clauses goes with preceding clause. M. not convinced.	
	39	M. rereads beginning with 'Since...' M. says she wants 'Since' to begin sentence and to be linked with 'for instance'. T points	
		out that full stop not needed before 'for'.	
	42	T reads next section 39-42 and suggests' whereas minority bilingualism..' should follow on.	
		M. says already said that in first section and asks whether she should say it again.	
		She feels that she shouldn't. T rereads first paragraph. Tells M that focus, in this	
232		paragraph is 'double standards' and M therefore, needs to explain what 'double standards' are.	
236		M: *So it's like I'm writing assuming that they know what I'm talking about again.*	
		T says M hasn't compared views on elite with minority language bilingualism.	
		M. accepts. T asks where M goes after this page.	
		M reads 39-43 of D1 and adds 'then bilingualism is undesirable'.	
244		T: *Not 'undesirable'.*	T/M-nature of intermental encounter.
		M: *Is, you know, will be a problem*	Wording/identity/position.
		T: *because...*	
		M: *of the way other people react to you.*	
		T. says need to be careful with, for example, 'undesirable', may sound as if the bilingual people themselves think it is	
		undesirable. M. says does not intend that meaning.	

257	44	M. continues to read from d1, 44-52 - changes 'four' to 'two' groups.	
	49	T queries M 'I will take notes. T says M is not going to take notes - M has taken notes but not going to say that taking notes in essay.	
266		T. suggests 'I will highlight certain important points'.	
		M: *I knew there was something wrong with that. I was waiting for you to point it out (laughs).*	
272	195	M moves to section 195-199 reads aloud.	
	197	T queries 'bilingualism does not seem to distinguish'.	
		M: *The definitions don't seem to...*	
		M. includes in draft.	
283	199	M reads 199-203	
	200	T asks what M means by 'language problems'	
292	203	M. says will discuss that. M reads 203-210	
		M: *I don't want to elaborate on that too much. I want to finish that off and start with something else.*	
	D2 1	M. reads from D2 1-4	
307		T asks whether M has supporting reference for statement. M points to it 4. T does not query complement 'cognitive genitive inferiority'.	T misses complement.
312		M reads 6-9. T says good. M reads 10-14. M asks whether all right. T points to need for 'in the sense' clause to continue. No need for full stop.	Punctuation, full stop complex clause.
321		M: *I've got a problem with long sentences, you see, because I used to be told not to do it. I think a lot of the problems that I've got now have really stemmed from being in that English class. (A level) Because a lot of the advice I used to get from this tutor seems to conflict with what you say. Things that I were probably doing all right before, she was telling me not to do.*	effect of previous learning - conflict with current advice.
		T asks whether M feels as if she's getting organised with this essay.	
340		M says yes and asks T's opinion. T says seems to be going well. T. asks how M is getting on with work on the continuum. M says familiar with notion of continuum in relation to intelligence.	
350		M. says her main aim is to keep to the question. T tells her to say clearly in the introduction which question she is answering, what she's drawing on and drawing on experience - will raise specific issues in relation to Creole speakers. M asks if she can arrange to see T following week.	
363		M. going to library - public library. Works in library because at home puts TV on.	

MR/TL

Me2disd3

Tape No	Essay No	Notes/Focus	Comments
		M asks T to read - D3.	
	6	T points to need for comma rather than full stop - 'Although...'	Complex sentence, punctuation - full stop.
9	9	T. corrects linguistics for linguists.	
	14	T. suggests 'along' along instead of 'a' a continuum. T suggests that can talk of	
12		a relationship between Creole and English could be viewed as a continuum. M. asks why not 'as' here. T explains why	
		'along' seems more appropriate - different points.	
		T reads 14 - asks why 'however'.	
23	11	M: *I thought, I'm starting a new sentence, if I like go straight, say 'there' straight' away, to me it doesn't sound right.*	Wording-linking words. M inappropriate use of 'however'.
		T: *So you need something in there.*	
		M: *Yeah.*	
		T points that 'however' introduces another dimension whereas M. is adding on	
28		continuing information. M suggests 'although'.	
		M: *Is that all right?*	
		T says no and they will return to this. T rereads and suggests 'For'.	
38		M. does not like. T continues to read 14-19. T asks whether M wants her to continue to read. M says of course.	
		T says reads well.	
41	29	T reads 29-30. T points to need for full stop end of dimensions. T suggests should be 'on' rather than 'of' scale.	Punctuation, full stop.
49		M reads, laughs agrees	
	31	T says must be 'extent <u>to</u> which' rather than 'in'. M insists it must be <u>in</u>. T says not question of in/on/phrase is 'extent to	M. use of prepositions-'extent in'.
54		which'. M says must be logical explanation. T says often not logical explanations - refers to discussions in sessions where	
		possible to explain why certain linguistic features occur but not possible to explain others. T gives example of 'according	
		to', would not say 'according of'. M agrees.	
62		M: *Some of them sound more obvious than others, but to me, everybody's different.*	
70	37	T reads 33-37. T says good.	
		T reads 41-43. Asks what M means.	
		M: *Because you can't really say, oh he belongs there and she belongs there, it's just like a guess really.*	
76	43	T asks whether M. needs 'ideally' there	
		M. says no. T points to verb <u>are</u> instead of <u>is</u> with positions.	
		T says good draft.	

MR/TL

Me2disd3

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		'along' seems more appropriate - different points.	
		T reads 14 - asks why 'however'.	
23	11	M: *I thought, I'm starting a new sentence, if I like go straight, say 'there' straight' away, to me it doesn't sound right.*	Wording-linking words. M inappropriate use of 'however'.
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		M: *Yeah.*	
		T points that 'however' introduces another dimension whereas M. is adding on	
28		continuing information. M suggests 'although'.	
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		T says no and they will return to this. T rereads and suggests 'For'.	
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		T says reads well.	
41	29	T reads 29-30. T points to need for full stop end of dimensions. T suggests should be 'on' rather than 'of' scale.	Punctuation, full stop.
49		M reads, laughs agrees	
	31	T says must be 'extent <u>to</u> which' rather than 'in'. M insists it must be <u>in</u>. T says not question of in/on/phrase is 'extent to	M. use of prepositions-'extent in'.
54		which'. M says must be logical explanation. T says often not logical explanations - refers to discussions in sessions where	
		possible to explain why certain linguistic features occur but not possible to explain others. T gives example of 'according	
		to', would not say 'according of'. M agrees.	
62		M: *Some of them sound more obvious than others, but to me, everybody's different.*	
70	37	T reads 33-37. T says good.	
		T reads 41-43. Asks what M means.	
		M: *Because you can't really say, oh he belongs there and she belongs there, it's just like a guess really.*	
76	43	T asks whether M. needs 'ideally' there.	
		M. says no. T points to verb <u>are</u> instead of <u>is</u> with positions.	
		T says good draft.	

Me2disd4

Tape made: 29/3/95
Notes made 12/4/95

Tape No	Essay No	Notes/Focus	Comments
		T asks M how she's getting on with essay. T shows M drafts she's got. M. checks	
11	D4 10	what T has read. M asks T to read from line 10-30.	
		T asks where this section fits in. M says fits in after description of 2 bilingual groups.	
29		T reads 30-47. T asks whether different findings by Saer relate to differences between simultaneous and successive bilingualism. M. explains that the difference	
		between the two groups was that the Welsh children had little exposure to English. M. says she discusses this in nest section and that she will discuss problems with	
32		that study later.	
37		T reads 48-62. T asks about referencing. Tells M must have all complete references at the end of essay or say which book from.	
		M: *Do I put in Bilingualism or in Romaine?*	Referencing conventions.
		T reads 62 - M says she's missed out some work that it's important	
53		T look at. M finds it - in later section.	
	105	T asks M what confounding variables are	
		M: *Them variables that affect the results, those variables which they haven't took into consideration. I know that word from psychology.*	Drawing on learning in psychology.
		T continues to read - 140.	
68		M: *Haven't you found no mistakes yet?*	
		T. says only question she would ask is how close to text is writing.	
70		M: *No it's not directly lifted. It's mostly in my own words.*	M using 'own words'.
		T: *What do you mean?*	
71		M: *Well, apart from words like bilingual, they're mostly my own words. Cause that's what I was concentrating on when I first writ it. I thought, well, I've got to make sure it's in my own writing.*	
		T reads. Corrects vice for visa.	
84	177	T asks whether M. means attend or attended. M says past tense. T asks whether not about what happens now.	T. queries tense.
		M: *Well, it can be, no, it's past really.*	
		T continues to read.	
87	178	T corrects categorized.	
89	179	T suggests standard rather than standardized. M. agrees.	
	190	'Which could have/of' T asks whether M. read sheets she gave her. M yes.	Speech/writing..'could of'.
		Corrects error.	
	196	T reads - corrects voluntary, rather then voluntarily.	
105	201	T suggests M put another reference in at end of section, suggests Coard.	
		M asks her to star place.	
114		T re-reads 190.ff. T not sure whether M has said what intends to say.	
		M: *What I'm trying to say is, is that you know semilinguals, they're not supposed*	
110		*to be proficient in both languages what they speak so if a person can't speak standard English and then Creole's seen as a substandard in a way they're seen as a semilingual, aren't they?*	T/M-content.

115		T says will reread to see if that's what's written.	
		M: *What I'm trying to say is, I'm agreeing with the Threshold Hypothesis in that sense but it's just that the Threshold Hypothesis doesn't make any difference between the groups in terms of social, or the status of the language, because it may be that, because somebody might have bad cognitive effects because of the language is stigmatized or they feel inconfident or..*	Speech-thought-writing. T. says M. not expressed in writing her ideas.
		T: *rather than because of the language itself.*	
118		M: *Yeah, maybe I didn't <u>say</u> that.*	
		T says will check to see if it's there. Reads 186ff -	
	186	T queries use of 'agree', - M. Offers 'support'. M feels 'agree' is all right. T underlines it and tells M to check later.	
129	188	M suggests needs to put 'because' in.	
	190	T suggests owing to semi bilingualism' needed after 'cognitive effects'.	
		T reads 191ff.	
150	201	M queries relevance of Coard - says not about language but about self- esteem. But points out Coard & M. are talking about effects of wider issues such as schooling, attitudes. M agrees. M. tells T she works in supplementary	
156		school one evening a week. She teaches pupils 5-11 for one hour, giving them extra time. She likes it and feels need for more supplementary schools.	
		M. talks of Chinese community having schools.	
170		T returns to essay. Suggests need for further sentence to show how M. linking semilingualism with notion of Creole being substandard. M says she has already said it. T. says perhaps not clear enough. T points to links needed: one made at 193.	
180		T says M. has not spelt out in writing what explained verbally to T,	
		the way a language is perceived.	
		T: *The fact that somebody might <u>label</u> it substandard would automatically put it on the semilingual front, rather than it actually being substandard.*	
185	202	T reads 202 - M asks whether T thinks there is a jump. T. yes. T reads 202-205.	T. queries wording 'healthy'.
		T says this is new dimension and asks how applies to Creole speakers.	
		M says talks about that later. T says there is a jump but needs to read. T reads	
198		205-220. T queries use of 'healthy'.	
		M: *I mean children of average ability.*	
205	219	M recognises 'healthy' not want to say 'average intelligence'. T suggests 'most children can speak... and in this way avoid controversial terms.	
		T reads 220-253	
	246	T queries 'could of' - M says 'would of' then corrects to 'could have'.	M. difficulty with 'could of'-speech/writing.
224		M: *Oh gosh, I can't cope with that. I just can't see the difference.*	
		T says not to worry too much - to check sheet - the ideas in essay are good.	
238	246	M. asks whether T can see her argument. T rereads 246 -	
		T: *Aren't you saying something like, a Punjabi speaker might speak well in terms of surface fluency, a teacher might listen to that child and assume they have sufficient English to use academically, but aren't you saying that with a Patua/Creole speaker what the teacher assumes is the opposite*	
		M: *Yes!*	
247		T: *That their language is so inferior that they can't do anything.*	
		M: *Yes. That's what I'm saying.*	Thought-speech-writing.
		T: *You haven't said that*	
		M: *I have*	
		T: *Show me where I'm not being funny. I know what you're saying but I don't think it's here*	

		M. reads 235ff - 'Surface, fluency'.	
262	246	T asks 'what surface fluency' - that M hasn't spelt it out. M: *The surface fluency of Creole isn't it?* T: *No, but what you're saying is, and you've explained it to me before and I think it's a really good point...*	
268		M. reads 247-248. She says she put it in brackets. T says should not be in brackets because it's an important point. M: *Really?*	T. queries use of brackets-key ideas hidden.
272		T: *It shouldn't be in brackets and I think you should explain it further because even if it sounds to you as if you're repeating, because what you're doing is, you've said you've understood it, but then you are turning it on its head its a way to say how it relates to Creole speakers. So you need to say that.*	
276		T reminds M that what she is doing is examining the usefulness of Cummins surface/academic fluency. T says M needs to spell out that she is altering the framework	
282		M: *and also that plantation English relates to that as well because this plantation English is inadequate for academic schoolwork - that quotation I used before, but you can't repeat quotations, can you? That would have been useful.*	
290		T. says no.	
291	246	T reads 246 - 'surface fluency' M: *I need some explanation there.*	
296		T tells her to show off this section because M critical of Cummins. M: *Well Cummins concept of surface fluency could be sort of applied to Creolised speech used by West Indian children. When any person in education hears them, it gives them the impression, because of the nature of the language and its structure it'll give the impression that this child's incapable of academic work. But sometimes people who speak Creole can read English and understand it quite well.*	T. highlights value of M's insight.
307		T: *I think you've got to say something like Cummins concept of surface fluency has got to be reinterpreted...* M: *Well I've put in brackets somewhere that it's in reverse order...* T: *Where? Because it's not clear you see.*	
312		T points to need to explain that for example a kid who speaks, has surface fluency can often be overestimated whereas the opposite... M: *Oh yeah, I've got to use an example for how they actually <u>overestimate</u> a child's fluency in some other language and then use an example to explain the Creole to make it more clear.*	M. articulating idea more clearly?-conscious of need for example.
328	T notes	T writes. M: *I never knew that such a word existed, 'reinterpreted'.* T: *What other word would you put?*	M. picking up on T's use of 'reinterpret'.
	T notes	M: *I don't know. I don't think there's anything wrong with it. I think it's all right. I all right. I think it saves a lot of.. time. Yeah, cause I didn't know what word to use. I was thinking I've got this idea and I can't say it.*	M. trying to find word to match idea..accepts T's word. Check if used. Thought/words.
349		T writes. M. asks about 249ff - whether fits in.	
354		T asks M. what means by 'anticipated in the opposite direction.	
381	253		

383		M: *Well the BICS, doesn't sound very good so it's still surface fluency, it's still, maybe surface fluency are not the right*	
385		*words to describe but it could be sort of surface - something else - what's the opposite to fluency? - cause I want to use a word. But I've got to use 'surface' because that's a keyword because it is just*	
390		*a surface, they're not delving deep really. Because their BICS is looked at inadequately, then they thought they're underestimated in terms of CALP then as well. But I don't know - surface fluency - I've got to come up with something else.*	
		T says thinks essay going well.	
396		M. says introduction 6 lines.	
		M: *This is an essay exploring some of the theoretical ideas of Cummins and Skutnabb, and the other guy that he was working with.*	
		T. reminds M. that Skutnabb's a woman. M. laughs.	
400		M: *I'm just going to.. say the discussion is based on the experience of bilingual children in education and their...*	
		T: *Are you talking about you?*	
405		M: *and some of the misunderstandings that have been used against them.*	
		T asks whether M. going to state that she will focus on Creole speakers.	
		M: *Do you think I should mention that in the introduction?*	
		T says should point out that drawing on personal experience - as pupil and teacher.	
414		M: *I don't think I'll have many problems with the conclusion, it's just a summing up.*	
		M says will give T introduction to look at T says no time (assignment due in	
417		following day) and that it will be fine.	
		M: *Oh I don't know, I might put 'of' or something.*	
419		M: *Is that enough then, Theresa?*	
		T says it's a good piece of work, particularly because M. has critically examined Cummins framework.	
431		M: *This essay's made me tired. I can't wait to finish it.*	
		M asks whether if she doesn't get place on combined studies this year, they will give her a place next year. T says need to find out.	

me2disfd

Essay	Tape	Notes/Focus	Comments
No	No		
		M tells T to start with what she wants.	
11		(1) T suggests M should start a new paragraph because highlighting a contrasting positive idea.	T on paragraphs for contrast.
17		(2) T says not clear what 'This opposing view' is.	T queries 'this' reference.
	14	M: *The opposing, the negative side actually.*	
		T: *So the negative view..*	
		M: *But that shouldn't come after the positive, should it? It should come after here.* (points to L11)	T suggests structure.
		T agrees.	
		(3) T queries wording 'mass majority'.	
	17	M: *The wide majority, I should have put. M said used mass for big amount. T asks M. whether used Thesaurus for that M no.*	T queries wording mass majority.
		M: *mass means big amount.*	
	19	T: *yes, but you wouldn't tend to put it with majority.*	

		M: *It's like putting two adjectives together, isn't it?* T: *yes. Except here you've put...* M: *It is isn't it - two adjectives described it twice.* T. says majority enough.	
53	26	(4) T. says need to say why 2 types. M. says to contrast two different groups. T says but presumably M has chosen those two because they are the most useful contrasts in British situation M: *For standard English and Creole speakers. Yeah, it is because of that.* T. says M needs to say that.	T - need to be explicit about reason for choosing 2 types to focus on.
		M: yeah I'm not tying it in with what my project's all about. I'm not relating it to me. Yeah I can see that.	M - need to tie in material. Evidence of learning.
	32	T. says the 'tying in', the 'argument', M is good at. T. says M has got line going through but needs to tie in some more neatly, to sew it up. M: *I've sat down and read your comments and thought, 'why has she said that?" I've done that before I've come here.*	M has read comments previously.
	35	T: *And? Do they make sense?* M: *Yeah, they all do. I think there are some where you've put 'wording'. Some of those are, I'm not quite.... I can't understand why you've put 'in' there?*	M understands comments but not wording.
76		M points and reads 'result to'. M: *'to's' wrong. Result 'in'. To me, it makes sense, but obviously you're going to have some argument about this (laughs).*	T queries - prepositions result to
	42	T says will have to look back over their discussions, but feels that prepositions seems to be a problem. M. says they cause a lot of problems with everyone. M: *Because you can <u>go</u> to a situation and you can be in, a situation. To me that makes sense. They should change the English language (laughs).* T. says that in the standard form it would be 'result in'. M asks T if, you can never use 'to' with 'result'. T. says trying to think. M: *I'm sure I've heard that before result to, result to other blah, blah.* T: *you can <u>resort</u> to* M: *Resort to....* T: *she resorted to violence.*	T/M on prepositions, result to resort to.
	50	M: *The last resort, no other way. And the result is actually how it ends up.* M. sighs deeply, fed up. T says can't think of a logical reason to explain why can't say 'result to'.	M frustrated with SE prepositions.
	52	M: *Some of these rules are made up for no reason what so ever, that's why. (laughs). That's why it's difficult to learn you see because sometimes there's no reasons why. Some of the knowledge comes innately, about language.* T: *what do you mean by 'innate'?* M: *you know, reading books and I know 'oh that just doesn't sound right'. Most of my knowledge about writing's through that. Just reading and what it sounds like.* T says will look to see what she can find on prepositions. M. says still got sheets on <u>of</u> and <u>have</u>. M says is going to work on it.	
	105	(5) T tells M to be consistent in use of pronouns. M had used 'their' and then 's/he'.	T - need for consistency in

69		M: *I should say they again, shouldn't I? cause it sounds like I'm referring to another person probably.*	pronouns.
		T. says it's clear but doesn't match up.	
	110	(6) Need to clearly show which sections of M's texts are based on SK.	VOICES ACADEMIC convention - need to be explicit about which sections based on texts.
		M. says has indicated previously that she was going to base her work on SK.	
	50	Shows T. Line 50. T reads.	
		T: *Except that here, you've put the reference in again and you don't mean just about this paragraph, do you?*	
	78	M: *No*	
109		T. says M needs to move whole bracket to next line-indicates referring	
	80	to previous section and not just paragraph.	
		T. says this is small detail.	T hedging-dialogue.
		(7) Punctuation/clause boundary.	Clause/boundary
	115/117	T reads	
		M: *Put in a semi-colon? Comma?*	
		T. says not comma.	
	87	M: *A colon which is two dots which means a longer pause, than the one with a dot and a comma.*	
		T. says not just a question of length of pause. T says if M puts colon, can put explanation after it.	
	91	M: *But what's wrong with carrying straight on? Is the sentence too long?*	
		T: *Structurally, that would be another clause. If you think of SVO...*	
		T reads aloud - pointing to 'these findings' as subject. T asks M if she remembers	
	98	about SVO. M says 'these.... is subordinate clause. T says not.	
		M: *But that can't stand on its own.*	
		T says it is a complete clause on own and therefore needs a full stop, colon.	
		M: *I think I'd prefer the colon.*	
		T: *Why?*	
	106	M: *It represents like a pause, not a pause but like, I want to talk about something that's related to that but not directly connected you know what I mean. Oh I don't know Theresa.*	
	111	T says colon fine. But important that M realise that if she has two clauses, you have to link them or separate with full stop.	M linking meaning to punctuation.
		T: *Whether you link them or put a full stop will depend on what the ideas are.*	
		M: *But sometimes, you can kill an argument if you put like a full stop in.*	
		T: *Right, but what you can't do is have two separate clauses and do nothing with*	
	119	*them.*	
		M: *I suppose I can see what you're saying but to me, it's fine. (laughs)*	
115		T asks M to read aloud.	
		M says would only have put a comma.	
		T. says this is the only example she could see like this. Other clauses in essay	
		are either definitely linked or separated. T says will check to see what M has done	To discuss.
		in her work.	
134	136	(8) Style. T reads 'I can't'. 'I'm.	
137		M: *It's too informal, isn't it. I cannot. Yeah, I understand that now, definitely.*	M. on contractions.

		T. says expectations that in academic essay will use long/full forms.	Academic conventions
		M: *It makes me sick though.*	M - angry about contractions
		T: *What makes you sick about it?*	not being allowed in
	140	M:*I don't think it's important at all (laughs). But you have to do it, innit? it's like I'm imprisoned, honest to God (laughs). that's how I feel. And that's why a lot of people are not interested.*	academia.
	144	T: *When you have to say 'I am not'...*	
		M: *(sing song) I - am - not*	
		T: *Rather than, I'm not, does it make you feel different about what you're saying*	
		M: *yeah - I - am - not, it's like, what am I saying? I know what I'm saying but it's like what for? Everybody knows what I'm not means. It's like trying to segregate, you know, you've got like a boundary that sets, you know, you apart from other peole. Why? What difference does it make as long as you get your message across..You're separating yourself from the reader or audience, whoever you're talking to whoever. You're separating yourself..why? Why is that? why do you have to do that in language?It's not even needed cause I know what I'm saying. What all this informal, formal...*	
		T: *As long as everyone can understand what you're saying?*	
		M: *Yeah. It's got some standard to a certain extent, you know. I'm not saying it's it's got to be pure gibberish but this formal and informal, you know, what is it? I think it keeps you apart from people in a way. When you're formal, you have to set back... you put yourself back. And express yourself in a certain way, which*	Need for 'standard'
		is colder. Formal is more colder than informal, isn't it? You're separating yourself more from the reader or the audience, whoever you're talking to, whoever. You're separating yourself.	* Good point for my paper on conventions.
	164	*Why? Why is that? Why do you have to do that in language?*	
		T. talks of how hooks when not famous could not get BE use published, edited out. Now that famous she can do it.	
	170	M: *That's all it's about isn't it? Who you are and where you get yourself in society.*	
		T. says these are decisions that M is going to have to make. T says pointing them out because likely to be raised. M will have to work out what her tutors will accept, but generally contractions not accepted. T. says M. may be able to challenge it. M says not know what lecturers will be like.	
192	178	(3) wording. T reads. 'The earliest use of intelligence test was <u>conducted'.</u> T. says tests can be conducted but use... conducted problematic.	abstract nominal? passive/agency.
	183	M: *So conducting is actually getting it altogether before it's in use. And I'm, you can't conduct and use at the same time. Is that what you're saying?*	
		T. says looking at subject and collocation with verb. M says understands (T - not sure)	
265		M points to 'of' after have. T says M must use exercises she gave her to see if it helps.	
279	199	M points to 'negative effects to bilingualism'. T says different - issue of pre position. M reads and asks whether 'with' would be all right. T. says 'of' best. M. clearly not convinced.	
291		(9) T reads. Asks <u>who</u> subject he.	
289		M. explains and T says section does make sense.	
303	220	(3) wording. T asks M to read 303-307.	
305		M corrects <u>with</u> for '<u>in</u>'	
		M: *cut the 'this' out.*	

		T reads 'a child... can result' emphasising clause structure. T still doesn't make sense. M: *No because you've missed the middle out, that's why.* T. says missed middle out to show M what the subject is.	
	239	T says still child that is the subject even though there's a lot of information in the middle. T says because you can't say 'a child... can result' - reason why M put 'this! M. says fact that then wrote 'result to', rather than 'result in' may have a lot to do with why sentence wrong.	
	246	T. says no. T. says, what about the child.... sentence incomplete. M. reads - proficiently - and then continues with 'can result'... But T says T: *A child who has suffered a lot just to shorten it, you haven't said what happens to the child. You're telling a story..*	
	256	M: *And I've cut a bit out of the story and just put the ending bit, and not put what happened in between.* T says yes and rereads, a child... asks M. may what? M. rereads. A child.. T: *(prompts) will* M: *will become sort of, he's going to be set behind because he's not going to be able to interact properly (speaking very fast) because he'll be using a tool...* T: *Slow down... will be set behind. What do you mean?*	
	267	M: *He won't develop cognitively, cognitive progress won't take place, because he's using the tools what aren't sufficient to adapt to the environment. So with using language 2, he's going to come across problems. Do you get what I'm saying?* T: *I understand what you're saying but then we have to try and put that in a structure.*	Wording and meaning & form.
	243	M: *That's always my problem that. Why can I never find what I want to say properly?* T: *You do. Most of the time you do. We're looking at a couple of examples where you haven't.* M: *yeah. It takes such a long time to organise my thoughts in writing.* T: *Right. If I follow what you're saying, and the story is about a child at the moment, 'unfortunately a child.... may find it difficult to develop their cognitive skills'. And that finishes that sentence off. Reads This, this whole situation can...*	
307	282	*so you needed to finish it off. It's like saying, Mary, who is a student at SUMES* *... what?*	
	287	M: *And then I miss a bit out. I understand yeah definitely. There's something definitely missing.* T. says students find it difficult to pull the ideas and clauses together.	Evidence of learning clause structure.
	297	M: *It's me, I'm not using my tools properly. I'm not using my thoughts, I'm not putting my thoughts down into writing properly. Just skimming things.* T: *So how would you be able to pick that up then?* *M: slowly thinking, stage by stage, step by step what I want to say. And saying it properly and making each sentence connect up. Making sense.* T: *That's when you're thinking but then how are you going to check what you've got on paper?* M: *Like this, like what we're doing now. Perhaps I could use a tape recorder, talk rewind and listen.*	

	305	T says M could try.	
373	308	T reads 372-3 emphasising 'determine' M: *I should put interpretate why or..* T: *explains...* M: *explains why...* T: *Do you think?*	
	314	M: *Yeah. 'Determines' wrong cause determines like, what is it? Determine is sort of like an explanation.* T says sometimes it can mean fixed. Explain better.	Thesaurus used?
382	325	(9) Explain. T reads 382-384 inconspicuous. M: *'inconspicuous' meaning the noticeable bits. But I shouldn't have put 'in', conspicuous, that's something really noticeable, isn't it?* T: *But you mean inconspicuous, do you? Do you mean things that are noticeable or not noticeable.*	
	338	M. says noticeable. T says that explains why she couldn't understand it.	
422		(3) wording. T reads 422-426. T says thinks M has cut the sentence before it's finished. M. reads aloud. T: *Whereas all that... what?*	
	354	M: *what I'm going to do is make a comparison between the Punjabi and the Creole speakers, that's all. That's I put whereas'.* T: *That's okay. But if you're going to put that, you need to finish it off.* T. says she's understood what M's saying but the structure needs sorting. M: *It's disgusting!*	
	360	T: *No, it's not.* T: *Whereas - something is said about a Punjabi speaking person, something else is said about a Creole speaker. And that's all in the structure.* M: *Ah... I understand...* T: *So what do you need to get rid of?* M: *But.* T: *Yes and the full stop.*	
422 -27		T. rereads aloud removing 'but'. M: *But why shouldn't I put 'but'?* T: *Because it's the same thing. You've already got 'whereas'. If you got rid of whereas, you'd put but in to join them up.* M: *But that's a join, it's just at the beginning.* T: *Absolutely.* M: *And I've put another join in the middle again.* T: *Yes, can you see that then?* M: *Yeah, now.*	
430		T tells M to learn the spelling of cons(c)equently as she obviously likes using the word.	
454		T tells M 'in fact' - two words END OF TAPE. SIDE TWO	

	1	Reference. T explains need to state reprinted. M: *That's not too bad then, is it? There's not too many.* T: *No. It's very good.* M: *It's all right.* T. reminds M that she had said in writing e1 that her syntax was 'crap' and T had told her to underline anything that didn't like. But M. hasn't done, so does that mean M. thought it was all okay.	
	7	M: *I did think some of it was 'iffy' but I just didn't want to highlight it (laughs).* T: *you thought I might miss it? (They both laugh). You horrible thing. did you think I'd pull it down?* M: *No, I didn't think that you'd pull it down, but I knew you'd discuss it with me and I was thinking sometimes when she's trying to point out some of these mistakes I'm making I can't see her point at all.* T: *Really?* M: *Yeah, sometimes.*	Dialogue-M not understanding.
	10	T: *Well you must tell me that then. Were there any of these here that you couldn't understand what I was going on about?* M: *No. Not really.* M. reads through list of comments. Says understood them. Had found (2) annoying at first because she hadn't understood it. Found (3) annoying too.	
	15	T. asks why. M: *Cause I don't like people criticising what words I use, cause me at the time of writing it really works.* T: *So you like it and don't like people saying they don't.*	
	17	M says a lot of the words in English mean the same thing, even though they have to be used in a different context. Finds it confusing. T. tells M about piece of writing she had done for supervisor who told her to cut a few words which she had thought were	
	26	best bit. (They laugh). M: *But you see, at the time when you're writing it and your attitude and your feelings at the time probably does fit it. But they don't <u>feel</u> what <u>you</u> feel you see.* *Because writing's about expressing yourself and how you feel at that time, they can't feel it. So it would be a load of rubbish to them because they've got their own perception of your writing and how they feel about it. That's why. That's all I see it as anyway. Because I remember in English with Miss K. She said (using RP pronunciation) 'oh Mary, you have an odd, odd way' - odd, she used to do it in big capitals - of expressing yourself. Yes, I do know what you're trying to say'. I*	M's concept of writing, essay, wording - 'inspiration' art.
	32	*felt like saying 'well, shut up then'.* T: *Did she <u>write</u> 'odd'?* M: *Oh yes at the end. 'Very good piece of work Mary but you've got an odd way of expressing yourself'.* T asks whether teacher ever talked to M about being a Creole speaker.	Tutor feedback past.
	32	M: *Never, ever, ever. She probably <u>is</u> aware of it. I mean she is an English teacher and we was doing Maya Angelou at some time.* M. says she did a piece of work for English GCSE where she had to keep a diary in Black American English supposing she was M. Angelou writing to her sister. M.	
	39	says she got B for it because she 'really caught it quick'. After reading excerpts	

	45	from the book where she'd used Black American dialect, M found it quite easy to do. M: *If I look back now, what I was actually doing was finding out the syntax and the grammar. I wasn't doing it consciously. and she thought it was really good.* M said she enjoyed it too.	
51	TF		

me2disf

Notes made 30/8/95

Tape	Essay	Notes/Focus	Comments
No	No	T explains that plans to come up with a summary of points made, also attempt to list the positive things about M's work.	
11		M.S. not worried about. T. says she'll come up with list of what <u>needs</u> to change, maybe will have to <u>decide</u>. T.s. 'could of/have' is wrong, but I'm/I am'	issue of, who 'they' in academia are?
23		is not, so M. needs to see list. M asks who makes could of/have rule up. Education? M asks who makes rules generally. T s. that she as tutor has to be aware of what moderator will say about different language uses. T.s. that moderator currently would support	M wants to know who makes rules of language.
29		alternative ways of writing in academia. Of personal writing -	
31		M: *It puts more character, doesn't it?* T says hopes to come up with framework for categorising different points discussed - need to be changed --------- choice.	M on self in writing in general.
	e2 20-22	(1) M: *I wasn't quite sure what it was saying but I thought it was something to do*	Drawing on other texts. Plagiarism check SK.
49		*with the wrong side politically so, but I didn't want to say that in case ... so I thought I better put that, I can't find any other word that would be equivalent to that and with the same preciseness,* T asks M how she works out what's important when she only half understands something.	*understanding of other texts.
54		M: *the half of the part what I understand about something is the part that's... a key point really.* T. asks if 'other side' sounded like wrong side politically but wanted to keep SK words in case hadn't understood it correctly.	M - understanding half of text drawing on that - plagiarism
59		M: *That's the only reason why I do that sort of thing. It's laziness as well... I did go back to it several times cause... sometimes when I'm writing it out it's as if I get a flow of ideas. I get them all down, I don't worry about all the things.* *And I'll go back and I'll look and I'll see, can I change that? Can I put that in my words? That's what I do.*	
67		(2) M. s. again she wouldn't say 'prerequisite'. T asks if M still feels the same about word.	M on 'prerequisite'

		M: *I feel like that about a lot of words (laughs) like sometimes if I'm talking to somebody's who's not been to college or anything like that, I'll think I can't say that word, you know. Cause they'll be thinking what the hell's she thinks she's talking to.*	Words and self conscious choice.
		T: *They'll see you differently?*	
71		M: *yeah they'll see me differently and I don't want em to, at all. At all (laughs)*	
		T: *what will they see you as?*	
		M: *oh, they'll say something like erm what's she using that word to me for? They probably do know what it means but they think there's no need for that. It's unnecessary. It's like putting on airs and graces in a way.*	
		T: *And you don't want to be like that?*	
		M: *No, and I think that's what holds a lot of people back actually. They've got this social pressure, you see...*	Social pressure holding people back - to not use certain words?
		T: *To what?*	check. Is she saying even words which are useful, i.e. reinterpreted cannot be used by all.
		M: *To stick to what...(laughs)*	
		T: *To stick to who we are.*	
76		M: *yeah, it's very strong as well, stronger than the actual institution probably, than the course that we're on. It's much stronger.*	
		T: *When you say 'we've got this pressure' who do you mean?*	
		M: *Us as a community sort of thing.*	
		T: *Do you mean anybody?*	
79		M: *Anybody, even white, anybody. Like my neighbour for instance, John, he's really down to earth and he doesn't speak like that and I probably couldn't speak like that to him. And, he's white. It's not to do with colour as such, it's social circle.*	
84		M.s. wouldn't use prerequisite . T S. M is using a lot of new words for her study. One example was reinterpreted, which M. liked. T asks why reinterpreted okay to use and not prerequisite.	
87		M: *Because prerequisite can be described in a lot of other ways, you see. You don't need it, it's just fancy, it's just an extra word. Reinterpreted, now, which means er being interpreted again in a different way, I can't see any other word for saying that, without having a long string of words and make it unclear. Prerequisite is something what you have to have beforehand, isn't it? Which I think you can say in a lot of other ways, without that.*	
92		T: *So it's to do with, so you try and use new words if you think they're absolutely*	
		M: *Necessary. Yeah. In a way, I'm fighting something unconsciously, I don't know. (laughs)*	M - resisting being socialised into new language.
		T asks how M feels about that. Does she feel she should be using prerequisite?	
97		M: *I mean, if I write like that, if I use certain words that are just unnecessary, I'm just going to feel out of it.*	
		T: *Out of what? (They laugh) Not out of your head?*	
		M: *Sort of like I'm not me, you know? It's like too much of a big stride.*	- words and self - not 'me'
		T asks M. if she could imagine herself, after doing a 3 year degree, to be the sort of person who would say 'prerequisite'.	
101		M: *No, because my mother doesn't say it.*	Need not use n. words example

		T: *And you don't want to be the sort of person who says that?*	of mother's experience.
		M: *well who were I going to do that with?*	New words social identity - who
		(laughs) I don't really know anyone who talks like that. You know even people	to use such words with?
		who have done degrees, they don't talk like that. They'll still be talking our	
		broken English and patois (laughs).	
105		T: *What do you mean 'broken English'. You've just done 2 essays on that?*	
		M: *That's what people say, 'so-called broken English' and patois, we still speak that and we love it, so. (laughs).*	M - loving patois.
		T.s. feels M has answered the question about whether there are any dangers, benefits in using new words.	
		M: *The new words, are good in a way. Depends who's reading it and who you're writing to. Depends on who I*	
		was writing to. If I was writing to someone who comes across that use of language all the time, then, maybe that's	
		fine to	New words are good.
114		*express yourself in that way. But like I say it's all context bound to that context.*	Context bound.
		(3) T asks if M still feels that the 'I' makes you feel part of it.	use of personal I's - prefers
		M: *you can never feel any different really. 'I' you're just there, aren't you? It's*	I - powerful.
		like you direct, whereas when you say 'we', not we, just 'the' or whatever, it's	But TL check m3.
		like, who's saying that? You know, 'who's said that'? (laughs).	
124		T. asks about the two 'I's.	
		M: *Sometimes I think I can be more than one.. I don't know why, it could be the Creole influence.*	
		T. asks M how well she feels she managed to pull the two I's and other writers together in the essay.	
134		M: *It just came I think. When I separated the voices, that's it after that.*	M - found 'separating the voices'
		Everything just came.	useful.
		T. asks if after drafts of Bernstein essay M feels that she's managed to separate voices out.	
		M: *And I find pleasure in it now you know... because I like to be able to distinguish between what I'm saying and*	
		what's been said by someone else. When it comes together, it's not good at all, cause you're not making yourself	
		clear. You ought to let the person who's reading the essay know what you are, what you're saying. I think that's	
		very important that. Separating the voices is one of the best, I think it's one of the best things I've	
			*
		ever... I never really thought about the voices before, separating them. I didn't realise I was making them	M - previously did not realise she was
		converge, making them link in. I didn't realise it.	'converging the voices'.
146		Ts. perhaps she should make that a lot clearer to everybody.	
		(4) Syntax	
		T reads notes and when T.s . M. had said didn't underline sections because she	
		didn't want criticism M laughs loudly.	
		M: *I don't know how to explain it, I don't know everything about language and*	
159		*linguistics but when I used to hear the same de de de de, I don't know, it wasn't flowing. It was like rigid.*	
		T.s. (notes) syntax not awful-some errors with different students.	
		M reads first example and s. there should be a comma or nothing at all.	
		M: *But I see in books, short sentences like that...*	M - short sentences and clause
		T.s. M must show her sentences if she thinks they are like the above.	boundaries.
		T. reads ex.2. M reads. T asks M if she can see where there should be a full stop. M.s. comma after children. M	
		asks why. T explains basic structure in	
184		English. M asks which is verb in clause (a). T. explains SVO/C.	
		T.s. needs to think about how to explain this - she can talk about SVO/C because students on linguistics course.	

		Ms.. they haven't been applying what they've learned.	
189		T. suggests reason is that in talking, you mark off the boundaries with information but not in writing. Ts. needs to think of how to explore this.	
195		T. asks M if these are examples of what M means when she says she has problems with syntax. M: *yeah, I think that's what it is, I don't know. I think it's punctuation, I'm not quite sure when to use it, I don't know.*	M - not sure what she means by problems with syntax.
208		(6) could of/have. M: *I've got that sorted out now. 'Have' is possessing, 'of' is like, yeah, I've got that sorted out.* T.S. <u>could</u> and <u>of</u> would never go next to each other in writing. M: *why don't they teach this in school?* T: *Perhaps they do?* M: *They don't.*	M - could of/have.
231		M. feels got of/have sorted. Prepositions - M can't see why certain, prepositions unacceptable 'no good reason'. M.s. 'aim to' is okay. TS. needs to make list of prepositions for M. Pronouns. T. an consistency in use. M understands that. M: *Well if you start a new paragraph you can change.* T: *Well not really.* M: *So throughout the whole essay (laughs). Bloody hell!*	prepositions T <u>check</u>
239		Ts. that there are different views on s/he - they - (based on discussions for essay writing pack, tutors had different opinions). T.s. important to make clear who you're talking about.	
246		T asks s/he. M.s. didn't like it but does now. T asks what changed her mind. M: *It's convenient. Say if I wanted to talk about somebody who can be either male or female, it's good. I can see the advantage of it. What did I used to do before? I think I used to put she or he.*	M on changed opinion of use of s/he.
258		however. Why took 'however' out? M: *I took it out because I didn't know what the hell was going on. So I thought (T laughs) forget it! Get it out.* T.s. okay but it is an important point. M: *I thought however meant, well another change of thought.* T: *It does but it means a change in <u>direction</u> of thought.*	T on 'however' check texts.
262		M: *I thought it meant the same direction. Oh.. a completely different idea?* T. gives example 'I like going shopping. However I'm not going today'. M: *Whereas, I've been saying 'I like going shopping however I'm going to buy some... laughs* T: *Exactly.* T returns to example in M. text. And how 'however' makes her expect a different idea.	Dialogue - examples - inpractice? check m3.
277		M: *You're going to expect something like 'however, the continuum's no good'. (laughs)* M.s. that is a serious point. T agrees because it confuses the leader.	
284		M: *It's serious and I just used it casually like it was nothing but it's very serious.* Ts. also serious because in future tutors may have less time to read M's work in detail and may not think 'oh that's	M - 'however' serious error.

298		what she means and she's put the wrong conjunction in'. M: *I'm glad you've shown me that anyway.*	M - usefulness of dialogue 'however'.
306		(7) reads M: *I expressed myself a lot more in my second essay and the reason why I liked my argument was because I liked reinterpreting what Cummins had said* *cause he was talking about surface fluency, how someone speaks, and I wanted to say that that situation was the reverse for people coming from, like* *Creole speakers. Cause probably how... they're thinking it's bad English,* *they'll be thinking 'oh they don't know anything, they must be daft. Because* *language and thought are obviously closely linked, aren't they.* T: *So you liked the idea of taking that framework and doing something else* *with it?* M: *yeah, I don't know if anybody's ever done a framework about Creole speakers...*	M uses 'reinterpreted' in talk. M - enjoyed e2 because of reinterpreting Cummins.
318		T.s. it would be good to include M's reinterpretation of Cummins' framework.	
325		Ts. usually most original work comes out of project but M's framework would be good to include. M: *But where I'm lucky really, reinterpreting other ideas and things like that is because when every time I read something I always try to apply it to a different situation so I can understand it, to a situation that I know of. Then all* *of a sudden some idea comes up and that's it. And that's how it triggers off* *and before you know it, I'm writing a page on that.* T tells M to hang on to that.	M - recognises her strength in attempting to explore ideas.
345		M: *Yeah that's my strength. That is my strength. Otherwise I wouldn't be able* *to write anything. I can't just write boring things. I can't do it,... how do people* *understand something if they don't apply it to a situation what they know of.* T.s. that is a big criticism in education as to what learning is about - transmission or relevant learning.	M - need to apply ideas to what they know.
359		M.s they don't want people to think anyway. TS. (8) M. wrote good conclusion - more time? M s. knows she can do a good conclusion if she has the time. M: *That's if I don't get caught up in the middle. Cause most of my exciting ideas are in the middle. And I spend too much time. And by the time the conclusion comes I'm exhausted (laughs).*	M on writing conclusion - effort/weary.
367		(9) M: *I do still feel the same about that. I do still think 'why separate people'?* *Why does there have to be a distance, aren't we all bloody humans?*	M - contractions and effect of not using them. Distance TL between when? check.
381		T: *But which people are being separated from what, do you think? Everybody?* M: *No, the person who's writing the idea is separating himself from what he's* *actually, obviously it's all that stuff about being objective and even if you're writing to somebody official, you*	
385		*never put 'I'. Why? Why? Isn't it you? Isn't it you that's writing the letter? Isn't it you you're, talking about.* *Why not be direct and say 'I'.* T: *So what's the effect of separating people, why would the institution want to do that?*	
391		M: *It's like a standing off, like I'm not interested in the person, I'm just interested in what they've written. Which I thinks a bit... it's like, I just want your ideas, I don't want to know you.*	M - separating person from ideas

side 2			*
		T asks what M will do on her course next year re 'I' business. M: *Oh I'm cutting it out, the 'I'. I'm going to do it for my first essay, take a risk..* T: *To see what they say?* M: *Yeah (laughs). Do you know what I'm going to do? I'm going to cut the 'I' at first, write a nice essay and then on a second one I'm going to put 'I' in, to make them think that, it's not cause I'm doing it cause I don't know what I'm*	M take risk future - 'I'.
6		*doing...* T.s. M. could ask. M laughs. M.s. wouldn't have the guts for the first essay and it depends what the group's like, depends what tutor like. (10) M: *They are to a certain extent, but to some extent, some of the knowledge about writing is, seems to me, has to be something innate. Not innate, but like something you've been used to for a long time.*	M on writing/standard - innate. TL. so how can learn? Do discussions help?
		T: *So it's still difficult to get a hold of..* M: *sometimes I'll get to a point and I think what do I do now? Do I do this or*	
18		*do I do that? Even though you've talked about it maybe before. It's something like innate you know, like repetition of sentences and all of a sudden you know when something's ungrammatical. It's just, you <u>know</u> because you've heard it over and over. You know like Chomsky's idea.. and I think, if you're around people that speak like that constantly, you would notice it more and use the standard. I don't speak round people who use the standard, I don't bother with it. So, it's very difficult for me. It's like I'm really having to examine, say it again, again. Sometimes I spot it, sometimes I*	
21		*don't. It depends what mood I'm in.*	M on access to standard and effect on her writing.
24		T. asks M if there's anything T could do in the future differently, to help people look at their writing. M: *People like us who have got problems with our writing? Yeah. Read more.* T: *What? Me tell <u>you</u> to read more?* M: *(laughs) That's what I was told. I don't know. One thing I was told by someone was, anytime I do any writing, read it out on tape recorder, play it to yourself. It didn't work.*	
36		T.s.N tried that and she said it helped her a bit. MS. sometimes it helps. M.s. it would be obvious to hear switches form standard and other codes. M: *I suppose I'm not that bad because I can say some things in 3 or 4 different ways.*	M - evaluating her writing.
41		T. tells M she's a good writer and has strength of critically examining an idea.	
45		(11) MS. was going to use Louise Bennett but didn't want to stray off topic. T asks if there are things M feels she can say and things she can't. M: *I feel there are things you can say and things that you cannot...* T: *Like. ?* M: *(laughs) like these white people... what I'd like to say would be out of context.* T.s. talking about within context. T. asks about writing about Creole. M.s. that things she wants to say about	M - what can be said in essays.

		white people's attitudes can't be written in 2 sentences.	
68		M: *It's too big, when that feeling comes to you, it's like, you really want to, you know.. (quiet) bring it out. But the way you bring it out probably is not nice. Not swearing, I wouldn't swear...*	
		(12)	
		M: *I do, I think I've got the ability to study, I've always known you know, I can <u>think</u> for myself, I <u>know</u> that. But I just feel that my thinking's just way above my writing.. Sometimes I want to say things and I'm thinking of words to say them and it really, gosh, my thinkings way above my writing. Do you get what I mean? And that's how I'm feeling now. I feel like what I really could say if my writing was just that bit better. And that's only for the purpose of getting my ideas across more clearly and better.*	
84		T: *And would that relate again to why you want a word like 'reinterpreted', because that is a word that helps to explain what you're trying to say whereas the other one was just 'fancy nonsense'?*	
88		M: *yeah, I don't want no fancy nonsense. But I do want words, I do want to improve. Course I do. I <u>need</u> it to say what I want to say. Cause what I've got to say needs to be expressed better. And I think at the moment, with the vocabulary that I've got, it's not <u>that</u> bad. But it doesn't, I miss out a lot of things cause sometimes when you*	M - wants words.
90		*find a better word you can say more things in that one word, whereas when you go down lower the vocabulary, it means very few sometimes. You know what I mean? The Thesaurus is no good because when I look up words I do know what they actually mean and I see they've got other words what are supposed to be having the same meaning..*	M - needs bigger vocabulary. - value of new words.
	95	T.s. she didn't use Thesaurus bought one but felt more confused than anything else. M.s. she always goes back to the dictionary. T.s. that although M did write a good piece work, she did seem to get fed up about it and also seemed not sure about whether she wanted to study. At first M had been keen, then disappointed..	
104		M: *It's not that. It's just that when I read certain things that are political like SK is political, isn't she? It was really upsetting me, you know. I thought what the heck with these people. And I thought, I'm only caught up in it, following the rubbish. That's what I started to think. I even think that now, what am I going there for? I just don't want the Employment Centre to be harassing me for a job. I'm not going to work for 45 pound a week. I'd rather*	M - upsetting area for study - bilingualism. M - convinced that she should be involved in academia.
109		*go and do this.* T. asks whether M's wanting words to express self would be reason for continuing study.	
113		M: *Yeah, cause my mum says to me, well, you want to get going. Carry on and get better. Cause if I'm improved while I've been here with you, what would happen after 3 years? (implying there would be <u>huge</u> improvement).*	M - great potential for future.
		T.s.M would be unstoppable.	
		M: *Yeah, cause I've never experienced talking to anyone about my essays before, so I find it <u>very</u> interesting and I appreciate, maybe other people in the class don't (they laugh). I do, I <u>do</u> cause I can see the benefits of it. Nobody's ever sat down and talked to me about my essays. They've just said oh, 'hard to fathom at times'. (they laugh).*	M - enjoys talking about her essays.
		T asks about Creole (notes) - language/politics.	
124		M: *What I did was use the strategy I've been using for a <u>lifetime</u>, block it out.*	

129		*We've got a mechanism in us that's inbuilt, you know. And you just block it. You have to learn that though when you're black.* T: *To survive.* M: *Course you do. I mean, you hear so much negative things all the time, all the time. They're frightened of something, anyway. I don't know what it is.* T asks what that means for somebody going through univ. - what happens to person doing the blocking, what happens to those ideas... M: *But even with SK writing. I don't think she said what she really wanted to.*	M - content - block out difficult issues.
146	*	She had to be a bit more civil... Sebba's way ahead. Most people are not even where he is. T (talking as if S. white) asked how S. managed to hold on to things in order to explore them. M: *That's what we have to do. As soon as we get where we want, we have to yaaagh (vomit). You have to be like that.* T. asks how S. managed to get that space. M: *But before you get there you have to be like a mouse. Play the game. That's with anybody though. Once you get your name, then you do what you want. I think it's really unfair. Why do we always have to pretend?*	M - self in system 'mouse' pretence.
	163F		

Appendix 4
Drafts of Mary's essay 2

Discussed in MezDisAl and AL. E2 Draft 1

Bilingualism has been and still is categorised as disadvantageous and unprogressive for the attainment of academic qualification. The reason is because it tends to be associated with people from low socio-economical groups. This applies to migrants who speak a minority language in a foreign country. Commonly these people are forced to acquire the politically powerful language of the majority (Skutnabb Kangas 1981). This situation would refer to creole and punjabi speakers in Britain, who are compelled to acquire the major language English. Bilingualism was viewed positively during the earlier 19th century. It is common amongst the middle classes and patrician people involved in trade. Negative attitudes towards bilingualism emerged from the existence of the nation state. This opposing view was supported by the 'one nation-one language' ideology. In which native and immigrant linguistic minorities as well as against minorities which found themselves on the 'wrong' side of some national frontier as the consequences of treaties (Skutnabb Kangas 1981).

Although the negative view of bilingualism is going through a process of change a major majority of monolingual language speakers still perceive bilingualism as irregular or some what odd.

A bilingual individual usually possesses identities (if they accept it or not) with the enrichment of two cultures and two languages. If attempts are made to maintain both of them it can be as strange as abnormal. Bilingualism is different! assumed to be deficient or inferior. But this is not just a degree of larging upon the community in which the bilingualism exists. There are double standards, for instance while bilingualism is often viewed as an asset because it concerns those from higher social (Skutnabb Kangas 1981). If you are a bilingual individual coming from a socially low status background, and your mother-tongue is a minority language in comparison to the official majority language of the country (for example, several African states colonalised by european countries) * Bilingual individuals can be grouped into four main categories in which all groups undergo

Draft 1

47 different experiences to attain bilingualism
48 Based on the work of Swinnabb (Canada)
49 will take brief notes on the important points which
50 typify the situation of bilinguals in each of
51 the three main groups
52
53 Elite bilinguals
54
55) The choice to become bilingual is usually voluntary
56) These groups of bilinguals tend to be from backgrounds
57 of high social status i.e. upper and middle classes.
58 The parents of these children are most likely
59 educated or wealthy business (wo)men

60 4) Social and family pressures to become bilingual
61 are often non-existent

62 5) The child tends to be proficient in their own
63 mother tongue, which serves as a reliable foundatio
64 for acquiring another language competently.

65 6) The childs mother tongue is not threatened by the new
66 language (if it is an international language)

67 7) The bilingual often have some primary knowledge of
68 the new language beforehand.

69 8) Since the childs social standing is high there
70 will respond positively towards them and offer
71 encouragement when attempting to acquire (ie learn)
72 language.

73 9) If the child fails to become bilingual it does not
74 result in devastating consequences. The child will return
75 to their home country or decrease social interaction wit
76 native speakers of the foreign country

77 children from linguistic majorities

78) These children achieve bilingualism by two main
79 procedures: children who learn a foreign language at
80 school and those in immersion programmes. Immersion
81 linguistic majority with a high status mother tongue taught
82 through the medium of a foreign language

Draft

2) Children from linguistic majorities become bilingual for two main popular reasons. Social upheaval among minority groups who may demand that their language receives more prestige. The language has to be learnt by the majority for this to happen in order to make the language official.

3) When the minority language is used for instruction by the majority this enables (the majority) them to benefit from the economical interests of both parties. The immersion programmes fulfill this particular aim. The Canadian schools were linguistic immersion programmes are available to linguistic majority children who are taught through the medium of French).

4) The linguistic immersion programmes tend to teach prestigious minority languages.

5) Children who become bilingual (as a result of social unrest (the first group mentioned above) do so voluntarily.

6) They do not have to cope with internal family pressure or external social pressure.

7) The methods and resources which are used to teach majority children a foreign language are more adequate than those used for any other linguistic groups.

8) If the child fails to become bilingual the consequences are not serious. It will not affect their linguistic or academic achievement. They will simply be competent monolingual speakers in their mother tongue, and are able to continue as normal since their language has official status.

Children from bilingual families

1) The child's parents both have different mother tongues

2) If one of the parents speaks a majority language then the child will experience external pressure from society to become monolingual in that official language.

3) Society does not give the child an incentive to become

Draft

bilingual but, instead, monolingual.

4) Some children often experience pressure from the family to speak both their minority and majority language properly.

5) Their child will change their language voluntarily but usually as a result of pressure to assimilate into the majority culture or society.

6) There is a risk that the child may not speak both languages with equal proficiency. One end up dominant in one of the two languages (usually the majority language).

7) If the child fails to become bilingual, the child will not be able to communicate with one or both of the parents if s/he has not maintained their mother-tongue.

8) If the first language is replaced by another language, then s/he will not be able share their parents traditions and culture and introduce it to the next generation.

9) These negative consequences do not apply to children who live in a home environment where one of the parents speaks a majority language which is the official language of the country.

children from linguistic minorities

1) The child is under severe societal pressure to learn the language of the larger community since their mother-tongue has no official status.

2) The expectations of outside pressure influences parents to encourage their child to speak the majority language competently in order to achieve a good education and the economic prospects which they themselves may not of had.

3) Most parents desire that their children learn their mother-tongue also. Although, very few minority parents do not want their child to learn the mother tongue. These people do

Draft

not want to be identified by their ethnic
group because they are experiencing extreme racism
from the majority community.

5) Since they may occupy a low social standing
they feel more compelled to adapt to the larger
community (ie refugees).

6) Some parents are not aware of the importance
to maintain their mother tongue and will
replace it with the majority language.

7) The resources and methods used to aid
minority children into bilingualism are
inadequate and inefficient.

8) The risk of failure to become bilingual
results to more serious consequence than
any of the other bilingual categories.

8) If the child becomes dominant in their
minority language then s/he will experience
under achievement in school and will most
likely be employed in menial work.

9) The child will have a limited opportunity to
influence the wider community or change
the situation for their own ethnic group.
(Skutnabb Kangas 1981: 75–79)

My Section

This last category strongly reflects the
minority group in which I belong. My ethnic
origin is African-Caribbean, and although
does not seem to exist in any
which is Jamaica creole / patwa it is evident
that language problems are found among
some African-Caribbean children and
were established by the national
the ILEA. West indian children (in comparison
to their contemporaries [illegible])
had a poor reading ability in education system
failed (or ignored) to realise the need
children since creoles/patwas have no
official status neither in England or Jamaica
this neglect of course put some west indian
children at a disadvantage.

E2 D2 Mezdisa2. Draft 2

Bilingualism has been and still is categorized as a disadvantage and ~~unprogressive~~ for the attainment of academic qualifications. The reason is because it tends to be associated with people from low socio economical groups. This applies to migrants who speak a minority language in a foreign country. Commonly, these people are forced to acquire the politically powerful language of the majority (Skutnabb Kangas 1981) This situation could be referred to punjabi, Urdu, or arabic, creole etc speakers in Britain. However bilingualism was viewed positively during the earlier 19th century. It was common amongst the middle classes and particularly people involved in trade. Negative attitudes towards bilingualism emerged from the existence of the nation state. This opposing view was supported by the 'one nation - one language' ideology, in which native and immigrant linguistic minorities as well as ~~against~~ minorities ~~which~~ found themselves on the 'wrong' side of some national frontier as the consequences of treaties (Skutnabb Kangas 1981:67)

Very clear

Although the negative view of bilingualism is going through a process of change a mass majority of monolingual language speakers still perceive bilingualism as irregular or some what odd. A bilingual individual usually possesses two identities (whether they accept it or not) with the advantage of two cultures and languages. If attempts are made to maintain both of them it can be viewed as strange or abnormal. Anything different is assumed to be deviant or unworthy. But this sort of judgement depends largely upon the community in which the bilingualism exists, since they are double standards, for instance elite bilingualism is widely viewed as an asset because it concerns those from higher social groups (Skutnabb Kangas 1981) whereas.

Elite bilinguals Draft 3

D3 1) The choice to become bilingual is usually volun and the parents of these children tend to be from backgrounds of high social status (ie upp and middle classes.

D4 2) Bilingualism is not imposed upon them by schoo the choice to learn a foreign language is initia by themselves. Although there are exceptions such as the international European schools which are elite bilingual establishments.

3) The child is often quite proficient in their own mother tongue, which serves as a facilitation for acq another language competently. Elite bilin usually have some primary knowledge of i foreign language beforehand.

4) The childs mother-tongue is not threat by the foreign language because it is international since the childs social is high others will respond positively to them and offer encouragement when attem to acquire the new language.

5) If the child fails to become bilingual it does not result to devastating consequ. The child will either return to the country of origin or interact with native speakers of the foreign language.

There is a significant contrast with the Lima case. The [illegible] the [illegible] phenomenon as a [illegible] aspect to linguistic [illegible]. It is [illegible] for elite bilinguals to [illegible] linguistic minorities in the education

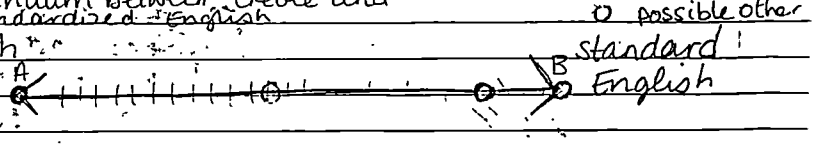
D3 1/2 Although there are various definitions bilingualism which focus on four a of linguistic ability, I cant really one that describes the situation for me as a creole/English bilingual. I a not a monolingual because I speak two distinctive codes (English and Creol

Come before bilingual group

Draft 3

and I am not recognized as bilingual by certain linguists, psycholinguists and educationalists. The Jamaican creole that I speak does not have a completely different grammar and vocabulary to the English language. All forms of West Indian creoles should be viewed as a continuum. However, there is a large number of creole speakers but no one speaks each uses a creolized speech to the same extent. There is a variable degree of its use. The continuum of English creolized speech can be represented as a diagram which is my own construction. The purpose of this diagram is to get any ideas across more clearly.

Fig 1. A diagram showing the continuum between creole and standardized English



The points A & B are the two main dimensions. A speaker could be placed at any point on the scale according to the extent to which a creole or standardized English is used. For example, my subjective view would be that I am able to reach either extreme. This means I can speak relatively standardized English and creole. The situation for other people may be different. For instance, some speakers do not speak creole really well, but can speak standardized English more competently. These speakers would be placed roughly very near point along the scale (indicated by green circle). The positions in which each speaker is placed along the scale are approximate.

Elite bilinguals [illegible] A+3

1) The choice to become bilingual is usually volunt
and the parents of these children tend to be
from backgrounds of high social status (i.e. upp
and middle classes.

2) Bilingualism is not imposed upon them by schoo
the choice to learn a foreign language is initia
by themselves. Although they are exceptions such
as the international European schools which
are elite bilingual establishments.

3) The child is often quite proficient in their own mother
tongue, which serves as a facilitation for acqui
another language competently. Elite bilingu
usually have some primary knowledge of th
foreign language beforehand.

4) The childs mother-tongue is not threatened
by the foreign language because it is
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is high others will respond positively towar
them and offer encouragement when attempti
to acquire the new language. A

5) If the child fails to become bilingual it
does not result to devastating consequences.
The child will either return to his home
country or decrease social interaction with
native speakers of the foreign language.

There is a significant contrast between
two linguistic groups. The el bilingu
are definitely at an advan over
aspect to linguistic minorities. It is inevit
for elite bilinguals to outperform
linguistic minorities in the education syst

D3 * Although there are various definitions of
bilingualism which focus on four areas
of linguistic ability, I cant really find
one that describes the situation for me
as a creole/English bilingual. I am
not a mono-lingual because I speak
two distinctive codes (English and creole

Come before bilingual groups

not wants to be identified as an African ethnic group because they are experiencing extreme adv from the majority communities.

4) Since they may occupy a low social standi they feel more compelled to adapt to the larg community (ie refugees).

5) Some parents are not aware of the importa to maintain their mother-tongue and will replace it with the majority language.

6) The resources and methods used to aid minority children into bilingualism are inadequate and inefficient.

7) The risk of failure to become bilingual results to more serious consequence than any of the other bilingual categories.

8) If the child becomes dominant in their minority language the s/he will experi under achievement in school and will mo likely be employed in menial work.

9) The child will have a limited opportu to influence the under community, or change the situation for their own ethnic group. (Skutnabb Kangas 1981: 75-79)

My structure

The last category stressing the minority group in which I belong, the origin is African-Caribbean, and the de is a [illegible] seem to distinguish my which is Jamaica creole / patwa it is and that language patterns are from the same African-Caribbean [illegible] that were established by the Colonial [illegible] the ICE West Indian [illegible] to their contemporary [illegible] had a poor reading ability. The education sys failed (or ignored) to realise the [illegible] children. Since creoles/patwas have no official status neither in England or Ja the problem was not addressed properly.

The West Indian creolized speech u categorised as a cognitive genetic deficiency and a non-standardized language by

Draft 4

the national association of schoolmasters (NAS) (Edwards & ALLADINA 58). So therefore, creole was not recognized as a language and west Indian creole speakers were not considered to be bilingual.

Other ethnic minority groups have also suffered from racist ideologies within education. The discrimination is of a similar nature to those experiences by West Indians in the sense that the oppression is politically motivated. This is reflected by the research which has been carried out to investigate the negative effects of bilingualism. One negative view is from Weisgerber (1966) who claimed that bilingualism would have some devastating effects on the intelligence of an entire ethnic group. This sort of opinion is quite common amongst psychologists and educators (Bilingualism). The earliest use of intelligence tests was conducted by Binet and originally written in French. However, Goddard (1910) translated the test into English and used it to measure the intelligence of Jewish immigrants. From the results he came to the conclusion that Jews were 'feeble-minded' (Romaine 1989).

Hakuta (1986:19) argued against Goddards findings by questioning the validity of the test. Goddard administered the test through a translator in a situation which was unfamiliar to the immigrants and may have caused some apprehension (Romaine:100). The studies done by Saer (1924) were the most popular cited studies. The subjects were 1,400 welsh/English bilingual children between the ages of 7 and 14 in five rural and two urban areas of Wales. He came to the conclusion that the low scores obtained by rural bilingual children was a result of low intelligence (supposedly caused by bilingualism). The higher scores of urban children were said to be due to their earlier opportunities of being able to experience the use of both languages at an young age (Romaine 101).

Although there seems to be a correlation between bilingualism and low IQ scores, the

Draft 4

50 In urban areas monolinguals and bilinguals
51 are comparable in terms of intelligence this is
52 measured by IQ. Clearly, the urban children hac
53 more exposure to the English language before
54 they began school and during social contact out
55 of school. This was not the case for rural bilingua
56 who were probably more isolated (Romaine 1981). In a later sh
57 Morrison (1968) highlighted other factors that could
58 influence the results for instance the parents
59 occupation or social class had been taken
60 into account. As a result the measures of
61 intelligence between rural and urban children
62 were relatively the same.

63 Peel and Lambert (1962) had carried out stuc
64 with the aim to measure the true ability of
65 bilingual children. They had taken special ca
66 to control the variables which were treated
67 inappropriately in earlier studies by other research
68 For instance, the subjects in both groups were ma
69 in terms of social class background. They compare
70 10 yr olds bilinguals and monolingual children
71 from the same french school system in Montreal.
72 Peel and Lambert used only balanced bilinguals who
73 could speak both languages proficiently which
74 they assessed by giving the children various
75 tasks and subjects self ratings.

76 The findings indicate that bilinguals are
77 superior to monolinguals on both verbal an
78 non-verbal intelligence. Bilinguals were also
79 better on certain subtests which required mer
80 manipulation and reorganisation of visual patter
81 They also had other abilities such as certai
82 mental or symbolic flexibility.

83 "Intellectually (the bilingual's experience SR) wit
84 two language systems seems to have left him
85 with a mental flexibility, a superiority in conce
86 formation, and a more diversified set of
87 mental abilities, in the sense that the patter
88 of abilities developed by bilinguals were mor
89 heterogenous. It is not possible to state from the pres
90 study whether the more intelligent child becam
91 bilingual or whether bilingualism aided his
92 intellectual development, but there is no questio
93 about the fact that he is superior intellectually
94 In contrast the monolingual appears to have

Draft 4

a more limiting structure of intelligence which he must use for all types of intellectual tasks (Peel and Lambert 1962 104 in Romaine) There are various other findings by other researchers that support Peel and Lambert's studies. But they themselves have great difficulty in trying to explain the causal relationship between bilingualism and cognit flexibility on the basis of cross sectional evidence. This may be due to the fact that Peel and Lambert probably failed to control confounding variables in their experiment. For instance it could be that the more intelligent individu are the ones who become bilingual. This problem be resolved by carefully controlled longitudinal study which measure intelligence before and after the onset of bilingualism (Romain 106) Macnamara (1966 in Romain 106) claimed that the positive effects of bilingualism as indicated by the results of Peel & Lambert's studies was inevitable since the sample was biased. The children were selected bilinguals who already have a talent for language learning Fishman (1977 109 in Bilingualism) suggests that finding a relationship between bilingualism and intelligence is not quite enough evidence to support negative or positive affects of bilingualism upon intellectual capacity. It is the context in which the relationship between the two factors exists, and what is the specific cause for such a relationship The question of whether there are positive or negative affects of bilingualism is still unresolved.

The contradictory results gathered from previous studies investigating the affects of bilingualism upon cognitive development can be interpreted by the threshold hypothesis (Cummins, 1976b; Toukomaa & Skutnabb-Kangas 1977) In the earlier version of the threshold hypothesis Cummins suggest that a bilingual child's competency level in L1 & L2 may be crucial to their cognitive development. He has adopted some of theoretical ideas of Jean Piaget, with the attempts to explain bilingu and monolingualism as tools of thought used by the child to operate upon the environment. This follows that the bilingual child's task of interacting with the

Draft 4

linguistical environments as more complicated than
a monolingual which kid of the bilingual child
learns to compete (equal level of competency in L1 & L2) in higher linguistic environment
the consequences would be advantageous. There
would be a potential for positive cognitive grow
Unfortunately a child who has experienced som
long term interaction with a linguistic environmen
using L2 (which is not learnt proficiently) this can-
result to devastating effects such as
under developed cognitive growth. Cummins
came to the conclusion that proficient bilingualis
can only be obtained if there is an certain level
of competence in L2 (as well as mother tongue
competence which in this case is assumed to be
high) in order to achieve cognitive growth. There
are thresholds for example, the competency
level may be higher in L1 than L2 (or vice versa
but this would not cause cognitive problems.
(Cummins 1976 in Bilingualism or not 1982).
(as shown in diagrammatic ~~representations~~ fig 2)

As you can see there are three types of
bilingualism represented on the diagram. Out of th
three there is one group that particularly
interested in and they are the semilinguals.
This bilingual group are said to be incompeten
in both languages meaning that they are unab
to communicate in either language proficiently.
This sort of characterisation is associated
with the creole speakers from the West Indies who attend
schools in Britain, who were categorized as be
unable to speak standard English and
Creole was viewed as a sub-standard language. For
example, the National Association of School Masta
is on record as saying that 'The West Indian
child usually arrives speaking a kind of
"plantation English" which is socially unacceptabl
and inadequate for education (NAS 1969:5 in Multilin
in the British Isles). This argument seems to agree
with the threshold hypothesis because it did result
in devastating effects because a large proportion of west Indian
children left school without any qualificat
which could have been due to negative cognitive effects
But one of the main problems with the threshold
hypothesis is that it doesn't take other importan
factors into consideration such as the status of
(1) Adding to several criticism

(2) Eyrian [illegible] being substandard
194 Dress language problems by the bilingual child
195 as well the [illegible] choice to become bilingual
Draft 196 was voluntarily or involuntarily, and there is a distinction between
197 the children in terms of social class
198 For instance, the educational failure amongst
199 West Indian children was definitely caused
200 by stigmatization from the education system and
201 society as a whole. [illegible]
Jump 202 Jim Cummins (1984) then attempts to explain why the
203 longer higher ability of bilingual children often fewer
204 restricted [illegible] may appear to be affluent but
205 particular language problem communicating in everyday
206 situations which do not require abstract academic cognitive
207 abilities. Cummins calls these communicative skill
208 surface fluency which entails oral fluency, basic
209 vocabulary and basic syntax. It is the conspicuous
210 features of language use which are viewed as
211 a basis for making judgements about a persons
212 linguistic ability. Another communicative skill is
213 CALP (cognitive/academic language proficiency) according
214 to Cummins this skill has a strong association
215 with the results of tests for vocabulary, synonyms, analogies, and
216 the verbal part of intelligence tests. Several different
217 studies have proven that these two skills of linguistic
218 ability do not necessarily correlate. A majority of
219 children who are [illegible] healthy can speak their
220 mother tongue quite fluently. Problems with linguistic
221 performance are only recognized when a child
222 is required to use language as a cognitive
223 instrument (which takes a long period of time to develop than BICS). It is the proficiency in this particular
224 linguistic skill that determines positive
225 achievement in school. This why the use of
226 intelligence tests with bilingualis is totally unfair
227 The purpose of the tests is to measure the
228 childs CALP, (so to speak), which are often administered
229 in the childs foreign second language. It is
230 a serious mistake to assume a child knows a
231 language well because s/he has shown
232 superficial fluency. This fluency is interpreted
233 to be adequate for the cognitive demands of
234 academic study in schools.
235 These theoretical ideas by Cummins could be
236 applied to the situation concerning West Indian
237 children placed in British Schools. A large percentage
238 of black children were mistakenly sent to schools for the
239 educationally subnormal as a result of obtaining

Draft 4.

low scores on IQ tests, in which many of the questions were quite stupid and unrelated to the experiences of West Indian children. This same misunderstanding can be found amongst teachers attitudes towards creoles/patwas, (as mentioned above), a language use categorized as inferior, thus the people that speak it also ranked. This sort of judgement could have of derived from surface fluency the child's verbal linguistic ability was underestimated which is other proposed or reformated as known in cummins research (ideas) basic interpersonal communicative skil (BICS). Therefore, the child is assumed to have problem with higher cognitive/academic language proficiency (CALP) skills too. Here the interpretation of Cummins two concepts (CALP) & (BICS) are anticipated in the opposite direction

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Final draft

Essay question?

3 The main argument is based on the positive and negative effects of bilingualism upon cognitive development from a political perspect. The essay also explores some of the theories by Jim Cummins, Skutnabb-Kangas and Toukomaa, and how the theoretical frame work of these theorists relates to the experience of West Indian children in Britain.

TD

Bilingualism has been and still is categoriz as a disadvantage for the attainment of academ qualifications. The reason is because it tends to be associated with people from low socio economic groups. This applies to migrants who speak a minority language in a foreign country. Common these people are forced to acquire the politically powerful language of the majority (Skutnabb Kangas 1981) These sort of circumstances could be applied to the situation concerning creole Punjabi or Urdu speakers in Britain. However bilingualism was viewed positively during the earlier 19th century. It was common amongst the middle classes and particularly people involved in trade. Negative attitudes towards bilingualism emerged from the existence of the nation state. This opposing view was supporte by: the 'one nation - one language' ideology, i which native and immigrant linguistic minorities as well as minorities who found themselves on the other side of some nation frontier as the consequences of treaties (Skutnat Kangas 1981:67)

Although the negative view of bilingualism i going through a process of change a mass majority of monolingual language speakers still perceive bilingualism as irregular or some what odd. A bilingual individual usua possesses two identities (whether they want to allep it or not) with the advantage of two cultures and languages. If attempts are made to maintain both of them it can be viewed as strange or abnormal. Anything different is assumed to be deviant or unworthy. But this

sort of judgement depends largely upon the Community in which the bilingualism exists since there are double standards. For instance elite bilingualism is widely viewed as an asset because it concerns those from higher social groups (Skutnabb Kangas 1981). Whereas if you are a bilingual individual coming from a socially low status background speaking an unofficial minority language you are likely to experience negative attitudes from native monolingual speakers.

Bilingual individuals can be grouped into four main categories in which all groups undergo different experiences to attain bilingualism. Based on the work of Skutnabb Kangas, I will highlight certain points which typify the situation for two of the bilingual groups (4)

Elite bilinguals

1). The choice to become bilingual is usually voluntary and the parents of these children tend to be from high social positions (ie upper- and middle classes).

2): Bilingualism is not imposed upon them by school; their choice to learn a foreign language is initiated by themselves. Although they're are exceptions such as the international European schools which are elite bilingual establishments. This could still be a 'choice'.

3) The child is often quite proficient in their own mother-tongue which serves as a facilitat

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for acquiring another language competently. Elite bilinguals usually have some primary knowledge of the foreign language beforehand

4) The childs mother-tongue is not threatened by the foreign language because it is internationa Since the childs social status is high other will respond positively towards them and offer encouragement when attempting to acqui the new language.

5) If the child fails to become bilingual it does not result to in devastating consequences. The child will either return to their home country or decrease social interaction with native speakers of the foreign country.

6

children from linguistic minorities

1) The child is under severe societal pressure to learn the language of the majority (since their mother tongue has no official status). Parents also expect their child to learn the majority language in order to have access to the a good education and the economical prospects which they themselves did not have.

2) Most parents desire that their children learn the mother-tongue also. Although very few minority parents do not want their child to learn the mother tongue. These people do not want to be identified by their ethnic origin (ie refugees).

FD.

3) Some parents are not aware of the importance to of maintaining their mother tongue, and will replace it with the majority language.

4) The resources and methods used to aid minority children into developing bilingualism are inadequate and inefficient.

5) The risk of failure to become bilingual results to in more serious consequences than for any other bilingual group.

6) If the child becomes dominant in their minority language then (3) s/he will experience under achievement in school. There will be a limited opportunity to influence the wider community and change the situation for their own ethnic group (Skutnabb Kangas 1981: 75-79)

(6) Children from language minorities

This last category strongly reflects the experience of minority group in which I belong. My ethnic origin is African Caribbean and the definitions of bilingualism do not seem to distinguish my language which is Jamaican Creole. It is evident that language problems are found amongst some African Caribbean children (1) these findings were established by the national survey 1980 the ICE. African Caribbean children (in comparison to their contemporaries uk non-immigrants) had a poor reading ability. The education system failed (or ignored) to realise the needs of these children. Since creoles have no official status neither in

FD

England or Jamaica the problem was not addressed properly. The West Indian creolized speech was categorized as a cognitive / genetic inferiority and a non-standardized language by the National Association of School Masters (NAS) (Ewards & Alladina : 58)

Although there are various definitions of bilingualism which focus on four areas of linguistic ability, I can't really find one that describes the situation for me as a creole / English bilingual. I am not a monolingual because I speak two distinctive codes (English and creole) and Im not recognized as bilingual by certain linguists psycholinguists, and Educationalists. The Jamaican creole that I speak does not have a completely different vocabulary from the English language, but the grammar and syntax is quite unique. Infact all types of creole languages should be viewed along a continuum. There is a large number of creole speakers, but no one speaker uses creolized speech to the same extent; there is a variable degree of its use. The continuum of English creolized speech can be represented as a diagram (fig 1) which is my own construction. The purpose of this diagram is to get my ideas across more clearly (look at page no. 6).

ID

Fig 1. A diagram showing the continuum between creole and standardized English.

?

Key

o · me

o possible other

The points A and B are the two main dimensions. A speaker could be placed at any point of the scale according to the extent to which creole or standard English is used. For example, my subjective view would be that I am able to reach either extreme. This means I can speak relatively standard English and creole. The situation for other people may be different. For instance, some speakers do not speak creole really well, but, can speak standard English more competently. These speakers would be placed quite near point B along the scale (indicated by green circle). The positions in which each speaker is placed along the scale are approximations.

Unfortunately creoles are not considered to be languages, therefore West Indian creole speakers are not defined as bilingual, but as intellectually inferior. Other

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ethnic minority groups have also suffered from racist ideologies within education. The discrimination is of a similar nature to those experienced by African caribbeans in the sense, that, the oppression is politically motivated.

This is reflected by the research which has been carried out to investigate the negative effects of bilingualism. One negative view is from ? weisgerber (1966) who claimed that bilingualism would have some devastating effects on the intelligence of an entire ethnic group. This sort of opinion is quite common amongst psychologists and educators (Romaine 1989). The earliest use of intelligence tests was conducted by Binet and originally written in French. However, Goddard (1910) translated the IQ test into English and used it to measure the intelligence of Jewish immigrants. From the results he came to the conclusion that Jews were 'feeble minded' (Romaine 1989).

Hakuta (1986:192 in Romaine) argued against Goddards findings by questioning the validity of the test. He administered the test through a translator in a situation which was unfamiliar to the immigrants and may have caused some apprehension. The studies done by Saer (1924 in Romaine) were the most popular cited studies. The subjects were 1400 welsh / English bilingual children between the ages of 7 and 14 in five rural and two urban areas of wales. He came to the conclusion that the low scores obtained

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by rural bilingual children was a result of low intelligence (supposedly caused by bilingualism). The higher scores of urban children were said to be due to their earlier opportunities of being able to experience the use of both languages at a young age (Romaine 101).

Although there seems to be a correlation in the rural areas between bilingualism and low IQ scores, but in urban areas monolinguals and bilinguals are compatable in terms of intelligence this is measured by IQ. Clearly, the urban children had more exposure to the English language before they began school and during social contact outside of school (Romaine: 101) In a later study Morrison (1958 in Roma highlighted other factors that could influence the results. For instance, the parents occupatio or social class had been taken into account As a result the measures of intelligence between rural and urban children were relatively the same.

Peal and Lambert (1962) had carried out studies with the aim of measuring the true ability of bilingual children. They had taken special care to control the variables which were treated inappropriately in earlier studies by other researchers. For instance, the subjects in both groups were matched in terms of social class background. They compared 10 year old bilinguals and monolingual children from the same school system in Montreal. They used only

+D

balanced bilinguals who could speak both languages proficiently which they assessed by giving the children various tasks and subjects' self ratings. The findings indicate that bilinguals are superior to monolinguals on both verbal and non-verbal intelligence. Bilinguals were also better on certain subjects which required mental manipulation and reorganisation of visual patterns. They also had other abilities such as certain mental or symbolic flexibilities (Romaine 1989).

There are various other findings which support Peel and Lambert's studies. But they themselves have great difficulty in trying to explain the causal relationship between bilingualism and cognitive flexibility on the basis of cross sectional evidence. This may be due to the fact that Peel and Lambert probably failed to control confounding variables in their experiment. For instance, it could of been that the more intelligent individuals are the ones who became bilingual. This problem can be solved by a carefully controlled longitudinal study which aims to measure intelligence before and after the onset of bilingualism (Romaine: 106).

Macnamara (1966 in Romaine: 106) claimed that the positive effects of bilingualism in Peel's and Lambert's studies was inevitable because the sample was biased. The children were selected bilinguals who already have a talent for language learning.

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The question whether there are positive or negative effects ~~to~~ of bilingualism is still unresolved. The contradictory results gathered from previous studies investigating the effects of bilingualism upon cognitive development can be interpreted by the threshold hypothesis (Cummins 1976; Toukomaa & Skutnabb Kangas 1977). In the earlier version of the threshold hypothesis Cummins suggests that a bilingual child's competence level in L1 and L2 may be crucial to their cognitive development. He has adopted some of the theoretical ideas of Jean Piaget, with in the attempts to explain bilingualism and monolingualism as tools of thought used by the child to operate upon the environment. This follows that the bilingual childs task of interacting with the linguistic enviroment is more complicated than a monolingual child's. But if the bilingual child learns to conger (equal level of competence in L1 and L2) his/her linguistic enviroment the consequences would be advantageous. There would be a potential for positive cognitive growth. Unfortunately a child who has experienced some long term interaction with in a linguistic enviroment using L2 (which is not learnt proficient this can result ~~to~~ in devastating effects such as under developed cognitive skills Cummins came to the conclusion that proficient bilingualism can only be achieved if there is a certain level

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of competence in L2 (as well as mother tongue competence which is assumed to be high) in order to develop cognitive growth. There are two thresholds for example, the competence level may be higher in L1 than L2 (or vice versa) but this does not cause cognitive problems (Cummins 1976 in Skutnabb Kangas 1982). As shown in diagram fig 2.

As you can see there are three types of bilingualism represented on the diagram. Out of the three there is one group I am particularly concerned with and they are the semilinguals. This bilingual group are said to be incompetent in both languages meaning that they are unable to communicate in either language proficiently. This sort of characterisation is associated with creole speakers from the West Indies who attended schools in Britain. Instead of being viewed as bilingual they were labelled as genetically inferior which was related to their speech patterns. This ~~was~~ is because the child was unable to speak standard English and creole was viewed as a sub-standard language. For example the National Association of School Masters is on record as saying that 'the West Indian child usually arrives speaking a kind of 'plantation English' which is socially unacceptable and inadequate for education (1969 in Edwards & Alladina) A large proposition of West Indian children left school without any qualification: according to the threshold hypothesis this could have been due to negative cognitive

FD 8.

effects caused by semilingualism. I'm not quite convinced that this is the case. One of the main faults with the threshold hypothe is that it does not take other fundamental factors into consideration, such as the status of the languages spoken by the bilingual child, or whether the choice to become bilingual was voluntary or involunta and there is no distinctions made between the children in terms of social class. For instance, the educational failure amongst West Indian children was definitely caused by stigmatization from the education syster and society as a whole. A teachers attitude towards a black child can affect a childs performance:- by being openly prejudice; by being patronizing; and by having low expectations of the childs abilities (Coard 1991). The expectation of teachers is a crucial factor when assessin the ability of children in schools; teachers can either over estimate or under estimate a child potential.

Jim Cummins (1979 in Skutnabb Kangas) attempts to explain some of the judgements made by teachers concerning the ability of children in terms of language proficiency. His theoretical ideas determine why the linguistic ability of young children is often overestimated. A child may appear to be fluent in a particular language when communicating in everyday situations which do not require linguistic cognitive skills. Cummins calls these communicative skills 'surface fluency' Basic Interpersonal Communicative skills (BICS) which entails

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oral fluency, basic vocabulary and syntax. (13)
It is the inconspicuous features of language use which are viewed as a basis for making judgements about a persons linguistic ability.
Another communicative skill is cognitive/academic language proficiency (CALP) according to Cummin this skill has a strong association with test results for vocabulary, synonym, analogies, and the verbal part of intelligence tests. Several different studies have proven that these two skills of linguistic ability do not necessarily correlate. A majority of children can speak their mother tongue quite fluently. Problems with linguistic performance are only recognized when a child is required to use language as a cognitive instrument (which takes a longer period of time to develop than BICS). It is the proficiency in this particular linguistic skill that determines positive achievement in school. This is why the use of intelligence tests with bilinguals is totally unfair. The purpose of the test is to measure the childs CALP so to speak, which are often adminisbered in the childs foreign second language. It is a serious mistake to assume a child knows a language well because s/he has shown superficial fluency. This fluency is interpreted to be adequate for the cognitive demands of academic study in schools.

These same kind of ~~misunder~~ misunderstanding can be found amongst teaches attitudes towards creole (as I mentioned above) a language use categorized as inferior, thus the people who speak it. When a West Indian

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child speaks creole the sounds and characteristics of the language probably gave some teachers the impression that the child BIC skills are inadequate for cognitive/academic language proficiency skills (CALP). (1) In order for Cummins frame work to be useful in describing the situation of creole speakers it has to be reinterpreted. whereas an English/Punjabi bilingual child's English surface fluency can be overestimated so the child is expected to have competent academic linguistic skills in English, But the experience for creole speakers has been that their fluency (so to speak) is under-estimated and their CALP skills are assumed to be worse than what they actually are. Consequently a large percentage of black children were mistakenly sent to schools for the educationally sub-normal as a result of obtaining low scores in IQ tests; in which many of the questions asked were unrelated to the experiences of west Indian children.

The creole language was commonly rejected by the parents of West Indian children because it was perceived as a hindrance to social progress in terms of education and employment. However, creole is still spoken by many of the Black British today. creole is a fundamental aspect of the West Indian Culture.

The proposals to include language diversity into the national curriculum has led some teachers wanting to introduce creole languages into the curriculum (Alladina

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& Edwards 1991). Edwards (1979 in Alladina & Edwards) argues that the West Indian Creole should be given some recognition in the curriculum, since West Indian creole is part of a dynamic culture which will always be existent. Infact all languages spoken by natives from different parts of the world should be given equal importance. Every language community uses their mother tongue to communicate and as a medium of instruction. From a linguistic perspective no one language is better than another: all languages are equal. Every single language has a system of rules and meanings which can be found, analysed and described there is not one language that is unsystematic or irrational (Skutnabb-Kangas 1981).

In terms of the negative and positive effects of bilingualism the social context in which the acquisition of the second language takes place is very important. The positive advantage of bilingualism is found amongst groups who receive support from parents. Also the surrounding community is patient and understanding towards them. Whereas, the social context for the migrant workers child is quite different: his/her mother tongue may be stigmatized. It is under these circumstances where bilingualism can be found to have negative cognitive effects. As a result the child will become dominant in one language which causes an unequal proficiency in both languages

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S03 (S. Romaine 1989)
S04 Cummins (1976 in Romaine) claims that
S05 'subtractive bilingualism' - when the acquisition
S06 of a second language replaces the first.
S07 produces negative effects. But 'Additive
S08 bilingualism' which involves the acquisition
S09 of a second language that does not threaten
S10 the acquiring of threshold skills in the first
S11 has positive effects. Smolicz (1979 in Romaine)
S12 highlighted the fact that bilingualism in
S13 'migrant' children is often discouraged,
S14 while it is encouraged amongst children
S15 coming from elite social backgrounds.

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APPENDIX 5
Talkback sheet from Mary's essay 2

18/5/95 M/T

POINTS ARISING FROM DISCUSSION OF FINAL DRAFT OF ESSAY 2, LINKING IN WITH FEEDBACK ON ESSAY 1 AND OUR DISCUSSIONS OF THE 4 DRAFTS, FINAL DRAFT OF ESSAY 2.

Aspects we've previously discussed.

1. How to write about somebody else's work/ideas without using their words. You said you'd tried to use your own words a lot more in this second essay and that you found this possible to do because the works you were drawing on, i.e. Skutnabb-Kangas, were easier to understand. Where you drew closely on her work you gave a page number. Do you feel clearer about acknowledging the work of others if you draw on their work and about the danger of being accused of plagiarism if you don't? There was also a section which you said you felt was important to include although you weren't sure why (see p. 1 essay). How do you work out what's important when you only half understand something? In general do you think this essay was in your words, your structure?

2. Using different/new/alternative words.
You gave different reasons for wanting to use new/different words. For example you chose *primary* for *elementary (S.K.)* because you wanted to move away from SK text. You used *beforehand* for *prerequisite* because you felt prerequisite was not a word you felt comfortable with. You felt it was a word used by 'real academics' who wouldn't accept you because you were black: your community wouldn't accept you using it either. How do you feel about that word now? You're using quite a lot of different/new words through your study. For example, I suggested the word *reinterpreted* and you liked it. Why is this different from *prerequisite?* Are there any dangers/ problems/ benefits in using these words..and what does using new words say about who you are?

3. Personal voice/ Separating voices

When we discussed the issue of personal voice and 'I' after your first essay, you said you thought it was 'awful but great'. When you were beginning to write your second essay, you said it was still a bit of a shock to be asked to use 'I', but you thought it 'was very powerful because it makes you feel part of it, whereas in a lot of your previous writing you felt like an 'outsider'. You also talked about the two 'Is': the I personal, and the I as part of a wider community. How do you feel about the 'I's' now? Do you think you included them both in your second essay ?and how did you feel you linked up these 'Is" with the ideas of other writers...and do you feel that you managed to separate the voices more successfully than in the Bernstein essay?

4. Sentence structure/syntax.
In discussions on your first essay you said that you thought your syntax was 'awful'. You were going to underline bits that you thought were awful so that we could discuss them. You didn't because you seemed to be saying you didn't want criticism. In discussions on your second essay, at some points you said you thought your syntax was awful, especially when writing about your own experience, was awful but at others said it wasn't too bad. One criticism you had was that it was repetitive. What are you/ we going to do about this?

I've looked at your sentence structure and it's not awful but there were a few errors in clause boundaries..see below and tell me if you think this is what you're worried about.

5.Clause boundaries/syntax.

We looked at several examples in drafts and the final draft where the clause boundaries were not marked.*But this sort of judgement depends largely upon the community in which the bilingualism* ***exists. Since*** *there are double standards.(E2D2)*
In the final draft you wrote it as I suggested. Was that because you agreed with me...?
In your final draft there were a couple of similar examples
It is evident that language problems are found amongst some African Caribbean ***children these findings*** *were established by the national survey 1980 the ICE. (4)*

Unfortunately a child who has experienced some long term interaction with a linguistic environment ***using L2 (which is not learnt proficiently) this*** *can result in devastating effects such as underdeveloped cognitive skills (10).*

Whereas an English/Panjabi bilingual child's English surface fluency can be overestimated so the child is expected to have competent academic linguistic skills in ***English. But the*** *experience for Creole speakers has been that their fluency (so to speak) is underestimated and their CALP skills are assumed to be worse than what they actually are.(14)*

Can you see the problems with the way these clauses come together? Are these examples of what you mean when you say you have problems with syntax?

6. Grammar

The could of/have came up again in the final draft of your second essay. The other grammatical bit we talked about was prepositions. Examples...*extent* ***in*** *which, with the aim* ***to*** *measure, effect* ***to*** *bilingualism, result* ***to.*** Do these still seem problematic to you? How can you learn about the use of prepositions in Standard English..do you want to?

Pronouns. In both essays we've talked about whether to use s/he or they. It doesn't matter what you use as long as you're consistent. You said you didn't like s/he. What are you going to do in your project.

Conjunctions. in your draft 3, you want to use however or although in the following point:

In fact all types of West Indian Creoles should be viewed along a continuum. ***However,*** *there is a large number of Creole speakers, but no one speaker uses a creolized speech to the same extent. (line 14)*
You didn't use a conjunction at all in your final draft. Do you see how using however or although would not be appropriate here because you're not changing direction in ideas?

7. Space to say what you want to say

At the end of your first essay you said that you felt you hadn't had enough space to say what you wanted to say. When we were discussing a draft of your second essay, you said

that you really liked your argument. What did you like about your argument and do you feel you said more of what you wanted to say in your second essay than in the first?

8. Conclusion.
You wrote a good conclusion in the second essay..was this because you left yourself more time than in the first essay?

New aspects

9. Style
When we looked at your final draft, we talked about informal language, I'm, can't, not being acceptable in academic writing. You were angry about this and said you saw it as a way of separating people, that formal language was colder and separated you from your reader. Do you still feel angry about it and what are you going to do in your project?

10. Learning to write/ usefulness of our discussions?

When we were looking at one of your drafts, you said you wanted to learn how to write and I said our discussions and the feedback I give you was supposed to help you focus on different aspects of your writing. But are these discussions/feedback helping? How...specific example? What would you like us to do differently?

11. What are you allowed to say in an essay.
You raised this when we were discussing your final draft of your first essay. You said you wanted 'to slag people off' for saying that Creole was inferior but you weren't sure whether you were allowed to do that. You could think of a writer to support your view but not from linguistics and you wanted to know whether you could use that. I said you could but I don't know whether you used it in your final draft of essay 2
..I don't think you did. Any reason why?

12. Being a Creole/Yorkshire dialect speaker/schooling and university. Finding writing hard.

When we were discussing your final draft of your first essay, you said that you felt that you had no standard language and that was a reason why you found it so hard to express yourself in writing (in Standard English?). You said that it was such hard work that you wondered whether it was just not natural for you to study. Yet you also said that you knew you'd got the ability to study but just didn't feel a part of it all. How do you feel now?
You said several times when you were writing your second essay that you were finding it very hard to write although you had your argument and knew what you wanted to say. You seemed to be questioning again whether this. studying. was really for you. What do you feel now?
You said you were fed up with reading about Creole being regarded as inferior and felt the whole area was very political. You said it was difficult to focus on language issues when the political issues were so strong. How did you manage to do this in the end?

Appendix 6
Final draft of Sara's essay 1

INTRODUCTION.

I have chosen this question for my assignment primarily because it is an issue which is very important in education and language.
There are many arguments surrounding this issue that I can relate to.
Being a woman in the educational system I am more aware of gender related with language which affects a lot of people in our Society, mainly women. My project out lines the way language can influence genders creating a social and linguistic hierarchy.

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LANGUAGE AND GENDER.

This project basically highlights different issues surrounding language and gender. It attempts to explore the work of different researchers. I have also touched upon how language became gender related and how many feminists are trying hard to make people more aware of the way sexism in different contexts such as for example, dictionaries is used implied. All in all, it is about the way in which words are being used or misused in order to trivialize, downgrade and exclude women from social life. My essay is mostly based on D. Spender (1980) and Cameron D. (1985).

There is a lot of sexism in the language that enhances the position of males giving them more power and control over women, in turn disregarding women, making them virtually invisible in society. It can be said that one sex is conditioned for 'power' while the other is conditioned to remain powerless.

Sexism in language can be found in various contexts such as dictionaries and grammar books. The use of certain lexical terms in these contexts are seen as insulting A good example of this can be found in the words 'MAN' and 'MANKIND', which are used to describe the human race, but implying the idea of male superiority rooted to the deepest of our historical experiences. Words of this nature were obviously manufactured to dismiss women. Using such words as 'MAN' and 'HE' to refer to women encourages confusion amongst women.

Women may ask if they are being referred to as well. These contradictions imply that the world belongs to the male species and that the female is not of equal importance, but just another inhabitant. To shed more light on this subject I have included a bit of history as to where some of these rules may have derived from.

Spender (1982.) who refers to the work of a prominent scholar Mr Wilson in1553 who wrote for an upper class educated male audience. put forward his opinion that it was natural' to place a man before the woman as in the following examples: male, female, husband, wife brother, sister, etc. He implied that the social religious superiority of a male should be reflected in the structure of a language. Women in those days were denied any form of education and could not oppose this statement This kind of social hierarchy became part of our grammar and spread to language in general. This was one of the earliest records that could be found of male rationalization that man embraces woman, implying that the women weaker and the man stronger therefore he's embracing,protecting her Other scholars, such as Joshua Pool suggested that not only should the male have supremacy, but should also be considered the worthier gender. See 1850 Act of Parliament in Spender (1982) 147 This legislation was introduced which legally insisted that he' should stand for she

There are many critics who complain that women are changing language However the same critics do not realise that language changes constantly through the introduction of new words which are combined from parts of existing words or borrowed making old words obsolete The publishing press and the mass media can play a big role in popularizing a word or proving it to be unimportant. For instance Cameron (1985) gives an example of the New York Times which for years refused to print the word Ms even if the woman being written about preferred it. The dictionary also makes some meanings and more acceptable than other. The following are referred to as gatekeeping institutions which regulate the acceptability of words education, press media, lexicography and grammar In the case of the introduction of words institutions also have their own political reservations. They are targeted by feminists who emphasise that priority has to be given to creating a non sexist dictionary and of feminist lexicography A few feminists have actually embarked on various projects concentrating on a clean - up of sexist definitions.

1. Alma Graham wrote an article called ' The making of a non sexist dictionary'. She discovered that standard dictionaries used in schools gave students a powerful implicit message that men were more important than women. The sources of these dictionaries were largely male orientated. She actually initiated a project to make an unbiased gender dictionary, which will involve female as well as male sources and which will disregard sexist definitions.

2. Cheris Kramarae and Paula Treichler have also compiled together a non sexist dictionary, which show different meanings of words in a creative form. The object of this dictionary was to point out that words can have different meanings apart from what their standard definitions suggest.

3. Mary Daly and Jane Caputi's 'Websters' First Intergalactic Wickedary of the English Language also focuses on possible meanings of words beyond ' standard definitions'(As discussed in Cameron.(1985))

Feminists are trying hard to bring to our attention the benefits of a neutral language to our society, a non sexist language, so that not one of the genders is excluded. One way of implementing this would be to substitute words like 'humanity' for 'Mankind', 'artisan', for 'craftsman', 'astronaut' for 'spaceman' etc. Another method would be to recast a sentence. for example 'pick up baby when he cries', could become, 'always pick up a crying baby'. You may even pluralize a sentence for example 'pick up babies when they cry'.

Arguments against feminist reforms have arisen suggesting that language is 'trivial' therefore these reforms are a waste of time and not worth the trouble. There are two arguments to this objection:

1. Sexist language is insulting to women.

2 Sexist language is inaccurate and misleading.

Cameron (1985) points out that cosmetic changes like getting rid of 'man' do not entirely work. There are no guarantees when it comes to linguistic neutrality'. for instance a report in the Guardian had this article:

"A coloured South African who was subjected to racial abuse by his neighbours went berserk with a Machete and killed his next door neighbour's wife. Birmingham Crown Court heard yesterday." (Cameron: 121).

The woman that was murdered was presumably the accused mans neighbour, but instead of being referred to as his 'next door neighbour' was instead called 'his next door neighbours wife'.

Cameron (1985) has a different view towards sexism in language, as opposed to Spen (1980). Cameron says that trying to abolish the generic 'he' or 'man' can complicate matt more by substituting different words for them like 'person'. She claims that if it is possible th we should try to reclaim the word 'woman'. She gives another example of this kind substitution. 'Ms' which when in use projects an image of an older unmarried woman, divorce and 'strident feminists'. This gives the impression of women who have had difficulty in acquir the company of the opposite sex. (4)

Spender (1980), on the other hand, shows more emphasis on how we can change sexism language. Cameron concentrates on how we can confront peoples prejudices by making the more aware of the problem and to emphasise womens' presence and existence in the world.

I have to agree with Cameron, that we have to confront and make people more aware these misrepresentations even though they may not realise that they are consciously making th difference. We have to try and change the way women are perceived in language and show a mo stronger, more positive alternative side to women. This kind of change should be carried out early stages in school like in infancy when a child is like a sponge. (5) Make them realise that bot sexes should have equal status in all areas of our society.

This brings me on to how the relevance and understanding of gender and language is teachers.

Children since they are born are influenced by all members of society; parents, teachers peers and even colleagues at work. From day one both sexes are categorised into two groups boys and girls. There behaviour is referred to as 'girlishness' and 'boyishness'. Some believe tha what is not 'nurture' is 'nature'.

Witting and Peterson 1979 carried out a major survey and concluded:

"Much discussion has been wasted and many theories generated from differences that d not actually exist." (page 5.

Witting and Peterson believe that no differences exist. But, through my own experiences believe that distinctions between genders in all areas of language and society do exist I hav pointed out the differences in this essay through quoting various researchers.

(10) Coming back to language and gender and the importance of talk and the which a speakers presents themselves can be perceived by others as feminine, working class hesitant etc. In some instances the intonation of a man or woman are variable This was claimed by Brend (1975) who stated that the rising intonation is usually linked with a question A falling intonation is associated with a firm statement. The rising intonation thus is a sign of insecurit Dubois and Crouch (1975) and Brower Gerritsen and De Haan (1979 claimed that this was not necessarily true. Taking into account the sex of the addressee was vital to determine how the speaker was phrasing a question. (11)

Teachers should be very careful when choosing topics of discussion. For example if a teacher chooses a topic on fashion them the girls would be more inclined to speak about the subject and expand on it. The boys however may feel a bit reluctant to discuss the subject because the girls would be more domineering. The same applies to the girls if a subject was chosen that would interest mostly boys. The boys would then dominate the floor. That is the boys tend to dominate the discussion, leaving the girls without a say in matters. But through my own experiences when a topic was chosen that was geared more towards females that showed they too had a legitimate role in life, was more often than not ridiculed by the boys who often became

(12)

disruptive. They could not stand it when women justified their position in society. This could boil down to the fact that in many topical discussions in education the male control of talk is more enhanced giving males more opportunity and authority to speak, showing them to be more capable in speech.

Spender gives another example of this kind of behaviour in a classroom. A topic is chosen that discussed the experiences of females. (Spender and Sarah 'Disappearing tricks'. womens' press 1980.)

Male 1. I'm not going to talk about girls' stuff; that's stupid. It's just stupid having to talk about what it's like being at home all day with the kids. Anyway, they don't have to do it. They can get out, can't they? Make everyday a holiday? Can't they?

Male 2. Yeah go to football, or the pub. (Laughter).

Male 3. Or play records.

Male 1. Or meet their mates.

Female1. What about the housework, and the kids, and the shopping?

Male 3. Well, they don't take long. Blokes could do that in half an hour. And then enjoy themselves. (Laughter, directed at females. Topic of suburban isolation abandoned; topic of the way males spend holidays introduced.)

Talk is very important in school. It helps speakers get their ideas across, in turn building their confidence and ability to speak more fluently. It is a vital component in learning and teaching.

-- " It is as talkers, questioners, arguers, gossipers, chatterboxes, that our pupils do much of their most important learning. Their everyday talking voices are the most subtle and versatile means they possess for making sense of what they do and for making sense of others, including their teachers." Harold Rosen 1969. (Towards a language policy across the curriculum.) p 127

(13)

(NCC 1989b. Science. non statutory guidance p.A8). "Pupils learning is supported and extended through discussion with peers and adults. Through talk and informal writing they are able to make their ideas clearer to themselves as well as making them available for reflection, discussion and checking."

I have to agree with these statements about the importance of talk in different contexts. I found as a child, by actually asking questions and talking out loud to the teacher that I could learn quicker and understand better.

Recent measures of attainment have showed that girls do just as well as boys overall, sometimes even better during school years.

It may not be necessarily true that girls are disadvantaged in class because they don't get the chance to talk. The frequency of talk in a class is important but more importantly is the quality of the answers. Having said this there are still some areas where girls lack confidence in eg technology, and computing. So it would be better if practical work could be organised in a way that girls could take a part in without being dominated or overwhelmed by the boys.

Children should be exposed to all different types of uses of language in different contexts, so that they develop the necessary abilities to communicate appropriately in different situations. They should be able to talk, listen, explain, understand and respect other peoples views and language.

Another way of sharing experiences apart from verbally is to record them as a base in turn giving rise to expansion and the skill to think deeper. An important issue about language is the literature that is available in schools especially literature by women. (14)

Different types of literature are important in language at school. They help in discussions as well as aiding a child in developing a more creative form of language.

Most children can relate to various literature when needed, or can they?

(13) See Showalter in Marland (1983: 109) who said that the literature taught in many schools confirms the idea that the masculine view point is the norm and feminine view point divergent.

A selection of prescribed 'A' level texts in English in 1978 revealed that there were fifty-three male authors to two female authors.

(13) See Walters in Marland (1983: 110) who pointed out that male students can normally find a match between their own experiences and the way literature tells them 'How it is', where as women students feel they are studying a different culture and cannot refer to them. This can occur all over the curriculum area for example science, social sciences, maths and so on.

I conclude that keeping the balance between both genders is a difficult area. But it is extremely important, especially in the education system, that we tackle the problem , where in most cases it is ignored and not dealt with. Otherwise the sexist battle will remain and many budding opportunists will be nipped in the bud, making education incomplete in many ways.

However schools are taking the initiative and making changes within their system. From my own experience in schools, there seems to be a level of awareness about gender and language. For example, introducing books with a female as a main subject, and also tackling questions about gender in all areas of Language and Education in a Sensitive way. So there is light at the end of the tunnel.