THE SOCIAL ACCOMPLISHMENT OF TRANSITION:

Investigating classroom talk practices as students move from primary to secondary school

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A thesis submitted to Charles Sturt University in fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy

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The social accomplishment of transition: Investigating classroom talk practices as students move from primary to secondary school

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CERTIFICATE OF AUTHORSHIP

I hereby declare that this submission is my own work and to the best of my knowledge and belief, understand that it contains no material previously published or written by another person, nor material which to a substantial extent has been accepted for the award of any other degree or diploma at Charles Sturt University or any other educational institution, except where due acknowledgement is made in the thesis. Any contribution made to the research by colleagues with whom I have worked at Charles Sturt University or elsewhere during my candidature is fully acknowledged.

I agree that this thesis be accessible for the purpose of study and research in accordance with normal conditions established by the Executive Director, Library Services, Charles Sturt University or nominee, for the care, loan and reproduction of thesis, subject to confidentiality provisions as approved by the University.

Name: Stephanie Kaye Garoni

Signature: [Signature]

Date: 18 December 2018
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I am grateful to the many people who have supported me along the way in this mental pilgrimage. It has been a voyage of significance; one that has transformed me as a fledgling academic and person. While I feel a great sense of accomplishment and achievement, I know now there is much more to know, and in many ways this marks the beginning of my journey. For me, I have most enjoyed being with those special colleagues, friends and family members who have walked the path with me. Here is my thanks to them.

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ETHICS APPROVAL

This research has been approved by Human Research Ethics Committees at Charles Sturt University (Protocol Number: 2015/278).
ABSTRACT

The complex nature of primary to secondary school transition has interested educators and researchers for many years. While it is widely acknowledged that experiences of schooling during this time are often challenging and problematic for students, very little is known about the day-to-day actions of accomplishing transition. There exists an absence of empirical work investigating the everyday practices of students and teachers in establishing how transition is socially produced in real time. This research examines transition-in-action by exploring transition as interactionally accomplished in classroom lessons. Through the detailed analysis of classroom talk-in-interaction during lessons at the end of Year 6 and the beginning of the following Year 7, an account of the unfolding nature of transition is provided. In this way, the research contributes understandings of how transition is socially organised and accomplished in the study of the talk practices of its participants, and how such practices are used by students as interactional resources as they transition to secondary school.

This study employs ethnomethodology and conversation analysis to analyse talk-in-interaction sequences. Sequences of naturally occurring interaction were selected from a corpus of audio and video recordings of student and teacher interactions during classroom lessons. These recordings provided the researcher with direct access to the details of social action, making it possible to scrutinise the data over and over again. The sequences were transcribed using the conventions of the Jefferson notation system. Analysis involved both the study of a corpus of talk-in-interaction instances across settings to establish patterns of practices, and a single case analysis of one Year 6 and one Year 7 lesson to investigate practices in fine detail. This focus on naturally occurring data enabled the researcher to study transition in the moment-by-moment talk practices of students and teachers during their everyday classroom lessons.

First, the study found that teachers and students, across both Year 6 and Year 7 classrooms, worked together in familiar and predictable ways to accomplish lesson openings. Despite the significant changes associated with primary to secondary school transition, this routine class of practices was
oriented to by students and teachers in both settings. Second, a single case analysis of the next part of the lesson of ‘teacher-telling’ revealed practices in the Year 6 classroom that provided opportunities for students to participate in the activity and make sense of what to do. Similar analysis of a Year 7 lesson showed fewer opportunities for student participation which resulted in limited understanding of the work getting done. The findings of the study established how students and their teachers used interactional resources across Year 6 and Year 7 lessons to negotiate and navigate the accomplishment of transition. By providing a detailed account of transition-in-action, the study proposed the respecification of transition as jointly managed and accomplished with others in the sequential organisation of interaction. In this way, primary to secondary school transition is constituted by the everyday talk practices and associated actions of teachers and students in everyday classroom lessons.
CHAPTER 1

THE SOCIAL ACCOMPLISHMENT OF TRANSITION: AN INTRODUCTION

This thesis explores primary to secondary school transition from an ethnomethodological (EM), conversation analysis (CA) perspective. By engaging with current literature on approaches to this critical time for students, the study presents an alternative way of conceptualising transition as social action. Previous research reflects the commonly held view of primary to secondary school transition as being problematic. As a result, much of the existing literature focuses on the challenges associated with adolescence, how such challenges impact on student learning and socialisation, and how they can be addressed to support a smoother transition process. Through an EMCA lens, transition can be studied as socially accomplished through the practices of its participants during lessons in Year 6 and Year 7 classrooms. Such an approach shines a light on everyday classroom lessons as constituting the moment-by-moment accomplishment of transition.

This chapter outlines the purpose of the thesis by situating it in the context of educational transitions. It introduces the investigation from a viewpoint that locates the topic of transition in the interactional moments between students and teachers as they participate in Year 6 and Year 7 lessons from one primary school and a neighbouring secondary school in North East Victoria, Australia. First, a brief background to the study highlights the need for research into how transition is socially accomplished. Second, the aim and questions informing the research are outlined. Third, definitions of terms used throughout the thesis are explained. Finally, the content of each chapter is detailed in a description of the thesis structure.

1.1 Background information and statement of research problem

This study was preceded by an unpublished research report titled *Teachers’ perceptions of the realities and consequences of classroom interaction* which was completed by the researcher in 2013 in the Graduate
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Certificate in Education Research course at Charles Sturt University, Australia. The research recounted case studies of three classroom teachers; one from a primary school and two from secondary schools. It depicted and conceptualised the factors that these teachers identified as influencing and supporting talk practices in their classrooms, noting the descriptions of learning environments that promote positive interactions.

Of interest to the researcher were interview accounts from two teachers about classroom talk practices and their relationship to transition. The teachers each highlighted differences in interactional patterns from the end of one year to the beginning of the next. They identified the transition from primary school to secondary school as a time where students experienced increased levels of anxiety sometimes resulting in the talk being ‘shut down’. Teacher A, in her conversation with the researcher, recognised a notable change in talk practices as students transitioned from primary to secondary school. She stated:

Traditionally, I think we have stifled the talk because for whatever reason, education is the way that it is and, in primary schools, there’s a lot of talk and a lot of play and a lot of enquiry, and all of a sudden they get to Year 7 and then it’s almost like the right answer becomes more important than what they’re thinking. And kids become less, I think, less likely to engage because they’re scared of not having the right answer and because people stand up at the front and talk at them... and it doesn’t suit them (Garoni, 2013, p. 12).

Similarly, Teacher B identified patterns of talk in the first few weeks of Year 7 that were dominated by the teacher who was ‘up the front of the room explaining things’. She also acknowledged that ‘there’s less interaction’ at the start of the school year during classroom lessons (Garoni, 2013).

These teachers’ perceptions from 2013 provided an insight into how the talk practices that students and teachers orient to during classroom lessons can reflect students’ experiences of transition. To date, there is no identifiable research that has considered transition as it occurs in the interactional structure of lessons. While a widespread and growing assortment of studies can be found within education research on primary to secondary school transition (Coffey, 2013; Cox & Kennedy, 2008; Evangelou et al., 2008; Maguire & Yu, 2014; Rice et al., 2015; Towns, 2017) and classroom
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talk (Barnes, 2008, 2010; Edwards-Groves & Davidson, 2017; Mercer, 2007; Mercer, Dawes, & Staarman, 2009; Wells & Arauz, 2006), there is no evidence to show how transition is socially accomplished in everyday talk practices. The current gap in the literature provides an opportunity to investigate the topic of transition as social action. This research offers a new perspective of transition-in-action; transition that gets done in the turn-by-turn talk-in-interaction of its participants during everyday classroom lessons.

Synthesis of the findings from the research literature, combined with the earlier research project, provide a platform for this study. By examining how talk is socially accomplished in classroom lessons at the end of Year 6 and then at the beginning of Year 7, a new way of approaching the topic of primary to secondary school transition can be explored.

1.2 Research aim and questions

The aim of the research is to examine the turn-by-turn organisation of talk-in-interaction as it unfolds in Year 6 and Year 7 lessons to explore transition as it is enacted in real time. The study argues for a situative perspective of transition; one where transition is accomplished locally in the sequential organisation of talk practices during everyday lessons. The aim will be achieved by addressing the following research question and sub-questions:

How is transition to secondary school interactionally accomplished in the classroom talk practices of students and teachers?

- What sequences produce talk-in-interaction during lessons at the end of Year 6 and the beginning of Year 7?
- What does the fine-grained analysis of talk-in-interaction reveal about practices in Year 6 and Year 7 lessons?
- How are interactional resources used by students as they transition to Year 7?
1.3 Significance of the research

1.3.1 Conceptual implications of the research

Investigating primary to secondary school transition is a continuing topic of interest for educational researchers. While existing research maintains that students generally look forward to this time (Cox & Kennedy, 2008; Evangelou et al., 2008) and see it as a normal part of their journey through the years of formal schooling (Topping, 2011), it can for some mean greater than usual disruption to learning (Hawk & Hill, 2004) and engagement (Wylie, Hodgen, & Ferral, 2006). Previous studies of educational transitions have focused on challenges for students, teachers and families by emphasising the disparity between the cultures of the primary and secondary school (Ganeson & Ehrich, 2009), but are yet to explore transition as social action. As a result, there is no empirical research analysing evidence of how talk-in-interaction unfolds across Year 6 and Year 7 settings. This study of transition-in-action is significant because it provides a different way of conceptualising and researching the topic. The project seeks to address this identified gap through the detailed analysis and rich description of talk-in-interaction in both contexts to build an understanding of how transition gets done in everyday classroom environments.

1.3.2 Methodological implications of the research

The research also makes a significant contribution to EMCA theory in the answering of the research question and sub-questions. The point of using this theory in this way makes possible a certain kind of critique that supports the fine-grained analysis of classroom talk practices. In doing so, it uncovers the order of everyday talk-in-interaction across Year 6 and Year 7 lessons and treats this as significant to the topic of transition. It further expands EM study in the field of classroom talk practices and contributes to the small body of CA research on the organisation of conversational floors in classrooms. Main conversational floors are managed and controlled by the teacher through the allocation of turns-at-talk. Other side floors, which often go unnoticed and unreported, are created in covert ways by students to overlap the teacher-directed talk. This study contributes to methodology by presenting rich
descriptions of the talk practices of students and teachers in classroom lessons to reveal how transition is interactionally accomplished.

1.3.3 Professional implications of the research

A study on exploring transition in the social accomplishment of lessons can inform educational policies and particularly pedagogical practices within primary and secondary school classrooms. In recent decades, research has pushed for policy makers and teachers to become more aware of transition by using effective processes and interventions (Evangelou et al., 2008; Rice et al., 2015; Towns, 2017). This thesis contributes rich insight into everyday instances of transition-in-action between students and teachers, and students and students. As a result, it offers a deep understanding of the interactional competencies of students, their ability to manage and adapt the contingent use of interactional resources across local settings, and a positive respecification of how educators might approach this time of Year 6 to Year 7 transition. The research also highlights teachers’ responsibilities to scrutinise their own interactions and participatory frameworks as a way of informing future policy and education practices.

1.4 Definitions of terms

The thesis uses language specific to an EMCA approach to the study of transition as social accomplishment. To avoid confusion caused by differences in interpretation of key words and phrases, terms frequently used in the research are defined below.

*Classroom talk*

The interactive discursive practices that occur in classroom lessons between participants during whole class, group and independent activities (Edwards-Groves, Anstey, & Bull, 2014).

*Interactional accomplishment*

The joint management and production of activities with others in the sequential organisation of interaction (Schegloff, 2007).
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**Practices**

The sorts of things that produce and mobilise particular actions within the structure of interaction (Edwards-Groves, 2015).

**Talk-in-interaction**

Talk as it occurs naturally, moment-by-moment in situations of everyday interactions between participants (Heritage, 1999).

**Transition**

Forms of action involving movement from one institutional year level to another that require the active involvement of all participants (Kovac, 2015).

1.5 Structure of the thesis

This thesis is comprised of eight chapters. Each is introduced below specifying how individual chapters address a particular aspect of the overall thesis.

This first chapter identifies the research problem and locates it in a field where there has been little prior empirical investigation into how the topic of transition can be explored in the social accomplishment of lessons in Year 6 and Year 7 classrooms. The chapter presents the research aim and questions to frame how transition-in-action can be studied in the turn-by-turn talk practices of students and teachers participating in lessons.

Chapter 2 provides a synthesis of notable research in the field of educational transitions. The chapter begins by investigating how transition is understood from different perspectives. Next, it presents an account of how primary to secondary school transition is positioned in the literature. Challenges associated with this time are discussed in terms of developmental, academic and social indicators and influences. The review then critically examines the social organisation of transition and presents a conceptualisation of transition as social action. It concludes with an overview of research that investigates the social accomplishment of classroom lessons and explores a case for transition to be studied at the level of talk-in-interaction.
Chapter 3 establishes the theoretical framework for the thesis by describing the perspective of ethnomethodology (EM) and the analytic approach of conversation analysis (CA). First, the chapter introduces the key concepts of EM as a way of studying the structures of interaction and uncovering the orderliness of the phenomenon of transition. Second, it presents a detailed explanation of CA as a method of discovering social order by describing its central claims, key concepts and processes of analysis. Then, a case is made for the utility and appropriateness of this methodology to frame an investigation into primary to secondary school transition.

Building on the previous chapter’s overview of EM and CA, Chapter 4 describes how these perspectives are applied in the design of the study. The chapter begins with a review of the study’s general approach. It then considers understandings about audio and video recordings and transcribing data, and how these apply to the project. Next, the chapter provides a detailed account of the processes involved in corpus and single case analysis in the selecting, viewing, transcribing and analysing of extracts that appear in the analytic chapters. The chapter also addresses ethical considerations and the validity and reliability of procedures in the collection, management and analysis of data.

The first of three analytic chapters, Chapter 5, presents an analysis of a corpus of sequences of talk-in-interaction to establish how teachers and students work together in familiar ways to accomplish lesson openings across both Year 6 and Year 7 classrooms. The accomplishment of a class of shared practices, and their related actions, provide the go-ahead for the next activity in the lesson to begin in a predictable way. This chapter also establishes that while teachers and students orient to a routine class of practices, they also adapt to their local, spontaneous circumstances. The durability of this class of practices reveals how transition unfolds as teachers and students orient their actions to the contingently relevant categories of teacher-student during lessons (Freebody & Freiberg, 2006, 2011; Schegloff, 1991). Such identities for talk traverse Year 6 and Year 7 settings as students use their interactional competencies to negotiate the transition process.
The second analytic chapter shows how the teacher and her students in one Year 6 classroom at the end of the school year co-produced the next activity, known as informings. Students were able to maintain a dual orientation to classroom conversations on main and side floors, shifting seamlessly from one to the other, re-engaging and dis-engaging in topical talk. These interactional arrangements provided students with enhanced opportunities to clarify potentially problematic matters with their teacher in preparation for the next part of the lesson, that of independent work. This display of knowing what to do and how to do it is then compared with the interactional patterns of a Year 7 lesson (Chapter 7) to uncover variations that inform a stronger understanding of the everyday doing of primary to secondary school transition.

The third and final analytic chapter establishes how the same phenomena of informings unfolds moment-by-moment in a single case analysis of a Year 7 classroom at the beginning of the next school year. A turn-taking system that preserves a single conversation dominated by the teacher is examined to reveal fewer opportunities for students to bring back problematic matters to the main floor for clarification. Such constraints limit students’ ability to interactionally achieve a shared understanding of what to do next, resulting in a lack of readiness for the work that follows. Differences in students’ access to interactional resources in Year 7 informings, when compared to Year 6 informings, provide insight into how students adapt to change during the process of transition.

Chapter 8 discusses the key findings from the analytic chapters. The findings address the research questions, and each is discussed in detail to provide an account of transition-in-action. The first finding asserts that certain practices are employed by students as interactional resources to participate in lessons and accomplish different activities. The second finding states that students display interactional competence as they respond to local contingencies and adapt to new situations and roles by renewing and reorganising their interactional resources during this time. The third finding presents a case for the respecification of transition as situated, interactional accomplishment. Implications for practice, policy and theory are discussed for
each finding. The conclusion then establishes that students socially accomplish transition through the local, situated and contingent organisation of talk practices with other students and teachers during everyday classroom lessons. It is in the talk-in-interaction itself where transition resides.

This thesis intends to demonstrate that transition can be viewed as accomplished in the sequential organisation of interaction; in the classroom talk practices of students and teachers. During transition, it is argued that students orient to, and invoke, interactional resources that are adapted to meet locally relevant and socially situated interactions. By conceptualising transition as social action and investigating it in the social accomplishment of everyday classroom lessons, approaches to dealing with primary to secondary school transition can be transformed and re-vitalised in such a way that they continue to challenge on-going education policy and teaching practice.
CHAPTER 2

CONCEPTUALISING PRIMARY TO SECONDARY SCHOOL TRANSITION: A REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

2.1 Introduction

Within the field of education, the question of how to facilitate a smooth transition for students as they move from primary to secondary school remains an ongoing topic of debate. Traditionally, the discussion has centred on identifying problems and challenges associated with this time, and then implementing programs that address them. In response, schools have adopted individualised approaches to interventions based particularly on meeting the needs of those students who are most at risk to a poor experience. More recently, a holistic view has emerged from the literature and, along with it, a renewed focus on relationships and the social organisation of transition. This shift in perspective has resulted in new insights into how the complexities of transition can be understood in the everyday social interactions of students and teachers. Despite current research on the social nature of transition, little is known about the interactive options available to students in classrooms at the end of primary school and the beginning of secondary school. What counts as transition remains shaped largely by the activities that manage discrete school populations rather than a consideration of what happens in everyday classrooms for students.

In light of the issues outlined above, this review of the literature presents a synthesis of work related to educational transitions and specifically, how they are socially accomplished. It highlights the commonly held beliefs about primary to secondary transition, challenging the notion that Year 7 students move into the ‘unknown’ and therefore act accordingly. First, the chapter investigates the different viewpoints and trends in the conceptualisation of transition. Second, the review focuses particularly on the distinctiveness of the primary to secondary school transition; the move students make from
their final year of primary school to their first year of secondary school (Year 6 to Year 7 in Australia). Third, this time of transition is examined through a social lens where its social organisation is analysed. Missing from the literature are studies where transition is observed as it occurs moment-by-moment in Year 6 and Year 7 settings. Finally, the chapter explores research into classroom talk, and presents a case for studying transition as it occurs in the interactional moments between students and teachers during classroom lessons. In this way, the review of the literature supplements the psychologised view of transition (and its focus on individuals) by establishing a position for a psychological approach that examines primary to secondary school transition within the continuities and discontinuities of pedagogical, curricular and institutional expectations across lessons at the end of Year 6 and the beginning of Year 7.

2.2 How transition is understood

While the word transition has no single definition (Fabian, 2007), it is generally recognised as involving the inevitable movement from one state to another (Cameron & Thygesen, 2015); a temporary phase that is replaced over time by a different form, practice or state (Kovac, 2015). It involves the ways people adapt to new situations or circumstances and respond to change over time (Ecclestone, Biesta, & Hughes, 2009). In educational terms, Fabian (2007) describes it as the process of moving from one setting to another, often accompanied by ‘moves’ from one phase of education to another. In the past, research into transition has tended to focus on identifying issues and resolving problems, particularly around bridging the gaps between these phases of education and making connections between different settings (Fabian, 2007).

The diverse and complex nature of transition has prompted it to become an enduring topic of interest for researchers. Underpinning much of the thinking around transition has been the application of research that has explored it in terms of a rite of passage (van Gennep, Vizedom, & Caffee, 1960) and a time of instability and insecurity (Ashforth, 2001; Moos & Schaefer, 1986). This interpretation of transition is supported by single-event
activities undertaken by children, families and programs at the end of one year and the beginning of the next (Kagan & Neuman, 1998). Another view regards transition as an ecological concept (Bronfenbrenner, 1979) which prompts ongoing efforts by educators to create linkages between children’s natural environments. More recently, research has reflected a conceptualisation of transition that focusses upon transition as continuity of learning and includes work on the everyday practices that constitute ‘horizontal’ transitions (Kagan & Neuman, 1998; Pietarinen, Pyhalto, & Soini, 2010). From this perspective, children engage in ongoing experiences as they transcend and continue between periods in their lives (Kagan & Neuman, 1998). The following section of the literature review explores the contexts influencing these views of transition, and seeks to explain some of the differences in how transition is understood within education.

2.2.1 Transition as a rite of passage

As far back as the 1960s, social scientists such as van Gennep et al. (1960) and Turner (1969) described transition in terms of ‘rites of passage’ where individuals experience fundamental changes as they journey from one previous state to enter another. Such a journey emphasises the importance of critical periods of imbalance which are stabilised and resolved once a set of new rules are adopted, and the world is re-entered with a changed status (van Gennep et al., 1960). These periods of imbalance are cushioned by rituals and ceremonies which incorporate the transitioner into the group (van Gennep et al., 1960). In each period and through each stage, there is a culture that needs to be understood so that sense can be made of the new environment (Fabian, 2007). When transition is viewed as an in-between period or a state of disequilibrium sandwiched between two ‘normal’ states (Kovac, 2015), it implies treatment of a limited temporal sequence which connects and marks two separate and different stages.

The conceptualisation of transition as a ‘rite of passage’ through a single, particular event over a limited segment of time has been adopted by many education researchers in their examination of how students experience and manage changes frequently and predictably as they move from one
aspect of their schooling life to another. For example, Fabian and Dunlop (2002) define transition as “the process of change that is experienced when children move from one setting to another” (p. 3), while Ecclestone (2009) depicts it as a formal ‘turning point’; a change and shift in identity and agency as students progress through the education system. Coffey (2013) and Green (1997) explain transition as the passage from one place to another; a process of moving from the known to the unknown, and Townes (2017) explains school transition pathways as signalling movement away from what is familiar and clearly understood, to something that can be unfamiliar and sometimes stressful.

Within Australian education policy, transition is generally considered to be a single event; where a child moves from one sector to another (Doyle, 2015). This way of thinking is evidenced by the Victorian Department of Education’s definition of transition as “movement from one set of circumstances to another with changes to environments, relationships, behaviours, routines, roles and expectations” (DEECD, 2014, p. 5). Supporting such a notion is literature that largely emphasises different sets of ‘institutional transitions’ which bridge specific and varied contexts such as home-to-kindergarten (Dockett & Perry, 2001; Petriwskij, Thorpe, & Tayler, 2005; Pianta & Rimm-Kaufman, 2006; Ramey & Ramey, 1998), primary school to secondary school (Coffey, 2013; Ganeson & Ehrich, 2009; Green, 1997; Hanewald, 2013; Maguire & Edwards, 2011; Maguire & Yu, 2014; Rossiter, Clarke, & Shields, 2017), middle school transitions (Akos, 2006; Galton, Hargreaves, & Pell, 2003; Hines, 2007) and upper secondary to tertiary (Briggs, Clark, & Hall, 2012; Gale & Parker, 2014; Hillman, 2005). Each of these distinct institutional phases is approached and written about in the literature according to the specific characteristics of ‘this or that’ particular developmental and systemic timeframe (Kagan & Neuman, 1998), with previous research largely focussing on exploring pupils’ learning and coping during such normative times of transition (Pietarinen et al., 2010). As a result, research findings from this perspective are often limited by timeframes and report on transition as systemic, annual events with single responses to these.
Such an image invites educators to think about transition as specific to the boundaries of particular developmental and systemic phases and, with some fine-tuning at the edges, any challenges associated with these times can be minimised (Kemmis, Cole, & Suggett, 1983). By perceiving educational transitions in this way, an interventionist approach that provides funding to support particular challenges representative of particular phases in the form of strategies, interventions and school-based programs has dominated past action (Blackwell et al., 2007). This approach has been adopted by schools in an effort to address common issues experienced by the majority of students transitioning in that particular developmental phase, in conjunction with additional strategies for vulnerable individuals on a case-by-case basis according to specific needs (Townes, 2017). Within the Australian context, such programs and activities include school tours, information nights, advertised enrolment procedures, templates for timetabling, orientation programs, packs for parents and generic checklists for primary and secondary schools.

According to van Rens, Haelermans, Groot and van den Brink (2018), many interventions in the primary to secondary school transition reflect a single and relatively narrow focus. In their review of 30 articles on the topic of primary to secondary school transition published between 1987 and 2011, they found little evidence of educational partnerships to facilitate successful interventions across primary and secondary settings, claiming that stakeholders approached the transition process from their own different perspectives, and adjusted interventions based on these. They also found that the effectiveness of their efforts was rarely evaluated (van Rens et al., 2018). Information that was shared between schools was usually generic information on the curriculum rather than information about individual children (Topping, 2011). Similarly, McGee, Ward, Gibbons and Harlow (2004) in their review of New Zealand intervention programs found few contacts between primary and secondary schools, and in schools where there was contact, it mainly concerned the transfer of information about the school itself; its facilities and teacher contact details.
Not all research supports a single-event, interventionist approach to transition. Findings from the Office of the Victorian Auditor-General (VAGO) (Doyle, 2015) and Department of Education and Training (DET) (DEECD, 2014) into transitions have revealed issues with such an approach claiming “it has no overarching framework, makes limited use of available data to track transition outcomes, and has problems associated with transferring information between schools” (Doyle, 2015, p. 37). The VAGO report (Doyle, 2015) described “a lack of guidance and support from DET” (p. 24), “inconsistent practices between schools” (p. 36), few “transition activities that targeted curriculum or pedagogy” (p. 35) and called for system wide change and “a different approach...to tackles[ing] these issues” (p. 29). Kemmis et al. (1983, p. 15) further contend that such “transition programs are barricades built on the boundaries” between separate institutions. Programs at these imagined boundaries, they argue, at the point of transition, can only offer temporary solutions.

By focussing on transition interventions that are peripheral to the day-to-day workings of the classroom, and peripheral to the central responsibilities and activities of students and teachers, these programs run the risk of providing an air-lock between transition and everyday school experiences (Kemmis et al., 1983), sitting outside the realm of the unfolding school day. Townes (2017) claims that transition should not be seen as a simple one-off procedure that happens on the first day at a new setting and a more comprehensive approach should be considered, and Tobbell and O’Donnell (2013) advocate for a re-focus on relationships to enable smoother transitions. Pietarinen et al. (2010) also agree, calling for new insights and complementary perspectives on the nature of school transitions to better understand its complexities.

2.2.2 Transition as a state of being insecure

While it is acknowledged widely that transition can lead to profound and positive changes for some school students (Fabian, 2007; Hawk & Hill, 2004), it can also be unsettling, difficult and unproductive for others (Ecclestone et al., 2009). The sensitive or fragile nature of transition is
frequently mentioned in the literature (Ashforth, 2001; Moos & Schaefer, 1986) with researchers describing people experiencing transition as being in a ‘state of being insecure’ as they move between different phases and encounter unfamiliar territory (Pellegrini & Long, 2002; Zeedyk et al., 2003). Anderson, Jacobs, Schramm and Splittgerber (2000) claim that school transitions interrupt the continuity of life and introduce students to what Rice et al. (2015) term ‘institutional discontinuities’. Other researchers describe transition as constituting a ‘gap’ in students’ school paths (Pietarinen et al., 2010). In this way, transition is seen as a phase of intensified and accelerated demands that are socially regulated (Fthenakis, 1998), left incomplete until the student, once again, is in a state of well-being and stability (Laevers, 1997).

The conceptualisation of transition as unstable and problematic provides cause for counter processes that balance and even out the risks associated within it (Kovac, 2015). There is general recognition that there are different expectations at either end of transitional phases and, to enable this gap to be crossed, teachers need to know the hazards and recognise the ‘dip’ in academic learning and progress that can occur for many students in the transition period (Galton & Mornson, 2000). This has prompted the use of a range of research measures to determine the degree of success of children’s transitions across school environments based on the identification of issues, problems and the kinds of support students need before, during, and after significant normative and structural school transitions (Galton & Mornson, 2000; Jindal-Snape & Foggie, 2008; Midgley & Edelin, 1998). Research studies by Anderson and his colleagues in the United States (Anderson et al., 2000), Galton and others in the United Kingdom (Galton et al., 2003; Galton & Mornson, 2000) and Hanewald (2013) and Hopwood (2017) in Australia report findings that are remarkably consistent. There is evidence of dips in student progress at each point of transition with most students exhibiting increased levels of anxiety and stress. Whilst they note that not all students experience negative transition-related challenges, and that post transition anxieties may reduce within the first few weeks of school (Galton et al.,
they agree that for some students, transition is an overwhelming process and a time when further support is essential (Rice et al., 2015).

Such a conceptualisation of transition suggests that issues can be solved by working back from those things that hinder a successful transition (Evangelou et al., 2008) and particularly the problems of those students who are at most risk of a poor transition (Galton & Mornson, 2000). Recent research has investigated the resiliency of some students to meet these challenges over others (Crump & Slee, 2015; Eccles et al., 1993; Jacobs, Lanza, Osgood, Eccles, & Wigfield, 2002; Towns, 2017). In their investigation into the association between pre-transition factors and post-transition difficulties, Maguire and Yu (2014) found a range of socio-economic and demographic characteristics that influenced how well Australian children transitioned to secondary schools. These included gender, age, socio-economic status and having older siblings. Girls were found to be more vulnerable than boys with respect to changes in friendship groups (Bailey & Baines, 2012), whereas a loss of motivation to learn was found to be more common amongst boys (McGee et al., 2004). Younger students experienced more difficulties, along with children from lower socio-economic backgrounds (West, Sweeting, & Young, 2010). Such pre-transition factors that have been associated with post-transition difficulties were found by Maguire and Yu (2014) to be highly inter-correlated with a combination of variables involved in making the transition to secondary school more successful. They recommended further research using measures such as teacher reports and teacher ratings to reveal different classroom variables as important.

In response to these findings, a transition framework has been devised by the Victorian Education Department in Australia to guide schools in the identification of specific transfer problems (DEECD, 2014). In New South Wales (NSW), resources are directed according to need, based upon an understanding of the types of students who have been identified as most vulnerable (NSW Government, 2017). In November 2008, the NSW government assigned $11.5 million to expand the support initiatives such as orientation and induction, taster classes, data transfer and pastoral care (NSW Government, 2008). The provision of district transition co-ordination
particular for students identified with support needs is regarded as a priority, along with a centralised enrolment scheme for the state. In the United Kingdom, most schools operate within the framework suggested by Anderson and his colleagues (Anderson et al., 2000) whereby ‘transfer plans’ are created within schools that address key areas that should receive the greatest attention.

2.2.3 Transition as multi layered

More recently, an approach that is embedded theoretically in Bronfenbrenner’s ecological systems perspective has reframed the notion of educational transitions (Rimm-Kaufmann & Pianta, 2000). This multi-layered model described in home-to-school transition studies by Ladd (1996), Ramey and Ramey (1998), Rimm-Kaufmann and Pianta (2000), Fabian (2002) and Pianta and Kraft-Sayre (2003) draws upon an ecological frame of reference that considers the relationships of factors in the child and family, the community, the school and early years services. Such a view claims that children do not learn in isolation, but belong to several microsystems and commute between these environments, adapting to their different demands and learning from each (Bronfenbrenner, 1979). These systems are interwoven and on-going.

An ecological approach argues that to understand transition one must consider the whole ecological system surrounding it (Bronfenbrenner & Morris, 1998). Understanding transition in this way, shifts the focus away from the individual child to the importance of meaningful and responsive relationships between all parties involved. It moves from a linear perspective towards a view of transition as a series of interactions where “the diversity and complexity of transition needs to be valued and understood” (Margetts, 2002, p. 113). In this way, children, parents and teachers co-construct transition in the context of its overlapping experiences and the environments in which they exist (Dunlop, 2003).

Such a shift in perspective became evident in Australian education during the 1990s when the issue of young children’s ‘readiness for school’ was reframed as the more complex ‘transition to school’ (Dockett & Perry,
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2001; where school and home were seen to overlap in nested learning environments (Rimm-Kaufman & Pianta, 2000). Previously, judgments had been made about children’s ‘readiness’ to start school based on individual abilities and levels of maturity (Petriwskyj, Thorpe, & Tayler, 2005). An ecological perspective provided educators with a more holistic view of transition by recognising that there are multiple contributors to children’s experiences (Dockett & Perry, 2001; Felner et al., 1994; Pianta & Rimm-Kaufman, 2006; Rimm-Kaufman & Pianta, 2000). Research from this viewpoint has increasingly included perspectives from children and ways in which they come to terms with change (Einarsdóttir, 2007). It has led to the development of the Australian documents Transition: A positive start to school initiative (2008) and Transition to school: Position statement (2011), along with the NSW Transition to school statement (2016). Transition in these documents is seen to be achieved through the effective management of a variety of communication systems that make the transition meaningful for everyone. It is based on a philosophy that children’s adjustment to school is easier when they are familiar with the new situation, parents are informed about the new school and teachers have information about children’s development and previous experiences (Margetts, 2002).

While these departmental statements have clarified the conceptual analysis of the nature of transition from home-to-school, there is little research to indicate implementation of such an approach during the move from primary to secondary school (Doyle, 2015). Adopting a holistic approach that addresses this time of transition in Australian contexts remains problematic because policy and procedures across primary and secondary educational sectors lack focus (Towns, 2017). This has resulted in limited translation, across primary and secondary settings, of day-to-day practices (Katz, Dack, & Earl, 2009). As such, the primary to secondary school transition is driven largely by autonomous interventionist approaches with schools adopting transition activities for Years 6 to 7 that manage individual school populations without any real accountability (Doyle, 2015).
2.2.4 Transition as continuity of learning

While recognising that transition involves specific changes, experiences and challenges, not all researchers agree that time limits between stages must be fixed or exact, and argue for a ‘softer’ conceptualisation of transition that occurs across extended timeframes and everyday activities. Petriwskyj et al. (2005) suggest that educational transitions should be understood as a multi-time continuous process of learning. They claim that transitions often evolve as small and frequent shifts of perspectives, policies and personal situations that occur regularly over a given time period. Supporting this view is Doyle (2015) who argues that school transitions are not simply a process of transferring a child from one setting to another, but rather a series of interconnected processes taking place over an extended period of time.

Bergstrøm and Voll (2002) adopted this view of transition in their research in kindergartens, schools and after-school care by acknowledging the difference between transitions that are ‘dramatic’ and those that are more common-place and part of a child’s everyday routine. Kovac (2015) further presents an idea of transition conceptualised as ‘moving forward’ and relevant to daily and frequently experienced ‘horizontal’ transitions. Similarly, Kagan and Neuman (1998) distinguish between ‘vertical’ and ‘horizontal’ transitions with vertical ones depicting upward shifts that are significant to later life and horizontal ones denoting customary, relatively frequent events. Their research into transition, spanning three decades, establishes the interrelationship between horizontal and vertical transition processes in education, and acknowledges that successful transitions achieve continuity in students’ lives across both simultaneously (Kagan & Neuman, 1998). This broader interpretation of transition has resulted in a limited field of work that focusses on the unfolding nature of transition that is often embedded in the everyday practices of school life (Pietarinen et al., 2010).

Pietarinen et al. (2010), in their study of Finnish 15 year olds, explored the kinds of horizontal transitions pupils face during their school life in an effort to break down the complexity of the transition process. Horizontal transitions are described by Pietarinen et al. (2010) as the less obvious
changes or frictions in the pupils’ present social environment. These are often embedded in school practices in such a way that members of the school community may not even be aware of them. While acknowledging the importance of vertical transitions, their research highlights the significance of these everyday school practices to provide substantial ‘horizontal turning points’ that either promote or hinder opportunities for students to actively participate in the school day and engage in meaningful learning. They found that the majority of the transitions identified by the students were in fact horizontal and “were usually situated in the instructional practices of a classroom” (Pietarinen et al., 2010, p. 239). Students, they reported, often attributed their competence and efficacy in classroom learning as either promoted or hindered by the quality of interaction with their teacher (Pietarinen et al., 2010). As such, the quality of interaction in pedagogical situations can play a key role in how students experience educational transitions. The next section explores this notion further within the specific context of the primary to secondary school transition to further investigate the nature of interactional practices during this particular time of transition.

2.3 How primary to secondary school transition is understood

The transition from primary to secondary school has long been recognised as a crucial and significant period for both students and teachers (Galton et al. 1999; Akos & Galassi 2004; West et al. 2010). Overwhelmingly, the research depicts a challenging time for students (Moje, 2008) and an ongoing concern for educators (Coffey, 2013; Green, 1997; Hanewald, 2013; Maguire & Edwards, 2011; Maguire & Yu, 2014; Rossiter, Clarke, & Shields, 2017; Towns, 2017). While the literature acknowledges that many students cope well with the transition and enjoy a positive experience (Brown, Kendall, Teeman, & Ridley, 2004; Evangelou et al., 2008; Galton et al., 2003), much of the research is driven by the view that this particular time is difficult to navigate and focuses largely on the negative experiences of those students who struggle and suffer setbacks (Eccles et al., 1993; Feldlaufer, Midgley, & Eccles, 1988). Coffey (2013) suggests that the transition to secondary school can be the most problematic aspect of a student’s school experience, and
Zeedyk et al. (2003) calls it one of the most demanding transitions in a pupil’s educational career. This view is supported by a general consensus that action needs to be taken to support adolescents through such an important phase of their lives.

In recent years, the topic has received increased interest from researchers due to growing attention from education bodies about closing gaps in achievement, improving student engagement, debates about the benefits of different school structures and the needs of adolescent learners (Wylie et al., 2006). Research studies from Australia have emphasised the issue of incongruence or a lack of continuity between primary and secondary settings as a major problem (Cairney, Lowe, & Sproats, 1994; Ganeson & Ehrich, 2009; Green, 1997; Yates, 1999) and examine interventions that contribute to a ‘smoother transition’ (Hanewald, 2013; Lester, Waters, & Cross, 2013; Towns, 2017). From an international perspective, research conducted in the United States suggests that primary to secondary school transitions can cause declines in student achievement (Alspaugh, 1998; Cohen & Smerdon, 2009; Neild, 2009; West & Schwerdt, 2012). Other research from the United Kingdom has focused on the way transition impacts students socially, emotionally and developmentally (Humphrey & Ainscow, 2006; Evangelou et al., 2008; Graham & Hill, 2003; Topping, 2011). Australian researcher Coffey (2013) focuses on transition and early adolescence by further investigating its social and academic aspects. In this section of the literature review, an understanding of primary to secondary school transition is explored by investigating the predominant research themes which include the developmental, social and academic challenges and opportunities associated with this time.

2.3.1 Developmental aspect of transition

The move from primary to secondary school is often considered challenging because it coincides with students’ developmental transition from middle childhood to early adolescence. Psychologists point to this time in the life cycle as a crucial period of cognitive, psychosocial and emotional transformation (Hines, 2007). It is a time where young people deal with the
effects of puberty, form values, identify with certain social groups and experience a shift in how they learn (Smith, 1997). Bafumo (2006) compared this turning point in teenagers' lives as a physical and emotional minefield; a period of “significant change and potential turmoil and difficulty” (Martínez et al., 2011, p. 526). A student’s ability to cope with these changes can have a significant impact on how they feel about school and how they progress through secondary education (Cox & Kennedy, 2008).

That students experience these changes while entering secondary school for the first time, makes transition an important issue for educators (Ganeson & Ehrich, 2009). At this point in their education, students have to cope with dual, concurrent transitions involving both personal developmental changes along with changes to their schooling. Chadbourne (2001), in his discussion paper prepared for the Australian Education Union on middle schooling, depicts the first year of secondary school as reflecting the highest incidence of student alienation, disengagement, disruptive behaviour, boredom and disenchantment. Certain groups of students, particularly those who have faced difficulties at primary school or who experience poor transition preparation, are more vulnerable to poor engagement as they start secondary school (Bailey & Baines, 2012; Bishop et al., 2003; Cox & Kennedy, 2008; Galton et al., 2003; Wylie et al., 2006). Findings from Humphrey and Ainscow’s study of 380 students in the north of England suggest that these pupils are at an increased risk of becoming marginalised and disaffected (Humphrey & Ainscow, 2006). Galton et al. (2003) note that “after an initial surge in interest and enthusiasm following the move to secondary school, both enjoyment and motivation begin to falter” (p. 10). And, even where students effectively negotiate the transition, it is almost always accompanied by increased levels of stress and anxiety (Topping, 2011).

However, the adolescent years can also be viewed as a time of potential and promise (Thorne, 2008) where the challenges students face can be seen as opportunities to further enhance their development and improve their experience of schooling. Thorne (2008) argues that a deficit view of this period as a time in which problems and difficulties must be tolerated can be replaced with a positive one where “practices that harness and take
advantage of the unique characteristics of the learners involved” (p. 22) can be embraced. As adolescents actively begin their search for belonging and identity, they widen their social networks and strive for independence (Rudzinskas, 2008). They are excited about having more freedom, more subject choices, and the opportunity to participate in a range of school and extra-curricular activities (Coffey, 2013). Anderson et al. (2000) go on to claim that environmental contexts such as the structure of the curriculum and teachers’ instructional practices can influence successful transitions by making the most of the adolescent learner’s new sense of academic autonomy. A discussion of the academic aspect of primary to secondary transition is presented in the next section.

2.3.2 Academic aspect of transition

Whilst there is a common expectation that students’ academic abilities will advance as they progress through school, it has become increasingly evident that academic attainment does not always follow a linear path across transitions. Power (1989) identified adjusting to the academic environment of the secondary school as the most frequent and persistent stress for students, with Fouracre (1993) suggesting a clear academic discontinuity between primary and secondary school. This view is supported by Galton and Morrison’s (2000) research investigating the idea that pupils suffer a ‘dip’ in their academic progress after transition. They report that two out of five pupils fail to make progress during their first year after transition. They claim that Year 7 pupils are not being sufficiently pushed academically. In agreement is Chadbourne (2011, p. 4) who further states that student learning slows down, stops or even seems to go backwards “at a time when learning should be jumping ahead”. Galton and Morrison (2000) recommend that schools direct their attention to the academic dimensions of transition to sustain pupils’ progress.

A large body of literature exists on the impact of primary to secondary school transition on student achievement (Alspaugh, 1998; Cohen & Smerdon, 2009; Neild, 2009; West & Schwerdt, 2012). Alspaugh (1998) reports, in his study of U.S. schools across 48 school districts in Missouri, a
consistent dip in students’ progress during times of transition. He found statistically significant achievement loss associated with the transition from elementary school to middle school at 6th grade, as compared with K–8 schools that did not have a school-to-school transition at 6th grade. The decline in achievement was larger when students from multiple elementary schools were merged into a single middle school during the transition (Alspaugh, 1998). Similarly, Blyth, Simmons and Carlton-Ford (1983) found that students suffered a significant loss in grade point average as they progressed from their sixth to seventh year of school in the United States. In their exploration of effective transition programs for students entering middle or secondary school, Cauley and Jovanovich (2006) established that 38 per cent of students did less well academically after they had undergone the process of transition. Likewise, West and Schwerdt (2012) identified that student achievement in reading decreased dramatically after students had entered secondary school, with Australian researchers Hopwood, Hay, and Dyment (2012) also finding significant declines in students’ reading ability as they transitioned from primary to secondary school.

The implications for student learning based on these findings are quite alarming. According to research by Cauley and Jovanovich (2006), students who struggle academically in their adolescent years are 20 per cent more likely to drop out of school. Longitudinal research conducted in the United States by Reyes, Gillock, Kobus and Sanchez (2000) over a six year period reported that a drop of one letter grade (for example, B to C) was not uncommon during the transition to secondary school, and they noted that over the course of transition, many average students came close to failing. They also concluded that for the below average student, the negative impact of transition can make it very difficult for some students to improve and catch back up to grade level standards with particular implications for students’ future in school and later in the workforce (Reyes et al., 2000).

Evangelou et al. (2008) recognise ‘student interest in the curriculum’ and the ‘continuity of academic content from one setting to the other’ as two important indicators of a successful transition. Firstly they claim that students need to understand what is expected of them in secondary school, and
secondly they need to be prepared for the level and style of work awaiting them. Eccles et al. (1993) identify changes in the nature of the curriculum and the learning environment during transition as plausible reasons for the decline in pupils’ academic performance and attitude towards school. Green (1997) found that many students reported secondary school academic work far less challenging than they had thought it would be. And, McGee, Ward, Gibbons and Harlow (2004) claimed that academic attainment in the first year of secondary school seemed to be related to pupils’ decreased interest in academic activities and an increase in non-academic activities in the middle years. The discontinuity between the work that students do in primary and secondary classrooms is termed by Davies and McMahon (2011) as ‘the curriculum gap’. In an effort to address and bridge this gap, they suggest that teachers from both settings engage in collaborative processes to cultivate, not only shared curriculum projects, but also the context for developing greater continuity in instructional methods (Davies & McMahon, 2011).

The types of instructional methods teachers use in classroom lessons to facilitate effective transitions for students can provide valuable information about how to support students from one year to the next (Midgley & Edelin, 1998). Galton and Mornson (2000) found that problems often arise from a lack of continuity in coherent instruction across the curriculum because teachers in the new school prefer to make ‘a fresh start’. Newmann, Smith, Allensworth and Bryk (2001) define coherent instruction as providing “sensible connections and coordination between the topics that students study in each subject within a grade and as they advance through the grades” (p. 298). In their study conducted in 222 Chicago elementary schools, they found that improvement in the level of instructional coherence across learning activities, among other variables, was associated with increased student motivation to engage in learning and improved opportunities for cognitive processing (Newmann et al., 2001). The validity of their research is supported by evidence claiming that instructional coherence is a component of school reform that leads to better learning outcomes for children (Stipek, Clements, Coburn, Franke, & Farran, 2017). This suggests the importance of organising instruction in classroom lessons within and across
grades during times of transition so that students can move along meaningful learning trajectories.

The way students cope with school life during times of transition is also impacted by the pedagogical practices adopted by their teachers (Butler & Shibaz, 2008; Pelletier, Séguin-Lévesque, & Legault, 2002; Ryan, Gheen, & Midgley, 1998). Like the curriculum gap, the differences in teaching and learning approaches between the ‘two tribes’ of primary and secondary teachers (Sutherland, Yee, McNess, & Harris, 2010) can result in major discontinuities for students (Davies & McMahon, 2011). Evidence from research by Galton et al. (2003) found that only nine per cent of UK transition initiatives focused on helping Year 7 teachers build on effective primary practices. They recommended exploring specific pedagogic strategies such as helping pupils to work together cooperatively, the effective use of appropriate questioning techniques and the capacity of pupils to evaluate their own learning (Galton et al., 2003, p. 72). Similarly, Baird, Gunstone, Penna, Fensham and White (1990) in their three year project to research student engagement in everyday science lessons involving 33 teachers and over 2000 students noted the disappointment of students beginning secondary school. They felt as if they just copied notes or watched demonstrations, and were not given any ‘real work’ (Baird et al., 1990, p. 17). The students expressed their frustration at the lack of activities, the amount of notetaking, listening to lectures and the irrelevant topics. So, while students are beginning to develop their higher level thinking skills, secondary school teachers tend to use low level thinking and student engagement strategies with their students (Jindal-Snape & Miller, 2008).

The following section goes on to investigate the social discontinuities between the kinds of relationships and interactions students experience across primary and secondary classrooms. It concludes with an examination of the inherent social nature of transition itself.

2.3.3 Social aspect of transition

Transitions are the periods in any social interaction that take place “when contexts change” (Doyle, 2013, p. 107). In Australian schools, the
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Primary to secondary shift from one setting to another involves a change to a significantly larger site, getting to know new friends, taking part in a different type of school day and working with a number of teachers with diverse teaching styles across multiple subject-based lessons. Ashton (2008) describes the transition between these very different school environments as social alienation from peer groups and insecurity in teacher relationships. No longer do students spend the majority of their day in the same classroom with the same teacher and the same group of peers. Instead, they move from class to class, from lesson to lesson, continuously changing their peer group and encountering new sets of rules that may vary dramatically from teacher to teacher (Coffey, 2013). From a social perspective, Hallinan and Hallinan (1992) refer to this shift as ‘the transfer paradox’ which represents both a step up and a step down for students in terms of socially reflected maturity. They move from being the oldest and most experienced in their primary school to being the youngest and least mature in the new secondary school.

Studies concentrating on the social dimensions of transition focus on the significant changes in the peer group and social acceptance as students move between settings. Eccles and Wigfield (1993) suggest that the secondary school structure disrupts social relationships at a time when students are most searching for social acceptance and belonging. Decreased self-esteem (Coffey, 2013; Eccles et al., 1993), peer group changes (Crockett, Petersen, Graber, Schulenberg, & Ebata, 1989; He & Wong, 2017) and fear of being picked on, teased and bullied by older students (Lucey & Reay, 2000; Pellegrini & Long, 2002; West et al., 2010) can lead to a drop in academic performance and rising anxiety and depression levels (Akos, 2006; Frey, Ruchkin, Martin, & Schwab-Stone, 2009). Ashton (2008) in her research using questionnaires to elicit responses from over 1500 students in their final year of primary school in the United Kingdom, found that the social aspects of the move such as making new friends, fitting in, feeling lost and working with new teachers were most important for them. Similarly, studies by Ganeson and Ehrich (2009) and Topping (2011) documented students self-reporting issues such as feeling alone and having difficulty in making friends once they get to secondary school.
Consistent with the above findings, The Longitudinal Study of Australian Children (Maguire & Yu, 2014) reports building new friendships as the most common difficulty reported by Australian children in their transition to secondary school. Maguire and Yu (2014) claim that, of those students reporting having difficulties with the transition to secondary school, a high proportion said they had difficulties with missing their old friends, and stated that problems with peers played an important role in shaping their experiences of loneliness, self-esteem, school involvement and academic achievement. This reinforces findings by West et al. (2010), who reported that children with anxiety and low self-esteem are more likely to struggle in the transition to secondary school. The findings of Coffey’s (2013) research further support an emphasis on the social relational aspects of the transition process. She explored the importance of relationships and how a focus on these can mitigate some of the stresses experienced by students as they negotiate the challenges that can be associated with transition. Recent studies by Tobbell and O’Donnell (2013) and Rice et al. (2015) both identify the formation of interpersonal relationships at the point of transition to secondary school as being central to students’ experiences.

The teacher-student relationship plays a pivotal role in students’ transition experiences and is central for providing the support students need in order to transition successfully (Akos & Galassi, 2004; Coffey, 2013). Characteristics generally associated with teacher support during this time include being caring, friendly, understanding and dependable (Ryan & Patrick, 2001). Recent Australian research by Fraser (2018) involving 541 students from years 7 and 8 in metropolitan and regional South Australia revealed that student-teacher relationships in mathematics classes deteriorated after the transition from the primary to secondary sector. Ferguson and Fraser’s (1998) earlier research in Tasmanian schools and Hine’s (2001) study in South Australia both reported decreases in the quality of student-teacher interactions from primary to secondary schools, with Hines (2001) attributing the trend to rapid lesson turnover, multiple specialist teachers and larger school sizes. Similarly, the Australian Department of Employment (1992) stated that, according to student feedback in Tasmanian secondary schools,
“deterioration in the relationship between student and teacher, stemming from too much emphasis on ‘chalk and talk’ in secondary classrooms, resulted in poor behaviour due to boredom” (p. 8). Bru, Stornes, Munthe and Thuen (2010) concluded from their study of 7205 students that student perception of diminishing teacher support is not an obvious, abrupt change during transition from primary to secondary school but a linear downward tendency over time. Their findings support the idea that the transition from primary to secondary school affects students' perception of teacher support in a negative way (Bru et al., 2010).

Other transition studies have suggested that teachers and students relate to each other in different ways across primary and secondary settings. Feldlaufer, Midgley and Eccles (1988) assessed student and teacher perceptions of classroom interactions in 117 Year 6 classrooms in one year and then 138 Year 7 classrooms in the following year. They found that Year 7 students were given fewer opportunities for self-management, lesson input, interaction and cooperation. Whole class task organisation increased and student-teacher relationships were characterised as less positive when compared to the previous year (Feldlaufer et al., 1988). Other studies have reported that students commencing Year 7 have fewer choices (Rounds & Osaki, 1982), participate less in decision making (Midgley & Feldlaufer, 1987) and perceive they have less control over their lives (Coffey, 2013). In response to this social disconnect between Year 6 and Year 7 settings, the findings of Coffey’s (2013) Australian research strongly support an emphasis on the relational aspects of the transition process. A focus on the social relationships between teachers and students and students and students “can help to ameliorate many of the challenges presented by this change” (Coffey, 2013, p. 269). The following section further investigates the importance of social relationships to the transition process in Year 6 and Year 7 classroom settings.

2.4 Transition and social interaction

Transition comprises a complex process made up of continued social activity in which individuals learn to cope by adapting to changing social
Conditions (Fabian, 2007). Classrooms are inherently social places where opportunities for social interaction impact student engagement, adjustment to school and academic achievement (Coffey, 2013; Ryan & Patrick, 2001; Tobbell & O’Donnell, 2013). As students transition from primary school to secondary school, much of their school day is spent interacting with others in the doing of classroom activities. The organisation of these activities affects the interpersonal relations at school (Pintrich, 2003; Ryan & Patrick, 2001) and can either help or hinder learning (Freeman, McPhail, & Berndt, 2002; Hickey, 1997). By studying the complex social organisation of classroom activities, key differences in the social contexts of classrooms can be revealed (Rathunde & Csikszentmihalyi, 2005).

Transition, when viewed through a social lens, can be situated and studied as it unfolds in the social organisation of Year 6 and Year 7 classrooms. In this way, transition gets done in and through the social interactional practices of its participants; achieved collaboratively (Jordan & Henderson, 1995) as teachers and students make sense of each other’s actions as meaningful, orderly and projectable (Schegloff, 2007). What follows in this next section is a different way of conceptualising transition as social action; where it is accomplished in the naturally occurring, everyday interactions of teachers and students (Drew, 2005; Drew & Heritage, 1992; Wenger, 1999).

2.4.1 The social organisation of the classroom

Students and teachers meet and learn together in social situations in classrooms. Here they take on recognisable social roles that reflect particular behaviours, routines and ways of interacting that are specific to classroom culture (Edwards-Groves et al., 2014). Gee (1996) uses the concept ‘Discourse’ to describe the social nature of the classroom as “a sort of identity kit which comes complete with the appropriate costume and instructions on how to act, talk and often write” (p. 127). Davies (1983), in her work on the social construction of the classroom, explains how social competencies are developed through their enactment in a variety of familiar rituals. These rituals form a type of framework for teachers and students to make sense of
their social actions. In this way, making sense of what is happening in the classroom, and being able to answer the question ‘What is going on?’, is the central task teachers and students face in relating to each other (Davies, 1983).

The social organisation of the classroom is similar to that of other culturally based activities in that it is guided by rules and norms that establish its sense of order (Macbeth, 1990; Mehan, 1998). Students need a detailed knowledge of these rules so they can present themselves as competent members of their particular social scene. As such, they must develop a set of social competencies to be used in the production of the 'order' in their classrooms (Cicourel, 1980; IcBay, 2008; Mehan, 1979a). Davies (1983) found that, as students cue actively into what the teacher says and does, the particular order of the classroom comes into being. This perspective proposes that ‘order in the classroom’ is an outcome of mutually negotiated meaning between what the teacher and students expect from each other. However, how order is negotiated and managed in the classroom talk practices of students and their teachers across primary to secondary school transitions, during Year 6 and Year 7 lessons, is yet to be explored.

Nonetheless, the work of establishing classroom order in the early grades has been studied as a major focus of Mehan’s (1979a, 1982) work into how lessons are organised. He concludes that, for students to be competent members in classroom communities, they must not only know the content of academic subjects, but they also need to know how to actually display this knowledge by employing interactional skills and abilities. “They must know with whom, when, and where they can speak and act, and they must provide the speech and behaviour that are appropriate for a given classroom situation” (Mehan, 1979a, p. 133). This implicit awareness of how to talk and act for effective participation in the classroom is described by Mehan (1979a) as ‘interactional competence’.

Interactional competence refers to “the active modes of human production and construction, the concrete observable ‘work’ of people that assembles orderly social entities” (Mehan, 1979a, p. 130). In the classroom, this work is displayed in students’ competent participation in lessons where
classroom rules for taking turns-at-talking, producing orderly utterances, making coherent topical ties and participating in ritualised openings and closings are negotiated between the teacher and the students (Mehan, 1979a). How students jointly orient their speaking and acting at the end of Year 6 and then at the beginning of Year 7 can reveal their access to interactional resources as a display of their interactional competence across settings. This notion is further explored in the next section where classroom lessons are identified as providing the infrastructure for such work to get done.

2.4.2 The social accomplishment of classroom lessons

The organisational features of the classroom are built around the structures of the talk that sustain the orderliness and inter-subjectivities that constitute each lesson. Classroom lessons are socially organised, collaboratively assembled (Mehan & Griffin, 1980) and collectively created and sustained in the interactions of teachers and students (Erickson & Schultz, 1997). Studies on classroom interaction by Edwards-Groves (1998, 2017), Edwards-Groves and Davidson (2017), Macbeth (1990, 2004, 2011), McHoul (1978, 1990, 2008a) and Mehan (1978, 1979a, 1982) all agree that the ‘social work’ accomplished in different parts of the lesson provides the interactional infrastructure for teachers and students to co-produce what gets done. Mehan’s (1979a) *Learning lessons* reports on the everyday life of classrooms by “dismantling the ‘black box’ of classroom pedagogy” (Macbeth, 2003, p. 240). He suggests that, in a play on the phrase ‘learning lessons’, students are not actually ‘learning their lessons’ but are learning how to do them. Such a view depicts classroom lessons as interactional accomplishments; dependent upon the participation of teachers and students for the organisation of their structure. In this sense, the very organisation of classroom lessons is locally and interactionally produced, and therefore contingent, practised and methodic (Macbeth, 2003).

In his book *Learning lessons*, Mehan (1979a) seeks to explain how the social organisation of classroom lessons is achieved in the organisation of the talk. He describes lessons as “contextually based discourse” (Mehan, 1979a,
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p. 182) and examines, in interactional detail, how they are assembled by teachers and students in familiar ways. Lessons are organised into units comprising sequences and phases. These are jointly produced by teachers and students who demonstrate their orientation toward each sequential and hierarchical component in verbal and non-verbal behaviours (Mehan, 1979a). Once a lesson is ‘set up’ and students are assembled, it begins with ‘an opening phase’, followed by ‘an instructional phase’ and then concludes with ‘a closing phase’ (Mehan, 1979a, p. 36). Within each phase, specific interactional sequences occur. The opening and closing phases are made up of directives and informatives, while the instructional phase is dominated by elicitations (Mehan, 1979a). These recurrent patterns of talk are found in classrooms with great regularity.

The sequential organisation of lessons has been a popular topic of study amongst education researchers. A major study examining the ‘everyday’ literacy practices, in and out of school, by Freebody, Ludwig and Gunn (1995) investigated how literacy lessons are constructed within the conversational features at work in classroom talk sequences. It documented the interactive pedagogical routines in ‘disadvantaged’ and ‘non-disadvantaged’ classrooms and reported student interactive options. They found, common to many of the lessons in 'disadvantaged' schools, was a switch in talk from school curriculum topics and task directives to managerial talk focusing on the management of materials, bodies, time and social behaviour (Freebody, et al., 1995). Their findings supported previous empirical research on classroom talk (McHoul, 1978; Heap, 1992; Drew & Heritage, 1992) where teachers controlled topic, sequence and the participation rights of students to join in the conversation by taking every second turn-at-talk during the lesson.

While the study by Freebody et al. (1995) was able to discuss differences in the social accomplishment of lessons across ‘disadvantaged’ and ‘non-disadvantaged’ classrooms, there is little research that documents the different interactive options available to students across ‘Year 6’ and ‘Year 7’ lessons. One account of the social accomplishment of Year 7 lessons however can be found in the work of Davies and McMahon (2011) who report
on how students adjust to science lessons in secondary school classrooms. They claim that lessons in secondary school classrooms place “more emphasis in science on reasoning and evidence, and less on the emotional and social dimension of learning, whereas primary science pedagogy has more emphasis on the creative, imaginative dimensions of science” (Davies & McMahon, 2011, p. 76). The ORACLE (Observational Research and Classroom Learning Evaluation) project (1975–1980) in the United Kingdom and its replication study (1996) also found low levels of expectation by secondary teachers of pupils’ enquiry skills and correspondingly high percentages of whole-class teaching in Year 7 lessons (Galton, Gray, & Ruddick, 1999). Davies and McMahon (2011) concluded their report by calling for opportunities for primary and secondary teachers of science to “arrive at a consensus of what constitutes effective teaching in their phase, and to build on the commonalities of practice around the point of transfer to minimise the dislocation for pupils” (p. 81).

Martin (2015) also studied the pedagogical make-up of classroom lessons in his discussion on teaching academically at-risk students as they moved from primary to secondary school. He proposed the implementation of explicit instruction and guided discovery learning to accommodate the escalation of cognitive demands during the transition from Year 6 to Year 7 (Martin, 2015). Despite these studies, there still exists a gap in the transition literature that addresses how classroom lessons are jointly managed and socially accomplished across this time. Just as the work of Freebody et al. (1995) has been able to inform debate on teaching and learning literacy in ‘disadvantaged’ and ‘non-disadvantaged’ sites, an investigation on the contrasting features of classroom talk in lessons at the end of Year 6 and at the beginning of Year 7 can detail the opportunities and challenges that face students during the transition process.

2.4.3 Classroom lessons and maintaining social order

Already established in this literature review is the belief that every educational setting involves various sorts of organisational mechanisms that govern the flow of social behaviours among its member (Macbeth, 1990,
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1991; Mehan, 1979a, 1998; Mehan & Griffin, 1980). Such mechanisms are created, sustained and modified according to the consequences of explicit and implicit rules, principles and routines. These are constructed mutually by teachers and students during lessons. How classroom lessons are structured interactionally can provide important details about how order in classrooms is assembled and maintained (IcBay, 2010). Studies of maintaining social order in classrooms are discussed in this section from a conversation analytic (CA) perspective; where social reality is viewed as constructed in naturally occurring talk (Sacks, Schegloff, & Jefferson, 1974).

The process of maintaining order in the classroom, and re-maintaining that same order when it is not followed, has been an ongoing topic of CA research in education. Common to the literature is the idea that teachers hold the leading power to organise the rules based on the “remarkably compact formulation of the central rule of classroom speaking”; when the teacher talks, students do not (Macbeth, 1992, p. 124). Payne and Hustler’s (1980) observations of secondary classroom lessons concluded that a common strategy used by teachers to uphold this rule was “to constitute them as a class, as a collectivity, as a cohort” (p. 50). They found that teachers used ‘cohorting practices’ in the organisation of their talk to ensure the collective pupil identity was maintained. Such practices were used by teachers in the routine management of the start of the lesson where “[t]he teacher does not announce that the lesson is beginning, nor does he explicitly describe the pupils as a collectivity; rather it is through the organisation of his talk that these actions are being made available to the parties in the occasion” (Payne & Hustler, 1980, p. 54). By addressing the class as a whole with the use of words like ‘you all’, the teacher gets students to act as one unit, “making their individual fates collectively interdependent” (Payne & Hustler, 1980, p. 54). In this way, social order in the classroom is established in the distinctive distribution of the turns within the talk (Sacks et al., 1974).

As the lesson unfolds, Payne and Hustler (1980) report other instances of the teacher demonstrating cohorting work in the procedures for introducing the topic of the lesson and when changing the activity for everyone. They discovered times where student talk would break up into a
number of smaller groups. When these different conversations occurred, the teacher organised the orientation of the talk back to the management of students as a single cohort. These findings are supported by the work of Sacks et al. (1974) into naturally occurring talk. They claim that the natural tendency in any conversation involving more than two persons is to have groups of two, each of which has a speaker and a listener, and a system of rules regulating the exchanges between them (Sacks et al., 1974). However, the nature of the classroom environment does not allow participants to have groups of two, but only to have a group of two parties, and a system of rules regulating the exchanges between these two parties: the teacher, and then the students as whole (McHoul, 1978).

This view is supported by the work of McHoul (1978) who describes classroom interactions during lessons as overwhelmingly teacher managed in a two-party speech exchange system. He examined audio and video recordings of naturally occurring classroom talk to reveal an orderliness in orientations to certain rules. He argued that the rules, which provided the degree of pre-allocation involved in the organisation of turns-at-talk in lessons, resulted in teachers enjoying ‘maximised participation rights’ in the classroom and students experiencing ‘minimised participation rights’ (McHoul, 1978, p. 185). Among other results from his study was that, until the selection of a next speaker was produced in any current turn by the teacher, every member of the cohort including each student, had to attend to what was being uttered in the classroom (McHoul, 1978).

More recently, research by IcBay (2008, 2010, 2011) further explores how classroom order is mutually established in the interactions of teachers and students during lessons. Building on the ideas of Mehan (1979a), Macbeth (1990), McHoul (1978) and Payne and Hustler (1980), IcBay (2010) presents a view of classroom order as interactional accomplishment; achieved in the collaborative actions of two parties; the teacher as the cohorting party and the students as the cohorted single party. He describes, in his study of three classrooms from three different high schools, how transitions are constructed in lessons, how teachers and students co-operate to move from one event to another, and how transitions function to restore the order
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(IcBay, 2011). He suggests that the key element governing the transitions from one event to another in classroom lessons is a ‘tying’ term; initiated by teachers turning backwards in their turns-at-talk to reference their last turn in a previous event. He concludes that transitions in lessons are accomplished by these tying signals. Used in a transition period, they aim to bring students who are engaged in private conversations back into the single cohort again (IcBay, 2011). As a result, transitions are the times when two events in a classroom are connected and students are transformed into a single unit.

While the work of IcBay (2011) addresses ways that teachers and students create cohort practices and restore classroom order during transitions within lessons, the question of how classroom order is constructed across the major transition from primary to secondary school remains undiscovered. In order to provide such an analysis, this thesis pursues an understanding of transition as a mutually accomplished shift from the particular organisation of the social interactions that take place in one context, to another context, which involves a different organisation of interaction. In this way, primary to secondary school transition is located in the day-to-day organisation of the social interactions between teachers and students during Year 6 and Year 7 classroom lessons. Such a social view of transition presents a need to broaden the current research base by analysing the details within the talk to understand the interactive options made available to students in each setting. When studying transition in this way, the talk-in-interaction of teachers and students during classroom lessons is seen to constitute the social organisation of transition itself.

2.5 Classroom talk and social interaction

Students bring with them to secondary school considerable knowledge of the interactional rules of the classroom. According to Macbeth (1990), secondary school students “are familiar with the order, structures and resources of the classroom, practised and even skilful in their production” (p. 192). However, students must still distinguish the special features of the interactional rules in a Year 7 classroom from those of a Year 6 classroom. Like strangers coming to a new community (Schutz & Luckmann, 1973),
students entering a secondary classroom for the first time must be socialised to new customs in how to speak and how to act. They must adjust to any disparities between ways of speaking and acting in Year 6, and ways of speaking and acting in Year 7.

According to Gee (2014), the interactional rules of classrooms become meaningful only in and through social talk practices; where they reside in a community of practice formed by those engaged in the language games that we humans play (Mauws & Phillips, 1995). Conversation analysts are interested in the interactional organisation of such social activities (Hutchby & Wooffitt, 1998), viewing talk as “the primordial means through which the business of the social world is transacted” (Goodwin & Heritage, 1990, p. 283). By describing talk practices as the central resource for revealing and understanding the infrastructure of social institutions (Schegloff, 2007), a new orientation for studying classroom lessons, as manifested through talk practices (Seedhouse, 2004), has been provided.

The next section of the literature review explores research into classroom talk and social interaction. First it outlines some of the early studies into classroom talk dating back to the 1960s. Next, an overview of constructivist approaches explains the contribution of seminal researchers such as Barnes (1976, 2008, 2010), Sinclair and Coulthard (1975) and Mehan (1979a, 1982, 1998) to the field. It then describes a range of discourse analysis methodologies by investigating the work of Mercer (2005, 2008a), Alexander (2004, 2005, 2008, 2017) and Gee (1989, 1990, 2014). Under the final heading, CA is identified as a potentially powerful approach to grasping the complexities and intricacies of classroom talk as it unfolds in everyday lessons. The section concludes by presenting a case for studying transition from a CA perspective; where transition is viewed as social action achieved in the talk-in-interaction of students and teachers as they participate in everyday classroom lessons.

2.5.1 An overview of classroom talk as a topic of research

The historical narrative of research into classroom talk is as interesting as it is complex. Until the 1960s, little direct study had addressed what was
actually occurring ‘inside classrooms’ and how the patterns of interactions influenced opportunities for students to participate in lessons (Green & Dixon, 1994). There was a general assumption that participation in the education process could be explained by looking at the external determinants of success or failure as measured by rating scales and questionnaires without looking at the everyday doings of the classroom itself (Stubbs, 2012). In his critique of early research, Stubbs (2012, p. 91) stated, “[o]ur ignorance of what happens in classrooms is spectacular. We are often prepared to make broad generalisations purporting to relate to children’s language to their potential educability, yet we lack basic descriptive information about how pupils and teachers communicate”.

One reason why the language of the classroom held little appeal for researchers pre 1960s was due to the complexities of gathering accurate talk-data in an era before the invention of tape recorders and video recording equipment. It wasn’t until well into the 60s that advances in technology provided researchers a means of capturing live conversations in classrooms and a way of studying communication patterns retrospectively. Talk could be transcribed and then used as a powerful source of analysis for teachers as they reflected on their own practices. Some of the earliest researchers to transcribe student talk from tape recordings were English teachers in London in the late 60s. They found that by talking to each other and reshaping their own thoughts, students could collaborate to make meaning (Barnes & Todd, 1995). With access to recording devices such as cassettes and radio microphones, researchers became confident in their ability to accurately observe and capture teacher and pupil exchanges (Edwards & Westgate, 1994).

Research from the 1960s and 70s prompted a new focus on the types of teacher-student interactions that could be observed within the classroom setting (Simpson, Mercer, & Majors, 2010). Researchers explored how these interactions impacted student participation in lessons by using analytical tools such as rating and category systems for observing, recording and measuring talk behaviours. Examples of this type of research, known as systematic interaction analysis, could be found in the work of Cantor (1953), Medley
(1963) and Flanders (1970). Although these techniques led to different ways of looking at classroom talk and interaction, they were not without their limitations and critics. One of the most serious problems was identified as dealing with the ambiguity of meanings for the same utterance, when said in a different time and context, and used with a different purpose in mind (Mercer, 2010). By failing to account for the context, all types of interactions were evaluated in the same way and from the same perspective (Walsh, 2011). Stubbs (2012) further argued that, at best, this type of system could provide only an overall measure of the classroom environment without studying the details of the actual talk used to create this environment.

Because of its dialogic peculiarities, the classroom became a popular place of study for linguists in the 1970s and 80s. Classroom talk was generally acknowledged as being characteristically different from other types of discourse (Stubbs, 2012) with linguists acknowledging the artificial or odd nature of the talk when compared to that of casual conversation between equals (Burton, 1981). One of the first conclusions inferred by linguists was the predictable sequences of classroom interaction, usually distinguished by orderly question-answer-exchanges (Barnes, 1971; Sinclair & Coulthard, 1975). Many studies during this time commented on the over-use of questions by teachers and particularly the practice of engaging student participation with pseudo or ‘guess-what-I’m-thinking’ questions that didn’t require students to think for themselves (Atkinson, 1985; Labov, 1976; Mehan, 1979b). Other studies found a quantitative imbalance of contributions, a lack of reciprocity in the exchanges and imbalance in control or power relations (Burns & Myhill, 2004). Overall, findings tended to support the opinion that teachers did most of the talking, asked most of the questions and owned much of the discourse; that the enduring pattern of classroom interaction was a three-part, teacher led interaction consisting of teacher question, response from student and feedback from teacher (Fisher & Larkin, 2008). Edwards and Westgate (1994, p. 46) suggested that:

In orderly classrooms, the teacher takes turns at will, allocates turns to others, determines topics, interrupts and re-allocates turns judged to be irrelevant to those topics, and provides a running commentary on what is
being said and meant which is the main source of cohesion within and between the various sequences of the lesson.

In this pattern of classroom interaction, teachers were generally characterised as the dominant, controlling voice.

By the 1990s, language, linguistics and education had been productively brought together to frame a new tradition for studying classroom practices, and the talk that sustained them. This tradition was built on the view that teaching and learning were communicative processes that required an understanding of talk as both a personal resource and a social process within a social group (Green & Dixon, 1994). During this period, the influential work of Halliday (1993) and the functional aspects of language saw research shift towards studies that investigated the sociocultural impacts of classroom talk. Methods researchers used to explore discourse in this way included discourse analysis (Alexander, 2004; Gee, 1990; Mercer, 2010; Wells & Arauz, 2006), conversation analysis (Drew & Heritage, 1992; Schegloff, 1987b, 1996a, 1996d), and combinations and applications of both of these.

Just as talk can be viewed as practices that impact student engagement and participation, so can the practice of silence affect students’ experience of the classroom (Alerby & Alerby, 2003; Jaworski & Sachdev, 1998; Ollin, 2008). Influenced by Vygotsky’s work on the development of silent inner speech, where thoughts remain private and cognitive development becomes internalised, Ollin (2008) argued that the perspective of classroom silence, rather than classroom talk, was often misunderstood and undervalued by researchers. “Descriptions of the figured worlds of the participants in which actual practices involving silence were reported presented an alternative perspective on classroom practice, which is generally configured and described in terms of vocalisation and overt activity” (Ollin, 2008, p. 278). Alerby and Alerby (2003) reported silence as a language in itself; “that a non-message is also a message - that silence tells us something” (p. 41).

Jaworski and Sachdev (1998) further confirmed the importance of silence for learning rather than for teaching claiming that students believed they were “more silent when learning than their teachers were when
teaching” (p. 273). While there is variability amongst conversation analysts around the way silence is seen to function in interaction, generally they argue that silence, or the absence of talk, is “an event in its own right” (Schegloff, 2007, p. 21). It can be viewed in the organisation of conversational turn-taking as a mere gap in the flow of talk (Mushin & Gardner, 2009) or as a practice whereby an individual may choose not to talk at all. Some conversation analysts have associated silence with flagging a type of interactional trouble, as if they can’t find the right word (Goodwin & Goodwin, 1986; Hayashi, 2003). Nevertheless, research into silence as a classroom practice provides analysts with a methodology that allows them not only to investigate how silences get heard, but also how the talk itself gets heard.

As a result of the work of these scholars, an increasing body of research has been established that supports the view that talk practices are crucial to what happens in classrooms. Research exploring classroom talk from a constructivist perspective will now be presented to provide further insight into the reciprocal and dynamic relationship between interaction and participation.

2.5.2 Constructivist approaches to studying classroom talk

Classroom studies of talk from the 1970s onwards were influenced by a constructivist view of teaching and learning. From a constructivist perspective, students actively create their own understandings from personal experiences by relating new ideas and ways of thinking into their existing view of the world. This view is strongly influenced by Piaget’s cognitive constructivist theories of assimilation, shaping new knowledge to fit with what is already known, and accommodation, changing one’s understanding of the world to accommodate new ideas that don’t fit with pre-existing knowledge. Vygotsky’s social constructivist approach where ideas are constructed through collaboration and social interaction differs from Piaget’s in its focus on learning from social practices. Teachers are encouraged to understand and adopt constructivist teaching methods by “developing tools that secure inquiry and social interaction in the classroom, along with
cooperative skills and individual discovery learning” (Powell & Kalina, 2009, p. 249).

Research by Barnes (Barnes, 1971, 1976, 2008, 2010; Barnes, Britton, & Rosen, 1971; Barnes & Todd, 1995) framed a new way of thinking about classroom talk as a topic of academic interest. Barnes’ studies conceptualised talk in a constructivist manner as a tool for thinking and a way students could work on understandings by talking things over first. By talking, he found that students could try out new ways of understanding and modify existing ones; “essentially talking their way into meaning” (Edwards-Groves et al., 2014, p. 5). In this way, Barnes redefined learning to acknowledge the social context in which it was immersed. He drew his theoretical framework from the writings of both Vygotsky (1978), on the value of these social relationships within learning as students co-constructed knowledge and understandings through interaction with each other, and Vygotsky’s contemporary Bakhtin (1981), on the dialogic nature of discourse in the meaning making process.

Barnes’ (1971, 1976) early work stemmed from the notion that any study of talk involved the study of classroom contexts. Through observations of his own teaching in a secondary school in Leeds, he noted that often the odds were stacked against pupils being able to use talk productively because of the rigid and formalised way teachers required children to engage in dialogue (Barnes, 1971). He found many secondary teachers, when talking about their subjects, used specialist language which could act as a barrier to learning for those students who weren’t used to it. The style of the teacher’s talk had potential to prevent the content getting through and inhibited some students’ ability to enter the dialogue. He was also surprised at how much talking teachers did in comparison to students, and by the lack of engagement pupils had with ideas that were being presented to them (Barnes, 1971). Students appeared to be given very little opportunity to establish their own understandings through talk.

Barnes’ work distinguished between exploratory talk, where students use talk with each other to sort out their thoughts and make sense of something, and presentational talk, where the talk offers a final draft and a right answer to a question (Barnes & Todd, 1995). While both functions of
talk, Barnes suggested, were important to classroom participation, the talk that teachers primarily invited from students was presentational. Teachers also tended to move very quickly towards presentational talk when their students could still be talking their way to meaning using exploratory talk (Mercer & Hodgkinson, 2008). Barnes advocated a repositioning of the teacher’s role to one that finds out what children were thinking by creating opportunities to talk to them; teaching them in turn how to talk to each other (Barnes 1971, 1976; Barnes & Todd, 1995).

The findings of Barnes and his colleagues from the 70s challenged the conventional style of teacher-to-whole class talk patterns where the purpose was to evaluate what students already knew. Teachers, under this traditional approach, led the interaction and isolated students by asking them questions. According to Simpson et al. (2010), teaching in this way viewed student participation as a rehearsal of existing, teacher-valued content; the implanting of concepts rather than an experience that allowed students to better explore ideas, making meaningful connections with what they already knew. The privileging of the adult voice was seen to displace children’s voices and limit their expectations of classroom participation (Lyle, 2008). Simpson et al. (2010, p. 1) also warned that by “curtailing talk for learning through the use of closed lines of questioning and an emphasis on teacher talk, the classroom becomes an oppressive space – the antithesis of what good schooling should be like”.

Other researchers including Atkinson (1985), Labov (1976), Postman and Weingartner (1971) and Mehan (1979a, 1998) further commented on teachers’ characteristic use of questions as disingenuous requests for information. Atkinson’s (1985) work investigated what happened to classroom talk when teachers continually asked questions to which they already knew the answer. He viewed these interactions as information games, simulations or mock ups where the teacher organised the classroom talk around little bits of pre-determined knowledge that he/she allowed to emerge. Labov (1976) described this type of classroom talk as students answering test questions posed by teachers, and Postman and Weingartner (1971) referred to the pattern as guess-what-I’m-thinking questions. Edwards-
Groves et al. (2014) claimed that teachers’ use of such pseudo questions acted “simply as mechanisms for controlling and managing students, leading students towards compliance and superficial engagement rather than learning” (p. 49). Mehan (1979a) further suggested that by using these types of question and answer routines to dominate classroom talk, teachers were able to control the type of talk going on in their classrooms by “imposing constraints on interaction” (p. 29).

Also in the 70s, researchers started to investigate specific ways talk classrooms were organised. Generally, the talk was seen to be structured so that the teacher in the first instance asked a closed question followed by a student providing a brief answer and then the teacher making some evaluative comment. Studies by Sinclair and Coulthard (1975) were among the first to investigate teacher-student exchanges and the impact these exchanges had on teaching, learning and the status and power relations between teachers and students. Their early work took place in traditional primary classrooms in the 60s where they tape-recorded spontaneous interactions between teachers and students. They were interested in investigating the underlying structures within classroom dialogue, moving beyond the surface details of short extracts to looking more closely at how talk worked as a system of communication. As a result, they produced a hierarchical model for understanding classroom talk that identified three basic kinds of exchanges:

1. Question-and-answer sequences
2. Pupils responding to teachers’ directions
3. Pupils listening to the teacher giving information.

(Sinclair & Coulthard, 1975)

The influential work of Sinclair and Coulthard (1975) identified a specific pattern to the discourse between teachers and students: initiation (normally through a question from the teacher), response (from the student) and feedback (by the teacher) or the IRF sequence. For every ‘move’ or speech act made by a student, teachers were found to typically make two. Anything the student said was sandwiched between whatever the teacher
said. In this common sequence, the student was characterised as a passive respondent with the teacher controlling the discourse and determining what was seen as relevant knowledge to be discussed (Sinclair & Coulthard, 1975; Cazden, 2001). Research at this time revealed that much of the talk in classrooms all over the world consisted of exchanges similar in structure.

Another noticeable characteristic of classroom talk researched during this time was the orderly nature of participants’ turn-taking when speaking (Wells, 1981). Previous analysis of classroom conversation patterns had typically used the two-part structure, the initiation and the response, so the third move or turn on the teacher’s part soon became the subject of extensive further discussion and research. As Lee (2007, p. 1206) stated “the third turn is an extraordinary space in the sense that it allows us to identify the practical and procedural details of teaching that teachers routinely and contingently display in the course of interaction”. This third turn provides opportunities for students’ answers to be evaluated, where questions can be reformulated, where rules can be enforced and errors can be corrected (Lee, 2007). In their study of the third turn, Sinclair and Coulthard (1975) proposed three categories: ‘accept’ (including reject), ‘evaluate’ and ‘comment’. The comment category included the sub-categories of ‘exemplify’, ‘expand’ and ‘justify’. These extra categories allowed analysis of the role of the third turn to reveal different ways that teachers went about dealing with students’ second turn responses and provided further insight into how teachers used the third turn to achieve a variety of different pedagogical purposes.

In their research, Nassaji and Wells (2000) made use of a highly sophisticated coding system and data matrix to capture the various functions manifested by the third turn. They identified six functional moves that the third turn displayed: evaluation, justification, counter-argument, clarification, meta-talk and action. These categories were then attributed to two larger conceptual roles of the teacher: the role of ‘primary knower’ of the given information and often the initiator of the exchange or the ‘manager’ or the ‘facilitator’ of the discussion who selected speakers and decided on the direction and pacing of the talk. Their findings revealed that even when teachers tried to create a more interactive style of dialogue in their
classrooms, the IRF remained “the dominant discourse structure” (Nassaji & Wells, 2000, p. 400).

More recently, the work of researchers such as Lee (2007), Wells and Arauz (2006) and Lee and Takahashi (2011) have provided a critique of the third turn position by acknowledging its complexity due to contingent circumstances and divergent responses occasioned by real-time classroom interaction. They have questioned the extent to which pre-established functional categories could do justice to the multiple layers of interpretation existing within them (Lee, 2007; Wells & Arauz, 2006). Lee (2007) suggested that the use of predetermined categories in studying the third turn failed to acknowledge any “local exigencies”, glossing over “an indefinite array of variants found in the third turn position” (p. 1208). He advocated an approach anchored in conversation analysis theory that focused on creating cases and instances of interactional actions and details, making connections between them. In this way, the analytic focus on the third turn position became one of understanding what was going on around that utterance, not the utterance itself.

The enduring significance of the IRF sequence to classroom talk and learning has been also criticised in the literature from several points of view. Tharp and Gallimore (1991) condemned its use in disadvantaging children from cultures where this form of interaction was uncommon. Lemke (1990) claimed that it failed to provide a bridge from everyday talk to talk where disciplinal knowledge was constructed, potentially confusing students. Smart and Marshall (2012) questioned its lack of opportunity for students to voice their own ideas or comment on those of others, resulting in “student passivity, facts and low-level questions and low level cognitive functions” (Tharp & Gallimore, 1991, p. 2). Tharp and Gallimore (1991) further suggested that IRF patterns prevail in classroom interactions firstly because there are too many students for each teacher and secondly, because teachers don’t know any better. They proposed a sociocultural method of teaching that mirrored patterns of talk from home and the community where conversation was more dialogic and less monologic.
Similarly, research by Bakhtin (1981), and later by Wells (1999; Wells & Arauz, 2006) termed the IRF recitation script as monologic. Lyle (2008) defined the monologic teacher as “firmly in control of the goals of talk” and “largely concerned with the transmission of knowledge to pupils” (p. 225). While monologic talk sounds like a soliloquy by the teacher, dialogic talk can be explained as an approach where both teachers and students make substantial contributions to classroom talk and learning (Edwards-Groves et al., 2014). Dialogic talk disrupts the IRF sequence by “opening up a fourth turn for students – to extend their thinking, to clarify, to agree or disagree, to challenge, to debate, to explain, to elaborate, to justify, to evaluate, or to self-correct” (Edwards-Groves et al., 2014, p. 82). The conception of dialogic talk emerges from Vygotsky’s sociocultural approach to learning and the influential work of Bakhtin (1981) who makes a clear distinction between monologic and dialogic discourse.

Monologic talk focuses power on the teacher; it stifles dialogue and interactions between pupils and their ideas. Dialogic talk creates a space for multiple voices and discourses that challenge the asymmetrical power relations constructed by monologic practices. (Bakhtin, 1981, as cited in Lyle, 2008, p. 225)

Within the literature, a number of studies have investigated the possibilities of making classroom interaction more dialogic. British researcher Alexander (2004), in his seminal work on whole class interaction across five countries: England, France, India, Russia and the USA, identified the essential features of the dialogic classroom as collective, reciprocal, supportive, cumulative and purposeful. Nystrand (1997) found that dialogic discourse took up less than 15 per cent of instruction time in middle and high school classrooms, and Myhill (2006) concluded that children had little opportunity to question or explore ideas in classrooms because teacher discourse in whole class teaching provided limited opportunities for this type of learning. The dominant form of classroom practice consistently still reflected whole class monologic interaction with an emphasis on factual recall rather than higher order interactions involving reasoning (Lyle, 2008).

Lyle (2008) claimed that one of the barriers to the implementation of dialogic teaching is the dominance of the teacher’s voice at the expense of
students’ own meaning-making voices. “The power relationship between teachers and learners is a stumbling block to genuine dialogue in classroom settings” (Lyle, 2008, p. 227). She also pointed out that many teachers, particularly those employed at secondary schools, worked to strict timetables and were bound by curriculum requirements so struggled to see how dialogic talk could become a regular feature of their lessons. Lefstein and Snell (2013) responded to the question of why dialogue wasn’t a common form of classroom discourse by claiming that its use raised real dilemmas (with no easy solutions) for both teachers and students. “Idealistic models of dialogic pedagogy that are not well-suited to current classroom conditions are not helpful – indeed they may be counterproductive by causing teachers to feel inadequate about pedagogy that is otherwise perfectly fit for purpose” (Lefstein & Snell, 2013, p. 169).

Lefstein and Snell’s (2013) work is predicated by a view of dialogue that reflects the complexity and unpredictability of changing classroom contexts and raises real dilemmas for teachers and pupils. Their approach to dialogic pedagogy is informed by the actual practices of classrooms in situ. Such practices are constrained “not just by the talk and actions of others, but also by the social and institutional context” (Lefstein & Snell, 2013, p. 174); how classrooms are physically arranged in different ways, how teacher and student roles are inherently allocated across different settings, and how the curriculum is organised according to authorised knowledge in schools. The emergence of dialogic pedagogy, they argue, requires attention to all the array of practices that impact the culture of individual classrooms. These include those that build social relationships, engage in activities and assessment, establish the physical organisation of the classroom, set goals and curriculum topics, along with the discourse itself (Lefstein & Snell, 2013). The practices that build such a complex classroom culture are the joint accomplishment of both teachers and pupils (Lefstein & Snell, 2013).

Edwards-Groves et al. (2014) further argue that teachers can adopt effective dialogic pedagogies by renewing their focus on the relational and interactive dimensions of their own practices. This could be achieved by engaging students in specific dialogic talk practices such as sustaining the
question, extending and deepening thinking, demonstrating active listening, allowing wait time for thinking and formulating, asking open guiding questions and vacating the floor. By implementing these practices in their lessons, they claimed that teachers could enact a pedagogy for diversity which was “dialogic, open and explicitly focused on student learning” (Edwards-Groves et al., 2014, p. 79). In this way, they are formulated with, and understood by the students themselves. Such practices have also been a focus of study for researchers using discourse analysis methodologies. These are discussed in detail in the next section.

2.5.3 Other approaches to the study of classroom talk

A general upsurge of scholarly interest in the scientific study of language or linguistics in the 60s and early 70s was also instrumental in driving classroom talk research forward. During this time, linguists treated the study of language in a highly organised way, viewing it as tightly structured and patterned at many different levels including sound, word structure, meaning, sentence structure, discourse and social context (Stubbs, 2012). Work by education researchers such as Flanders (1970) and Barnes (1974) deliberately analysed the nature of classroom talk for the purpose of ultimately improving classroom practices; Barnes through the use of small group talk and Flanders through teacher professional development. In contrast, research themes from the 1990s saw the emergence of discourse analysis as a way of examining how knowledge was socially constructed in classrooms.

Discourse analysis methodologies study conversations as they happen. Under this approach, researchers have been able to provide new insights into the complex and dynamic relationships among discourse, social practices and learning (Gee & Green, 1998). Discourse analysis in recent times has been influenced by the work of Gee (Gee, 1990, 2014; Gee & Green, 1998). Although originally trained as a linguist, his work focused on language in its social context and provided a valuable context and platform for the research of sociocultural discourse analysts such as Mercer (2005, 2008a) and
Alexander (2004). Gee (1989) argued that the focus of education should not be language or literacy, but rather social practices.

Gee (1990) re-examined the term discourse by distinguishing between the linguistic notion of ‘discourse’ and a broader definition ‘Discourse’. Traditionally, the word discourse was understood to mean the parts and structure of language, how words and sentences fitted together to make sense. Gee (1990) proposed that to appreciate language in its social context, it was important to study ‘Discourses’. As previously discussed, these were defined as ways of being in the world, “a sort of identity kit which is learnt by becoming a member of a certain group” (Gee, 1990, p. 142). According to Gee (1990), discourses with a capital D make up more than just language; they guide us in how to act, what words to use, what values and beliefs we should hold so we can engage socially with people in a particular group.

Sociocultural discourse analysis also acknowledges the social basis of language. It differs from sociolinguistic discourse analysis in that it is less concerned with the organisational structure of spoken language and more concerned with its content, function and the ways shared understanding is developed in social contexts over time (Mercer, 2010). While the work of sociolinguists in the 70s and 80s provided a considerable amount of knowledge about the organisation of formal systems of language, findings were often divorced from the contexts in which the talk took place. Sociocultural discourse analysis allowed for exploration of the principles that underlie the talk and how that talk was influenced by differences in the social context and the intentions of the participants (Wells, 1981). It was grounded in the social and psychological traditions of Vygotsky’s sociocultural theory where language was viewed as a cultural and psychological tool for getting things done and “a social mode of thinking – a tool for teaching-and-learning, constructing knowledge, creating joint understanding and tackling problems collaboratively” (Mercer, 2005, p. 137).

Mercer (2005) and Mercer and Littleton (2007) used this theoretical framework to adopt a particular methodology in the analysis of talk patterns in primary classrooms. Their work integrated the complementary use of qualitative and quantitative methods to understand how spoken language
could be used as a tool for the pursuit of joint intellectual activity. They took extracts of transcribed talk, both teacher-student and student-student interactions, and provided a commentary for analysis. Recent studies by Twiner, Littleton, Coffin and Whitelock (2014), Black (2007), Kershner, Warwick, Mercer and Kleine Staarman (2014) and Wang, Cheng, Chen, Mercer and Kirschner (2017) have used this multi-layered, sociocultural analysis approach in their studies of classroom discourse. Work by Nuthall and Alton-Lee (1993) also shares much in common, theoretically and methodologically, with the ideology framing Mercer’s sociocultural discourse analysis.

Other educational researchers have also devised useful approaches to the analysis of talk based on a sociocultural perspective and have used these to guide their own research questions. Examples can be found in the work of Lyle (1993, 1996, 1997), Wells (1999, 2015), Wells (1999) and Alexander (2008, 2010). The style of sociolinguistic discourse analysis which has become increasingly popular is well represented by the work of Gee and Green (1998). Green’s research during a large scale project from 1991 to 1997 in Massachusetts used an ethnographic perspective to guide the analysis of discourse data from a range of primary classroom activities. This approach formed “a basis for identifying what members of a social group (e.g., a classroom or other educational setting) need to know, produce, predict, interpret, and evaluate in a given setting or social group to participate appropriately and, through that participation, learn” (Gee & Green, 1998, p. 126).

This branch of language research theory was influenced by Halliday’s (1965) early work on sociolinguistics and his functional approach to the study of language. He believed that language should be studied, not as a self-contained system as in linguistics, but in relation to the purposes or functions it serves in particular social contexts. Instead of treating language “as a kind of code in which pre-existing conceptual structures are more or less distortedly expressed,” Halliday’s view of language focused on a semiotic system that serves “as the foundation of human experience” (Halliday, Matthiessen, & Yang, 1999, p. 140). Under this approach, social context was
viewed as the most powerful determinant of talk, and classrooms as intense and social settings that could provide interesting and readily accessible talk patterns that were often different to those found in other social settings. In this way, classroom talk can be understood within the context or system of the social practice in which it is embedded; how the type of talk students and teachers choose to use both acts upon and is constrained by the social context.

Systemic Functional Linguistics (SLF) is based upon Halliday’s approach to the study of language by examining how language is used, the purposes it serves, how those purposes are achieved and how form has evolved to serve function (Wells, 1994). It includes three overarching organisational components, or metafunctions, that explain the main purposes underlying all language use as: expressing reality – through representational or ideational structures; enacting social relationships – through interpersonal relationships; and organising these two functions in their contexts of use – through compositional/textual meanings (McCabe, 2011). These generalised functions correspond to the sets of options embedded in the grammar and are essential to social functioning of language and thus SFL’s study of language as a system (Anderson, 2013). Halliday (1993) suggested that by studying these three functions or notions of language as field (ideational meanings), tenor (interpersonal meanings) and mode (textual meanings) one could establish the general principles related to the use of language.

This approach is useful to education researchers because they can use the SFL framework to describe how meaning is made in the contexts of classrooms through talk practices. For example, talk can be described and discussed in terms of representational structures by examining; interactive meanings by unpacking the interpersonal relationships between those involved in the talk; compositional meanings by looking at the distribution of the talk and relative emphasis placed on certain aspects within it; and the nature of events, the objects and participants involved and the contexts in which the talk occurs (Unsworth, 2001). A number of researchers worldwide have taken up a SFL approach as a way of studying the changing nature of teaching academic English particularly to English language learners (ELLs)
The social accomplishment of transition: Investigating classroom talk practices as students move from primary to secondary school

(Derewianka, 1990; Gibbons, 2007; Knapp & Watkins, 2005; Macken-Horarik, 2009; Martin & Rose, 2003; 2008). Research by Aguirre-Muñoz, Park, Amabisca and Boscardin (2009) adopted a SLF approach to show how teachers’ use of explicit academic-language instruction (focusing on the concepts field, tenor and mode) improved ELL students’ writing performance. Similarly, Schleppegrell (2003) used the SFL framework in her study to analyse the academic language demands placed on ELL students at different grade levels and levels of language proficiency. Her research found that when teachers explicitly taught grammar development, students’ writing proficiency increased.

Conversation analysis (CA) offers another approach to investigating discourse. While CA shares similarities with discourse analysis in its focus on language use as a topic in its own right, there are significant differences in terms of both what is studied and how it is studied (Wooffitt, 2005). CA provides a formal methodological procedure for the analysis of interaction that is highly focused, repeatable and consistent in its analysis of interaction (ten Have, 2007). Such an approach is discussed in the next section.

2.5.4 Conversation analysis and the study of classroom talk

Since its inception, conversation analysis (CA) has emerged as a major contributor to the analysis of discourse (Heritage, 2017). While CA shares its focus with other forms of discourse analysis around meaning and context, it is distinctive in its treatment of the idea of sequence (Heritage, 2017). It emerged in the 1960s as a means of closely examining the sequential organisation of interaction as people went about their everyday lives. CA seeks to answer the question, how is conversation organised. It frames a response from a view that defines language as a means of social interaction, and conversation as the central activity of social life. By focusing on how, “in real time and for one another” (Ford, 2012, p. 152), humans jointly construct the local social orders that make up their daily lives, conversation analysts use their detailed examination of what takes place in moment-by-moment interaction to explore how people “shape and are being shaped by activity with others” (Gutierrez, 1993, p. 338). They look for the mechanisms through
which participants assemble and employ interactional resources inherent in their local situations for getting their mutual dealings done (Jordan & Henderson, 1995). As Goodwin and Heritage (1990) state, CA “seeks to describe the underlying social organisation - conceived as an institutionalised substratum of interactional rules, procedures, and conventions - through which orderly and intelligible social interaction is made possible” (p. 283). In this way, a CA approach to education research can investigate what classroom talk ‘does’ in lessons rather than what it is ‘about’ (Schegloff, 2007).

The origins of CA can be traced to the theory of ethnomethodology (EM), the study of how people go about creating their social life. Ethnomethodologists argue that to explain interactive behaviour, researchers must focus on the details of everyday interactions to examine the ways people ‘talk into being’ social realities (Freebody et al., 1995). Originating from Garfinkel’s (1967) perspective on social theory, meaning requires order, and it’s in these details that the order is revealed. To make sense of situations, from ordinary conversations through to work in the most highly structured organisations, people (who are involved in the same situation) must recognise the order of the details embedded in their individual actions.

“It is the achievement and display of such recognisable orders that allows for mutual understanding — sense making — and coordinated action” (Rawls, 2008, p. 703). Thus ethnomethodologists closely study the orderly properties of situations to establish meaning. In doing so, they do not reduce these details to general patterns of behaviour, instead they locate them in the details of people’s work.

By applying a CA perspective, Schegloff (1982, 2004, 2011, 1987, 1992, 1996d, 2004) was able to distinguish his work from that of discourse analysts (who focus on issues of meaning and context in interaction) by linking meaning and context to the idea of sequencing. Underpinning his approach was the belief that participants orient themselves to interaction through a particular sequence; first, by addressing themselves to previous talk (shaping the context) and then producing a next action from this to create a context for the next person’s talk, thus confirming their understanding of the exchange. His work further explored the details of how conversations started.
in an opening move, the nature of the space that it left in the air to be filled by the next speaker, the ways that other sequences could be inserted between opening and closing, and how sequences could be interrupted, repaired, halted, expanded, restarted and transformed. Schegloff (1995) also introduced the idea of multi-person conversations where multiple individuals created and displayed affiliation to more than one conversation at a time. Subsequent research has analysed several aspects of multi-person conversation including simultaneous talk (Lerner, 1995; Schegloff, 1995) and schisming as one conversation breaks off into multiple conversations (Egbert, 1997; Egbert, 1997; Sacks, 2004; Sacks et al., 1974).

While most of the early work of conversation analysts focused on ordinary conversation, the work of researchers such as Drew and Heritage (1992) started exploring conversations in institutions where the talk was more restricted, specialised and understood in terms of the business of the institution itself. CA studies in such environments demonstrated how social order was built in the talk between experts (or representatives of the institution such as doctors, police officers and teachers) and their non-specialist clients (Heritage, 2005, 2017; Drew & Heritage, 1992; Antaki, 2011; Heritage & Greatbatch, 1991; Whalen & Zimmerman, 1987). Heritage (2005) claimed that there was a defensible distinction between institutional talk when compared to ordinary conversation due to changes in its organisational structure particularly when it came to turn taking, question-answer-exchanges and language choice. For example, in courts, newsrooms and classrooms, special turn-taking procedures can “severely restrict which persons may speak (the addressee of the question) and the type of contribution they may make (responding to the question)” (Heritage, 2005, p. 116). This offers interactional affordances and entitlements to some participants over others, resulting in fewer opportunities for some to make statements, evaluate responses and engage in the same kind of routine common to ordinary conversation.

CA research from the 1970s and 80s was instrumental in framing the study of institutional talk. Studies of the courtroom (Atkinson & Drew, 1979), the classroom (McHoul, 1978; Gardner, 2012; Gardner & Mushin, 2013;
Lerner, 1992, 1995; Mehan, 1979b; Mehan & Griffin, 1980), the doctor’s clinic (Heath, 1986) and the newsroom (Heritage & Greatbatch, 1991) were influential in revealing how the social world of institutions worked. CA research in schools has investigated the classroom talk practices of storytelling (Lerner, 1992), questioning (Waring, 2012), instruction giving (Lerner, 1995), repair (McHoul, 1990), giving directives (Waring & Hruska, 2012) and informings (Gardner & Mushin, 2013). Other CA studies have explored student-student interactions (Ford, 1999; Glenn, Koschmann, & Conlee, 1999; Melander & Sahlström, 2009) along with the practices of teaching as interactional activities involving both teacher and students (Koshik, 2002; Lerner, 2004a; Margutti, 2006). They have been able to uncover the collaborative, “creative and transformable nature of classroom interaction” (He, 2004, p. 575) by showing how teachers and students orient to prevailing interactional structures.

The phenomenon of conversational floors (Goffman, 1981) has also been explored in classroom research to consider how the teacher controls the talk and maintains primary speaking rights by “holding the floor” (Sacks, 1992, p. 55). In such studies, the notion of floor as interactionally produced by participants, both speakers and hearers, working together to maintain it (Simpson, 2005) is adopted. Schegloff and Sacks (1973) describe floor in terms of the one-at-a-time character of conversation whereby the current speaker occupies it for a turn-at-talk. Edelsky’s (1981) research into floors and gender in spoken conversation identifies two types of floor - a singly developed floor and one that is a collaborative venture. The single floor is characterised by “monologues, single party control and hierarchical interaction where turn takers stand out from non-turn takers” (Edelsky, 1981, p. 416). A collaborative floor is constructed with the potential for more than one person to speak at a time and is therefore inherently more informal and cooperative (Edelsky, 1981).

In the seminal text Lectures on Conversation (Volume 1), Sacks (1992) discusses techniques speakers use systematically to keep a single floor and prevent others from entering it. They suggest one such practice as asking a series of questions where “the one who is doing the questions has control of
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the conversation” (p. 55). Mehan’s (1979a) analysis of the Initiation-Reply-Feedback (IRF) sequence is used to argue that the floor resides with the teacher’s privilege to direct the talk and control turn-taking procedures. In this way, the permutability (open-endedness) of turn-taking is minimised and interaction is pre-allocated so “that only teachers can direct speakership in any creative way” (McHoul, 1978, p. 188).

In Australia, research using an EMCA approach to investigate classroom interactions has been led by Freebody and colleagues (Freebody et al., 1995; Freiberg & Freebody, 1995; Freebody & Freiberg, 2006, 2011). In their examination of literacy lessons, Freiberg and Freebody (1995) found classroom talk to be dominated by teacher-led questions and evaluations of student responses. They also discussed how teachers and students are bound to the rational properties of the teacher-student category pair where teachers are in control and students demonstrate compliance (Freebody et al., 1995). Despite more recent CA studies by Skidmore and Murakami (2016) on classroom discussions and Koole and Elbers (2014) on scaffolding and responsiveness in lessons, there exists no research that uses a CA approach to investigate lessons as accomplished by talk practices across major educational transitions. Little is known about what happens interactionally in classroom lessons at the end of one year and the beginning of the next. This thesis provides an important opportunity to advance the understanding of how the study of accomplishing lessons in Year 6 and Year 7 can shed light on the interactive options available to students during this time.

The relevance of a CA approach to studying classroom talk in lessons is easy to recognise. It is not unproblematic though, and there are limitations to what the CA researcher can offer a study addressing the social accomplishment of lessons. Mercer (2010) termed CA as a demanding methodology because “it uses a very detailed and laborious style of analysis and sets very strict criteria for the kinds of interpretations which an analyst can make from the data of recorded talk; and it also involves the use of a very specific and detailed method of transcription” (p. 8). This level of detail can only capture selective grabs of discourse. Because of this, commentaries can appear contrived or idealised, and do not consider how the particular
discourse relates to the exchange in its entirety (Walsh, 2011). Another constraint for CA research is in its reluctance to generalise specific findings to other contexts. However, this also can be viewed positively by researchers as “studies of classroom interaction will clearly be extremely complex and tentative, and one must take care not to draw hasty conclusions from superficially identifiable tokens” (van Lier, 1996, p. 143).

Despite its limitations, CA provides a way of analysing classroom talk practices in Year 6 and Year 7 lessons. It provides a methodology to study the topic of transition in real time as participants engage in classroom lessons by orienting themselves to the talk through particular sequences and turns-at-talk (Schegloff, 2007). Such an approach differs from that of previous research where transition has been examined as a specific, and often problematic, event for students. This thesis adopts a methodology that allows transition to be studied as it gets done. Transition is conceptualised as social action; where students do the transitioning themselves as they interact with others. This interactional view of transition ensures that transition becomes the responsibility of those who are actually doing it.

2.6 Conclusion

By reviewing the literature, this chapter provides a synthesis of notable research and current perspectives on the nature of educational transitions. Moreover, it has presented a rationale for the study of the social organisation of primary to secondary school transition through the use of an ethnomethodological (EM) view of the world and a conversation analytic (CA) approach to studying it. Each section described in this chapter informs the main research question for the study – ‘How is transition to secondary school interactionally accomplished in the classroom talk practices of students and teachers?’ - in the following ways:

- The literature provides a broad, but clear overview of how transition is understood from a range of different perspectives. Shared across the literature is the notion that transition involves a form of action; a journey, a rite of passage, a process that requires the active involvement of all its participants.
• Current views on primary to secondary transition reflect the commonly held perception of this time as challenging. This has led to an approach that seeks and finds solutions to ‘the problem of transition’ through a range of funded strategies, interventions and school-based programs.

• This study is located in a social view of the world shared with an EMCA perspective; where transition becomes jointly managed and accomplished in the sequential organisation of interaction with others.

• Literature describing the social nature of transition shifts the focus away from transition as a ‘specific event’ to transition as it gets done in the naturally occurring, everyday interactions of teachers and students. The social competencies of the classroom are developed through a variety of familiar rituals that occur during lessons.

• Literature describing EMCA studies in education investigates how lessons are constructed within the conversational features at work in classroom talk sequences. The social accomplishment of lessons across ‘Year 6’ and ‘Year 7’ lessons can reveal the different interactive options made available to students in each setting. In this way, primary to secondary transition can be understood as social action; located in the interactional patterns set up and reinforced within the context of any given lesson.

• Using techniques for CA as a basis for conceptualising transition at the level of interaction is a unique approach to this area of study. Currently, there exists an absence of research showing how students socially accomplish transition in this way. As such, very little is known about primary to secondary school transition as it occurs in real time, and unfolds moment-by-moment as students and teachers orient to the patterns of talk in classroom lessons.

The next chapter details the particular methodological approach used in this study. It entails a description of the analytic processes of EM and CA to establish a view of transition as accomplished interactionally as students and teachers participate in classroom lessons. Then, at the beginning of each of
the analytic chapters of 5, 6 and 7, further explicit links will be made to scholarly contexts within the literature to enrich analysis of transition using this lens.
CHAPTER 3

METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

The preceding chapter presented a review of the literature to show how this thesis is positioned within the current field of knowledge around educational transitions. To date, there has been no identifiable research that has considered primary to secondary school transition as social action. This gap in the literature provides an opportunity to study transition in the interactional accomplishments of students and teachers as they orient to each other in sequences of talk during classroom lessons. Chapter 2 concluded by highlighting the advantages of ethnomethodological (EM) and conversation analytic (CA) perspectives for analysing how transition unfolds moment-by-moment across Year 6 and Year 7 lessons. This chapter further details the approaches of EM and CA in a description of their historical development and analytic position.

First, the chapter introduces EM and considers its critique of sociological perspectives of social action. Second, the chapter presents CA as a method of studying social order by describing its central claims, key concepts and processes of analysis. Then, a case is made to study the topic of primary to secondary school transition using a methodology that analyses and establishes how teachers and students orient to each other in their naturally occurring talk during lessons at the end of Year 6 and the beginning of Year 7.

3.2 Ethnomethodology

This thesis is influenced by a sociological perspective that views human beings as creating reality in interaction with others. Its methodology is underpinned by philosophical assumptions reflecting an interpretive paradigm or model of social reality that situates theory as emerging from research; research that begins with individuals and then sets out to understand their interpretations of the world around them (Cohen, Manion,
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& Morrison, 2007). As such, a nominalist ontological position is valued whereby an understanding of reality and the nature of the world is located in ordinary people’s experiences of the complexities of contemporary living (Elliot, 2006). This ontological position can be associated with constructionism or the belief that “social phenomena and their meanings are constantly being accomplished by social actors” (Bryman, 2012, p. 18). The research for this study aligns with anti-positivist assumptions of an epistemological kind where knowledge is viewed as something created in the social world through personal experience (Goodwin & Heritage, 1990); where knowledge is interpreted, not in an idealised, scientifically logical way, but within the context of social practices (Schegloff, 2007) from an ‘emic’, or insiders’ perspective, rather than an ‘etic’, outsiders’ view (Seedhouse, 2004).

The central focus of interest for this study encapsulates an EM approach to research that “examines the ways in which societal members create a sense of social structure through interpretation” (Leiter, 1980, p. 106). The first section of the chapter explores such an EM view of the world. It includes a synopsis of the work of Harold Garfinkel and the general principles that frame its use in social research. The key influences of Schutz and Wittgenstein are also explained and a discussion of recent studies and their contribution to an EM view of transition is presented. The section concludes with criticisms of EM as a prelude to later discussion on the limitations of the study in Chapter 8.

3.2.1 An ethnomethodological view of the world

Ethnomethodology (EM) as a sociological approach has emerged from interpretive, qualitative research traditions (Hitchcock & Hughes, 1995; Zimmerman & Wilson, 1979) to study the world of everyday life in a certain kind of way (Cohen et al., 2007). Ethnomethodologists view the world as the result of an incessant process of social construction and are concerned with:

How society gets put together; how it is getting done; how to do it; the social structures of everyday activities...how persons, as parties to ordinary arrangements, use the features of the arrangement to make for members the visible organised activities happen. (Garfinkel, 1974, p. 16)
Thus the point of EM is one of explaining the actual methods people use to determine and maintain an ongoing sense of reality rather than concentrating on the values, or power, or status, or the economic base that orders people’s actions as in traditional sociology (McNall & Johnson, 1975).

In this way, rather than focusing on a traditional sociological analysis of society that takes the cultural norms and social roles of social order for granted, EM concerns itself with the skills, practices and assumptions by which that social order is produced and shared. The ethnomethodologist seeks to discover the structures of interaction, the orderliness of phenomena that are independent of cohort particulars (Garfinkel & Sacks, 1970) where orderliness is not dependent on particular persons or particular settings. EM’s "central recommendation is that the activities whereby members produce and manage settings of organised everyday affairs are identical with members’ procedures for making those settings accountable" (Garfinkel, 1967, p. 1). This defines the central task of the ethnomethodologist as one that describes and studies the accounts that individuals use to assure both themselves and those around them that their behaviour in different settings is reasonable (Powell & Colyvas, 2008). This distinctive emphases on how social order is produced and accounted for ‘in-and-as ordinary activities’ sets EM studies apart from classic sociological studies, and sets ethnomethodologists apart from other sociologists (Garfinkel, 1988).

By using an EM view of the world, answers to questions about how social life is created and sustained can be found deeply embedded in the common-sense routines of the everyday, where “rationality is constructed through common-place interactions” (Powell & Colyvas, 2008, p. 282). Garfinkel (1967) proposed the idea of social order as created on the ‘ground floor’ through situated local practices; everyday, routine activities that are accomplished through the competent use of a range of skills, practices and assumptions. He sought to find out how common understanding happened, without questioning that it happened (Bailyn, 2002). He emphasised “social context as the ultimate foundation of intelligibility” (Dreyfus, 1991, p. 7) proposing the view that “most philosophical problems can be solved by a description of everyday social practices” (Dreyfus, 1991, p. 7). This premise
challenges ethnomethodologists to "go beyond appearances to the underlying pattern of intended meanings within a given context" (Goldthorpe, 1973, p. 453); to investigate, not just the world according to others, but one that includes themselves and their acts, where they consider their own activities as authentic data and subject matter. Attention is shifted in such a way that they put their own perceiving and inquiring into the field they are investigating (Wieder, 1977). They disagree with the idea that people identify and deal with situations by applying or matching them to knowledge they already have. Instead, they believe that they draw on 'held-in-common sense-making methods' to define situations together, while they are actually involved in the situation (Bailyn, 2002). It is through this process of trying to understand the situation that they're in, that people go about producing the situation. Thus the field of study becomes one of “methods-done-in-the-world-while-being-about-that-same-world-that-they-are-done-within” and their view of research as “sociology-about-the-world-while-being-done-from-within-it” (Wieder, 1977, p. 8). As such, this thesis seeks to discover how teachers and students go about constructing, producing and interpreting their ordinary activities during actual Year 6 and Year 7 classroom lessons.

3.2.2 Ethnomethodology as social theory

Ethnomethodology (EM) as a social theory emerged from the work of U.S. sociologist Harold Garfinkel and a group of his students and academic colleagues Bittner, Cicourel, Wieder and Zimmerman during the period of 1956-1968 (Wieder, 1977). It was conceived in keeping with the terminology of the time, ‘ethnoscience’, ‘ethnobotany’ and ‘ethnomedicine’ to suggest that, just as native classifications of plants or illnesses can be taken not as science but as data to be analysed by the social scientist, so can the ‘methods’ employed by participants in social situations (Mennell, 1975). Unlike other ethnosciences however, EM does not focus on a specific subject area. It is not interested in questions about how a particular institution came to be, what the actors are doing there in the first place, or the effect of larger events on the phenomenon being investigated (McNall & Johnson, 1975). Rather it investigates ways of doing things and conceptions of doing these things in
everyday life by ordinary people, making sense of it as it is happening, going about sharing this understanding with others and producing a mutually shared social order so they can live and work well. This focus on ‘practical reasoning’ as a ‘routine accomplishment’ emphasises how people in different contexts both make and find a reasonable world (Powell & Colyvas, 2008).

While EM shares some general principles with conventional sociology (Hitchcock & Hughes, 1995; Wieder, 1977; Zimmerman & Wilson, 1979) and can be seen as ‘related’ but ‘different’ to its philosophical position, according to Garfinkel (1967) it is distinctive in its own right and “does not seek to compete with it [traditional sociology], or provide remedies for any of its practices” (p. viii). For this reason, EM’s relationship to sociology can be difficult to describe and comprehend (Lynch, 1997). In their early work, Garfinkel (1967), Cicourel (1964), Douglas (1971) and Zimmerman and Pollner (1970) challenged the basic tenets of sociological theory. They consciously and deliberately questioned, or even opposed, some of its general assumptions arguing that sociologists should invert their traditional object of study. They claimed that orthodox sociology often neglected the very thing it should have been investigating in the first place by accepting the effects of processes as ‘given’ and then trying “to discover correlations...without first explaining why these phenomena are of interest” (Hassard, 1993, p. 100). They accused conventional sociologists of misunderstanding the nature of social reality by treating the social world as if it has an objective reality; independent of its members’ accounts and interpretation. Goldthorpe (1973, p. 451) explains the argument as:

The ways in which conventional sociologists define their problem area... draw on a vast array of everyday commonsense meanings and understandings. These meanings and understandings, they assume, are ones which they largely share with others... and such an assumption is obviously fundamental to their entire enterprise – the critical resource for the social activity which is ‘doing sociology’. Yet this resource remains quite unexplained; it is simply ‘taken for granted’. Thus, the ironic situation arises that the conventional sociologist proceeds with, as it were, a most remarkable and fascinating social construction beneath his feet which alone sustains him yet which he does not notice or at least leaves unexamined. The consequence is, then, that conventional sociology fails to attain any significantly higher level of theoretical awareness than that possessed by the lay members of society themselves.
Prior to Garfinkel, sociology had simply taken for granted, or left out altogether, any consideration of how social life was constructed by people themselves (Heritage, 1984b). In contrast, Garfinkel (1967) argued that the social world consisted of nothing more than the constructs, interpretations and accounts of everyday lay members. In his explanation of the social world, Garfinkel used an alternative approach that moved away from conventional sociology’s idea of ‘constructive analysis’ (Garfinkel & Sacks, 1970) and worked towards exposing the taken-for-grantedness of everyday circumstances by examining things that are known to ‘anyman’ (Hassard, 1993). In this way, EM sought to uncover the silent, taken for granted practices for the accomplishment of everyday, work and professional activities (Pollner, 2012b) by revealing an understanding of social accomplishments in their own terms; from within (Cohen et al., 2007).

Zimmerman and Pollner (1970, p. 33) explain:

In contrast to the perennial argument that sociology belabors the obvious, we propose that sociology has yet to treat the obvious as a phenomenon. We argue that the world of everyday life, while furnishing sociology with its favored topics of inquiry, is seldom a topic in its own right.

The job of the ethnomethodologist then becomes one of explaining and accounting for the methods and procedures, known as talk’s 'ethnomethods' (Heritage, 2003), that members employ to construct their social world; the very job they claim that mainstream sociology has failed to do.

3.2.3 Ethnomethodology as a field of inquiry

Studies using an ethnomethodological (EM) approach are anchored by the early work of sociologist Harold Garfinkel. While Garfinkel is acknowledged as establishing and developing EM as a field of inquiry, according to Mennell (1975), the roots of his work are embedded firmly in the social phenomenology of Schutz (1967) and Wittgenstein’s (1953) philosophical ideas on meaning as ‘knowing how to go on’ in ordinary everyday life.
Schutz (1967) believed that the explanation of human action and thought is to be found in the flow of the ‘everyday life-world’ where “man continuously participates in ways which are at once inevitable and patterned...the region of reality in which man can engage himself and which he can change while he operates in it” (Schutz & Luckmann, 1973, p. 3). Instead of viewing the social world as existing out there somewhere in the external world, ethnomethodologists agree with Schutz when he explains it as something that is continuously generated within the process of social interaction (Hassard, 1993). As such, they have drawn extensively on the writings and ‘theoretical vocabulary’ of Schutz to develop a sociology of everyday ‘knowledge-in-action’ (Heritage, 1984) where, in seeking to describe and interpret the social world, the researcher unavoidably encounters a world that has already been described and interpreted, not by other sociological researchers, but by the people themselves, engaged in their everyday activities.

Ethnomethodologists are also influenced by the work of Wittgenstein (1953). Wittgenstein’s reconceptualised perspectives of meaning and understanding, positioning them both in active practical life, makes his ideas very attractive to social theorists such as ethnomethodologists (Bailyn, 2002). He emphasised “social context as the ultimate foundation of intelligibility” (Dreyfus, 1991, p. 7) proposing the view that “most philosophical problems can be solved by a description of everyday social practices” (Dreyfus, 1991, p. 7). By adopting an interpretivist perspective where people use their interpretive abilities that take into account meaning and context, Wittgenstein explored existence in a self-interpreting way of “being in our practices” (Dreyfus, 1991, p. 24). He argued that because human beings are essentially self-interpreting, interpretation must be the proper method for studying them. Gier (1981) described Wittgenstein as trying to bring philosophy and logic back to the ‘rough ground’ of life itself; focusing on everyday life, in all its variations, inconsistencies, customs and habits, and not anything beyond it.
Wittgenstein’s work focused more intensely than anyone else’s on the significance of how linguistic practices carry understanding and intelligibility (Schatzki, 1996); how “practice gives words their meaning” (Wittgenstein cited in Johannessen, 1988, p. 294). From Wittgenstein’s perspective, the view that language can be understood in terms of a solitary, cognitive activity where meanings are retrieved or uncovered from some pre-existing system is rejected. Instead it becomes a product of ongoing interaction which reveals a world to us and provides “particular tools, concepts and practices which further facilitate interaction” (Mauws & Phillips, 1995, p. 325). In other words, language is what language does. Wittgenstein coined the phrase ‘language games’ to describe “the whole, consisting of language and the actions into which it is woven” (Feyerabend, 1955, p. 5a) where words are “collective products of social interaction, essential instruments through which human beings constitute and articulate their world” (Harris, 1990, p. iv). According to Wittgenstein, participation in a particular language game is fundamentally constitutive of the ‘reality’ within which one finds himself (Mauws & Phillips, 1995). Each language game provides a particular language with particular meanings. This language produces a particular kind of world in which certain objects - including those speaking and hearing - are made to exist in certain relations (Mauws & Phillips, 1995). Ethnomethodologists, while disagreeing on some matters, are bound by this Wittgensteinian principle that to study social phenomena one must examine embodied, sensuous, human activity, in everyday language, and in everyday actions (Mehan & Houston, 1976).

This notion that the social world unfolds in everyday talk and actions is particularly evident in the convergence between Garfinkel’s writings and Wittgenstein’s later work and their common concern with how people make sense of their world (Heritage, 1978). Garfinkel (1967) set out “to treat practical activities, practical circumstances, and practical sociological reasonings as topics of empirical study, and by paying to the most commonplace activities of daily life the attention usually accorded extraordinary events, seeks to learn about them as phenomena in their own right” (p. 1). By observing people’s orientation to ‘language-in-use’ as a social and interactional object in situ, he was able to reveal how the talk (as studied
in its own right rather than just as a resource for studying something else) could provide evidence of how the activities emerging from everyday encounters generated sociability and reproduced the social order (Garfinkel, 1967).

Together with the works of Schutz and Wittgenstein, Garfinkel’s ‘common-sense’ ideas around social research were inspired by Parson’s (1951) *The Structure of Social Action* and, to some extent, his notion of structural functionalism (Garfinkel, 1974). Parsons stepped beyond the previously held gestalt view of society (where the whole is more than its parts) by re-defining the holistic phenomena of everyday life as “something existing in the orderly concerted practices of actors in their actual, lived situations” (Maynard, 1996, p. 2). By proposing that there is ‘orderliness in the plenum’, Parsons was the first to articulate the fullness of detail that resides in mundane experiences (Garfinkel, 1988). Garfinkel used Parsons’ distinctive emphases on the production and accountability of order in-and-as ordinary activities to “identify EM studies and set them in contrast to classic studies as an incommensurably alternate sociology” (Garfinkel, 1988, p. 108).

In the study of social life, one must look carefully at the organisation of everyday interaction as formed on the ‘inside’ (not from anything ‘outside’) by the activities and actions of individuals as they arise in-and-as the concrete plenitude of lived experience (Maynard, 1996). Thus, according to Parsons’ ideology and Garfinkel’s interpretation of it, to study what happens during transition, the researcher, who uses an EM approach, must investigate the “local, moment-by-moment determination of meaning in social contexts” (Heritage, 1984, p. 2). Access to this ‘determination of meaning’ can be gained by systematically studying the actors’ points of view (Heritage, 1984); students’ and teachers’ accounts provided during everyday activity.

However, Garfinkel did not agree with Parsons’ interpretation of the dominant top-down sociology of the time which assumed the superiority of the sociologist’s knowledge over that of members of society. Everyday people were seen as cultural ‘dopes’; unthinkingly internalising and acting out the macro rules of society (Seedhouse, 2004) through a process of positive and negative reinforcement from institutions such as the family and education.
system (Hutchby & Wooffitt, 2008). Parsons’ ‘voluntaristic theory of action’ was made possible by the fact that people had internalised an identical set of rules and identify the situation in which they were acting in the same way (Heritage, 1984, p. 105). Garfinkel argued that this viewpoint failed to acknowledge the ability of people to understand and account for their own actions. He explained the aim of sociology as not to understand how social norms are internalised so that people end up reproducing them, but rather to describe the methods that people use to account for their own actions and the actions of others (Hutchby & Wooffitt, 2008).

In this way, Garfinkel rejected Parsons’ ‘etic’ or external analyst’s perspective on human behaviour in favour of an ‘emic’ or participant’s perspective (Seedhouse, 2004). Unlike etic theories which try to make large scale generalisations about phenomenon, emic theory is qualitatively different in that it emerges as a by-product of empirical analysis (Markee, 2008). So, from an EM position, in a study such as this, the researcher would be more interested in showing how participants made sense of real time practices, instead of trying to make broad generalisations about how social interaction contributed to such practices.

3.2.4 Key ethnomethodological concepts

There are four key concepts in ethnomethodology (EM). These are accountability, reflexivity, indexicality and membership. ‘Accountability’ features prominently in Garfinkel’s (1967) work and is the cornerstone of his approach. This notion discusses ways that both formal and informal social orders are realised by people through the production of recognisable and acceptable accounts (Rawls, 2008). Heritage (1984) described ‘accounts’ and ‘accountability’ simply as the actor’s definition of the situation and cited Garfinkel (1967) by stating:

Ethnomethodological studies analyse everyday activities as members’ methods for making those same activities visibly-rational-and-reportable-for-all-practical-purposes, i.e., accountable, as organisations of commonplace everyday activities (Garfinkel, 1967, as cited in Heritage, 1984, p. vii).
Garfinkel worked within this imagery of people accounting to one another to make sense of their world (Attewell, 1974). According to Attewell (1974), Garfinkel’s aim was to study the “practices for giving accounts of action that gives them properties of analysis, meaning, rationality concerning some situation” (p. 205).

Lynch (1997) further suggested that “the ordered features of social practices are banal, easily and necessarily witnessed by anybody who participates competently in those practices” (p. 14). He claimed that everyday people could be held to account for what they were doing in a variety of ways such as keeping records, showing they had followed instructions, informing others about what to do and where to go, and justifying their actions in terms of a set of rules or guidelines. Studies of clinic record-keeping (Garfinkel, 1967) and police record-keeping (Meehan, 1986), the social organisation of justice and policing (Bittner 1967; Manning 1982), and the social construction of gender (West & Zimmerman, 1987) have been inspired by Garfinkel’s explanation of accounts through accountable practices (Rawls, 2008). These accounts make action intelligible and interaction possible, as well as achieving what Lynch (1997, p. 15) describes as ‘instructable reproducibility’ which enables people to reproduce and recognise these same actions on different occasions. Garfinkel (1967) further claimed that ‘accountable’ social activities were produced in connection with the possibility of their description through language. That is, the language of accountability was used by people to account for the rationality of their actions both retrospectively or prospectively (Nicolini, 2012). This leads to the second key theme; the ‘reflexivity’ of accounts.

The pursuit of reflexivity and reflection are implicated in the notion of accountability in the reflexive way people account for their practices (Garfinkel, 1967). In Garfinkel’s work, accountability is reflexive; it is a constituent feature of activity which is embodied in the activity itself (Peyrot, 1982). For Garfinkel, reflexivity embraced more than a self-conscious, external view of activity or reflective capability, instead it was inherent in the activity and constitutive of the unfolding of the practice in which it was applied (Nicolini, 2012). In this way, accounts can be reflexive in that they are
‘self-explicating’ and thus displayed in the ‘self-organising’ character of people’s actions (Czyzewski, 1994). Garfinkel (1967, p. 1) himself states that “[t]he ‘reflexive’ or ‘incarnate’ character of accounting practices and accounts makes up the crux of that recommendation”. In this way, accountability and reflexivity build a representation of the world where practices are both context-shaped (locally produced) and context-renewing (embodied in and through actions) (Heritage, 1984; Sacks et al., 1974).

Reflexivity allows the enthomethodologist to reconstruct other people’s practical reasoning because other people’s practical reasoning is displayed ‘in and through’ their practices (Czyzewski, 1994). Garfinkel’s (1976) ideas on reflexivity offered a theory of communication in which the meaning of each next thing said was located by reference to its position in a developing sequence, and each next thing said reflected back on what was said before (Rawls, 2008). This requires people to orient to the developing sequence and its constitutive order properties when speaking to each other (Rawls, 2008).

The relationship of reflexivity had a particular influence on the work of Harvey Sacks (1984b, 1992, 2004) and the early development of conversation analysis, particularly the focus on adjacency pairs and the idea of turns and orders of turn-taking (Sacks et al., 1974). To further understand these characteristics of everyday actions, Garfinkel (1967) used the term ‘indexicality’ which constitutes the next key concept.

Generally, people when they interact do not make every single aspect of their intended meaning explicit. They do not and cannot elaborate on all aspects of “what they are really talking about” because it is too tiring, too time-consuming and too difficult (Garfinkel, 1967, p. 25). Instead they rely on mutually understood features of the background context to supply additional information (Seedhouse, 2004) and fill in the gaps that the words don’t address. This notion of indexicality or ‘context-boundedness’ allows utterances to represent vastly more than what is actually said, and “thereby makes mundane conversation possible” (Boyle, 2000, p. 33). By acknowledging the indexical characters of the particulars of everyday life, and hence the accounts they constitute, ethnomethodologists can quote others
Garfinkel (1967) explained indexicality as “the rational properties of indexical expressions and other practical actions as contingent on-going accomplishments of organised artful practices of everyday life” (p. 11). This means that for ethnomethodologists, expressions are indexical when their meanings depend on the particular contexts of their use, and are continually negotiated and renegotiated by people engaged in certain practices on the basis of ‘what everyone knows’ (Barnes & Law, 1976). Indexical knowledge is seen as not just something in the environment, but also something jointly constructed and ‘talked into being by participants’ (Boyle 2000, p. 31). In other words, people have to ‘work’ at contextualizing their talk (Atkinson & Heritage, 1984) by displaying, through their utterances, which aspects of context they are orienting to at any given time (Seedhouse, 2004). In this way, and because all expressions are characterised in EM as indexical, indexicality is seen by ethnomethodologists as “an essential and irreparable feature of all talk” (Barnes & Law, 1976, p. 3), and views human discourse as “constitutively indexical” (p. 235).

Garfinkel and Sacks (1970) argued that the properties of indexical expressions were ordered and socially organised as “an ongoing, practical accomplishment of every actual occasion of commonplace speech and conduct” (p. 341). In this way, indexicality can be seen as an important resource with a role to play in the sequential ordering of talk. It is the response that an utterance gets that displays, reflexively, the understanding others have of the utterance and attaches its meaning to the order of a developing sequence (Rawls, 2008). Attewell (1974, p. 185) explains:

Indexicality is a concept which describes a property of language. It refers to the fact that a word... has meaning which relates to the particular situation in which it is being used. For example, ‘he was there’ has different meanings for both ‘he’ and ‘there’ depending upon the particular occasion or situation in which the sentence was said.

To explain further, Zimmerman and Wilson (1979) used the example of Citizen Kane uttering the word ‘rosebud’ in his final dying words. It is only
when the shot goes to the boy Kane’s sled does the audience understand that ‘Rosebud’ is the name of the sled. By providing this context, sense is made. It is then “the practical accomplishment of the members of society that the indexical depiction of the world around is the practical properties of actual settings and events are resolvable as definite, sensible matters” (Zimmerman & Wilson, 1979, p. 58). This stress on meaning-in-context makes indexical expressions dependent on who said them, on what occasion and in what place (Phillips, 1978); a window from which to gaze upon the “bedrock of social order” (Maynard & Clayman, 1991, p. 399).

The final key concept of ‘membership’ is also critical to EM. The focus of EM is not on individuals as such but on the capacities or competencies to perform competent membership (Nicolini, 2012). EM is “not in the business of endowing humans with competencies and other psychological attributes that generate a practice, but seeks to identify what sort of ethno methods are necessary for a person to participate actively and competently in the accomplishment of an activity, and therefore become a member” (Nicolini, 2012, p. 139). Sacks (1989, p. 271) describes membership categorisation as “some very central machinery of social organisation”. His early work on the categorial analysis of suicide prevention telephone conversations found that ‘callers’ and ‘counsellors’, as part of their procedural knowledge, organised ways of jointly recognising the appropriateness of given categories in given situations (Sacks et al., 1974). He was able to describe the methodic bases of a given course of action or interaction by studying the turn organisation of such conversations. In later studies, membership categorisation was acknowledged by Sacks as a practice, an activity generated within the turns-at-talk. He noted conversational sequences to be categorically instructed according to the common-sense knowledge of social structures (Sacks, 1992). Attewell (1974, p. 183) also argued that the concept of membership formed the theoretical foundation for discussions on interaction and talk:

[Ethnomethodology is based on] the imagery of members accounting to one another to make situations intelligible (p. 205) [because] members’ abilities to make sense out of a situation is predicated on their abilities to announce to themselves and others what meaning they are getting out of the situation,
Garfinkel and Sacks (1970) further claimed that the notion of member was at the heart of the matter in that “[w]e do not use the term to refer to a person. It refers instead to mastery of natural language...that permits speakers and auditors to hear, and in other ways to witness, the objective production and objective display of common-sense knowledge, and of practical circumstances, practical actions and practical sociological reasoning as well” (p. 342). In this way, EM research is fuelled, not by the notion that indexicality exists, but by how people manage to deal with it in such a competent manner that they become recognised members of a group (Nicolini, 2012). Being a member becomes a state of affairs that is generated by the activity; in other words the activity performs membership (Nicolini, 2012).

While the idea of membership categorisation from an EM perspective is useful for the work of this thesis, the analytic steps and procedures of membership categorisation analysis (MCA), as an approach to examining the practical methods of categorisation, have not been used. Instead, the methodology of conversation analysis (CA) has been adopted as the means of studying how teachers and students orient to each other’s actions as members of the category pair ‘teacher’ and ‘student’. Along with membership, the concepts of accountability, reflexivity and indexicality are fundamental to the framing of this study from an EM perspective. They are applied under the premise that to “know ethnomethodology, you must do ethnomethodology” (Psathas, 1980, p. 16); where EM is described as a method as well as a theory. As such, the key concepts of accountability, reflexivity and indexicality are treated in this thesis as accomplishing the dual function of both theory and method. Other research in this field is discussed in the next section.
3.2.5 Ethnomethodological research

Garfinkel’s early ethnomethodological (EM) studies were intent on uncovering and identifying normative practices by ‘making the familiar strange’ (Pollner, 2012c). He believed that because the practices organising everyday interaction and activities were so deeply engrained and artfully deployed, they were seen but left unnoticed and therefore not easily perceptible when the norms were being followed (Seedhouse 2004). However, he did notice that the norms became more identifiable when they were being breached, claiming that “for these background expectancies to come into view one must either be a stranger to the ‘life as usual’ character of everyday scenes, or become estranged from them” (Garfinkel, 1967, p. 37). By taking the stance of a stranger and causing trouble in a situation through breach, disruption and ‘trouble making’, he was able to create basic departures from these taken-far-granted social expectations and make them visible, and thus subject to analysis (Pollner, 2012a).

Garfinkel’s (1988, 1996) later work evolved to focus upon ‘making the familiar strange’ by concentrating on ‘living’ the lived order by experiencing the here-and-now immediacy of everyday interaction as experienced by the adept practitioner (Pollner, 2012a). Garfinkel (1996) described his findings in terms of the questions “What did we do? What did we learn? More to the point, what did we learn, but only in and as lived doings, that we can teach? And how can we teach it?” (p. 9). As a result of this change in emphasis, he was able to demonstrate that interactions are “not treated literally but are understood by reference to context and assumptions about the other party, as part of an emerging sequence” (Seedhouse, 2004, p. 6).

According to Hamilton (1974, as cited in Armstrong, 1979), the belief that a so-called ‘methodological centrepiece’ for all EM can be found in the writings of Garfinkel alone is false. Garfinkel (1967) himself stated that there were a ‘variety of tacks’ and even contrasting procedures available to ethnomethodologists. He claimed that the goal, while doing rigorous investigation, must be to avoid the "pre-invention" of techniques (Garfinkel, 1967, p. 252) under the premise that all procedures are essentially "provisional" (Garfinkel, 1967, p. 105). In response, ethnomethodologists
have employed a range of research techniques including laboratory experiments (Jennings & Jennings, 1974; Zimmerman & Wieder, 1977) and traditional field ethnographies (Cicourel, 1987; Emerson, 1991; Emerson & Pollner, 1976; Mangrum, Fairley, & Wieder, 2001; Zimmerman & Wieder, 1977), with Maynard and Schaeffer (2000) offering potential synergies between survey-based methods and ethnomethodological social sciences.

Conversation analysts (Cicourel, 1980; McHoul, 1978, 1990; Sacks et al., 1974; Schegloff et al., 1977) have used EM principles to guide their investigations into the use of language and how conversations are structured in everyday circumstances. By analysing the sequential nature of ‘natural language’ (the taken-for-granted aspects of naturally occurring conversations) and taking special note of the shared meanings certain words have for members of a particular group, they have been able to deepen understanding of how people coordinate their actions to produce sequences of conversations (Hassard, 1993). Significant works by Sacks (1984a, 1984b, 1986) and his colleagues (Sacks et al., 1974; Schegloff et al., 1977) have examined the conversational turn-taking practices that assemble the organised character of conversational openings, closings, turn-taking and topic selection. As such, they have been able to demonstrate ethnomethodologically how much information ‘goes without saying’ and how messages are sometimes even conveyed and understood without ever being verbalised (Hassard, 1993).

Other ethnomethodologists have been more interested in describing how practices are reproduced over time and across settings and organisations through interactions and negotiations. Through studying work settings, they look closely at how practitioners make their activities “objectively accountable for all practical purposes” (Lynch, 1997, p. 23). Garfinkel’s original notion of taken-for-granted reasoning and the general importance of details of order and accountability have influenced the research of well-known organisational studies by scholars such as Bittner (1967), Weick and Kiesler (1979) and Manning (1982). Examples of practical studies include Whalen and Zimmerman’s (1987) research on the coordination of work-site practices of 911 dispatchers in ‘working’ a phone call and Macbeth’s (1991)
analysis of how teachers and students concertedly arrange for and spot trouble-in-the-making in an inner city high school classroom. Freebody’s (2013) more recent work has documented the ways the speech exchange systems of teachers and students in various classroom sites produce definitions of such operational matters as 'reading', 'writing', 'learning' and 'knowledge'. Mehan’s (1998) review of findings from the study of face-to-face interaction in educational settings highlights the contribution of such studies to culturally compatible pedagogical practices and the organisation of schooling more generally. These studies have allowed researchers to expose the taken-for-grantedness of everyday situations and explore the well-regulated sets of rules that underpin interactions in various sites (Hassard, 1993).

3.2.6 Criticisms of ethnomethodology

Since its inception in the 1960s, ethnomethodology (EM) as a sociological approach to viewing the world has generated considerable interest and controversy. Heritage (1987) stated that EM, and particularly the writings of Garfinkel, have been paid the “tribute of unrelenting criticism” (p. 224) with many arguments exasperating conventional sociologists because ‘the foundations seem to move’ whenever sociological issues are raised (Button, 1991). By the 1970s, EM was touted by some critiques as ‘a method without substance’ and a kind of ‘anything goes’ sociology; “frivolous, maliciously ludic or, somehow, ethically dubious” (Watson, 2009, p. 479).

Perhaps the most well-known criticism was by Lewis Coser (1975) in his presidential address to members of the American Sociological Association. He characterised EM as nothing but a sect that ignored the sociological tradition and failed to enlighten its practitioners (Coser, 1975).

Perhaps one of the main reasons sociologists such as Coser (1975), Armstrong (1979), Phillips (1978) and Woolgar (1981) were so vitriolic in their attacks on EM was due to its focus on ‘enquiry’ and ‘process’ as opposed to ‘theory’ and ‘theorising’ (Button, 1991). As Button (1991, p. 5) explains:

When asked any questions about matters pertaining to epistemology, method, theory, meaning, rationality, thought, structure, action...
ethnomethodologists constantly appear to turn to specifics, to turn to some materials they have collected, or study they have conducted, in order to explain what they mean... This is bewildering for sociologists because, when sociology does address its foundations, it does so by theorizing them, not by reference to the details of accountable action.

According to Goldthorpe (1973), such a focus on answers to questions lying in the ‘doing of EM projects’ challenged the notion that “[i]n the act of analysis, we are forced to assume some features of an order ‘out there’” (Silverman, 1972, as cited in Goldthorpe, 1973, p. 452). This self-validating aspect of EM can be seen by some as a major methodological problem. Without general theory, how can researchers make assertions? In this way, McNall and Johnson (1975) argue that EM can only refute important theories, because it cannot champion any theories it has built itself. It becomes more a method for studying and describing one unique case in an exhaustive fashion than a theory in itself (McNall & Johnson, 1975).

Zimmerman (1978) further claimed that ethnomethodologists, because of their focus on enquiry, could become preoccupied with ‘doing research’ rather than ‘talking about it’ or ‘writing it about it’. As Mehan and Houston (1976, p. 18) stated, “ethnomethodology is not primarily a reading, writing, and talking discipline; it can be best understood by being done”. This belief that it is virtually impossible to gain an adequate understanding of EM from reading about it, or even from discussing it with a practitioner, that EM studies must be engaged in (Schwartz & Jacobs, 1979), has resulted in a plethora of work consisting of mainly empirical research (Emerson & Pollner, 1976; Jefferson & Schenkein, 1977; Mangrum et al., 2001; Pollner, 2012b; Sacks et al., 1974; Schegloff et al., 1977; Zimmerman & Wieder, 1977) being published at the expense of theoretical writings that justify and reinforce the conception of EM. Peyrot (1982) suggested that this has caused interested parties to get their information about what EM is from secondary sources, especially reviews from non-ethnomethodologists whose work may/may not be credible and unbiased. This, he claims, has resulted in criticisms of EM which contain “a number of misconceptions which have been perpetuated by the lack of refutation and/or clarification” (Peyrot, 1982, p. 262).
Despite these criticisms, an EM view of primary to secondary school transition can provide a means of analysing how teachers and students build accounts of social action while they do that action. Generally, past research has investigated transition as a predetermined object of study from which problems can be identified and solutions presented. Such an approach depicts the topic of transition as ‘taken-for-granted’ social activity and leaves it largely unexamined as a phenomenon in itself. This thesis uses an EM perspective to uncover how transition is constructed by students as they do it; as they make sense of their world by making available their actions to one another and their teachers. Sense is made as they recognise the order of the details embedded in their individual actions which are located in the communicative sense-making methods used in their everyday lives (Garfinkel, 1967; Wieder, 1977) and everyday classroom lessons. In this way, primary to secondary school transition can be studied through an innovative lens; one that examines the structures of classroom interaction to reveal the orderliness of the phenomenon from within; one where transition is socially constructed and interactionally achieved in the routineness of the school day.

3.3 Conversation analysis

Informed by an ethnomethodological (EM) view of the world, conversation analysis (CA) has emerged as a major contemporary method for the analysis of social interaction (Markee, 2000). In general terms, CA is concerned with “the study of conversation as an activity in its own right” (Schegloff & Sacks, 1973, p. 290) rather than simply a window through which to view other social processes (Hutchby & Wooffitt, 2008). It is the methodical construction ‘in and through talk’ of member-productive and analysable social action and activity (Maynard & Clayman, 1991). It asks the question about some utterance: Why that now? Why this utterance here? (Schegloff, 1998), and in doing so, has reconceptualised the way researchers study the nature of language and social interaction, the kinds of data which are relevant and appropriate, and the detailed analytical procedures used for its empirical investigation. This is reflected in ten Have’s (1990) explanation of CA as a strategy or method for dealing with the "invisibility of common sense"
The social accomplishment of transition: Investigating classroom talk practices as students move from primary to secondary school (p. 23). By addressing the problem of studying everyday social interactions, in the most ordinary of settings, the most routine, naturally occurring activities can be examined in their concrete details (Psathas, 1995). The fundamental organisation of these interactions can reveal other characteristics of the social actors and the settings they act in (Heritage, 2001). As a result, in this thesis, talk in classroom lessons can be recognised as “the primordial site of sociality” (Schegloff, 1992, p. 1296), and the talk itself can be analysed for its role in the doing of, and the accounting for transition.

3.3.1 The emergence of conversation analysis

Conversation analysis (CA) emerged in the late 1960s from the work of Harvey Sacks and his collaborative inquiries with colleagues and co-authors Emanuel Schegloff and Gail Jefferson. Sacks, a U.S. sociologist, was interested in how activities were carried out in practice by real people in real situations (Pain, 2009) and began his investigations with real-world data of ‘actual utterances in actual contexts’ (Hutchby & Wooffitt, 2008). He strongly disagreed with the prominent Chomskian linguistic view of the time that “ordinary talk could not be the object of study for linguistics since it is too disordered; it is an essentially degenerate realisation of linguistic competence” (Hutchby & Wooffitt, 1998, p. 22). Instead, Sacks became fascinated by the idea that people could interact socially in an orderly type of way; that their ‘naturally occurring mundane talk’ was systematically organised and deeply arranged and methodic (Seedhouse, 2004). He saw structure in every conversation and started his first detailed analysis of its moment-by-moment production while working at a suicide counseling hotline in Los Angeles in the 1960s. The telephone calls to the hotline were recorded, and thus provided the data Sacks needed to study the process and power of ‘talk-in-interaction’ (Pain, 2009). This gave Sacks an insight into how talk could be studied in a systematic way and examined as an object in its own right (Schegloff & Sacks, 1973).

Sacks developed CA in an intellectual environment shaped by the works of Harold Garfinkel (1967, 1974) and Erving Goffman (1967, 1983). Sacks met and worked with Garfinkel in the 1960s at Harvard University while
Garfinkel was on sabbatical from the University of California and working on his branch of sociology; ethnomethodology. The bond between Sacks and Garfinkel was crucial to the development of conversation analysis and resulted in it emerging as perhaps the most visible and influential form of EM research (Maynard & Clayman, 1991). Both Garfinkel and Sacks (1970, 1973) believed that people made sense of their world through the sharing of practical methods of reasoning, which manifested themselves in courses of social action. A combined interest in the phenomenon of natural language and fundamental notion of indexicality resulted in their collaborative article *On Formal Structures of Practical Actions* (Garfinkel & Sacks, 1970). All natural language, they claimed, was indexical, meaning that the comprehension of any utterance, rather than being fixed by some abstract definition, depended upon the circumstances in which it appeared. They further argued that the properties of indexical expressions were ordered and socially organised; and that such orderliness was “an ongoing, practical accomplishment of every actual occasion of commonplace speech and conduct” (Garfinkel & Sacks, 1970, p. 341). Thus, indexical expressions could be viewed as a resource for social ends (Maynard & Clayman, 1991), and by studying the orderliness of them, one could appreciate how people achieved mutual understanding.

Along with the idea of indexicality, CA shares other fundamental principles with EM with Seedhouse (2004, p. 12) explaining the relationship as one where “CA is the result of applying EM principles to naturally occurring talk”. Central to both is Garfinkel’s (1967) ‘documentary method of interpretation’ which treats any actual real-world action as a ‘document’ or an example of a previously known pattern (Seedhouse, 2004). This is not only the method of interpretation which people use every day to make sense of situations, but it is also the fundamental process conversational analysts use when analysing social interaction. Reciprocal, back-and-forth talk and its conversational order can be interpreted in terms of the underlying patterns that are determined and reinforced in a ‘circular feedback effect’ (Watson, 1997). According to Seedhouse (2004), when looking at sequential interaction, any turn-at-talk becomes a document or display of a cognitive, emotional and attitudinal state, an analysis of context and of the previous
turn or turns in the sequence and a social action which renews the context. This points to the reflexive relationship between existing patterns and individual conversations; so that if we encounter a new way of saying something our underlying pattern or schema of saying that ‘something’ is updated.

The EM principle of reflexivity is further espoused in CA’s notion of analysis being bottom-up, data driven and non-theoretically based. Conversation analysts do not approach their data with any prior theoretical assumptions or assume that any background or contextual details are relevant. So in CA, it is not relevant to invoke power, gender, race, or any other contextual factor unless and until there is evidence in the details of the interaction that the participants themselves are orienting to it (Seedhouse, 2004). In their approach to analysis, conversation analysts refuse to take into consideration any kind of hypothetical presuppositions and choose to focus on the formal analysis of how social relations are accomplished in that segment of moment-by-moment interaction (Nicolini, 2012). That is not to say background or contextual details are not important to CA, but rather they are only discussed when close analysis reveals participants’ orientation to them (Seedhouse, 2004). Such refusal to consider demographics without an actual acknowledgment by the participants themselves, as explained further in the next section, is a key analytic strategy in the studying of teacher-student exchanges in this thesis.

Garfinkel (1967) also contributed the idea to CA that actions are a resource through which people involved in the interaction can see, and see in common, ‘where they are in’ a given interaction; where each is positioned in relation to the other (Heritage, 2003). He claimed that such actions, made up of practices, methods and procedures, with which people produce and recognise talk can be described as talk’s ‘ethnomethods’. These form the interactional resources which people unavoidably use to collaborate with each other. They are mutually intelligible and keep the interaction going in an orderly, sequential fashion (Heritage, 2001). CA takes this notion and focusses on the competencies people use to co-construct orderly and mutually understandable courses of action. It does so by mapping the interactional
resources with which members of the social world produce, recognise, understand and manipulate talk practices (Heritage, 2003).

Sacks’ work was also influenced by the work of his doctoral supervisor Erving Goffman. From Goffman (1967, 1983), came the idea that social interaction could be viewed as more than a medium through which other aspects of the social world such as social status, gender or personality could be manifested (Heritage, 2003). He maintained that social interaction was a social institution in its own right, with its own pattern of organisation and set of rituals. CA’s sociological roots are firmly established in Goffman’s notion of an institutionalised ‘interaction order’ (Goffman, 1983); a concept that provides the basis not only for social interaction but also social institutions (Drew & Heritage, 1992; Goffman, 1983). Goffman (1983) viewed talk-in-interaction as a fundamental social domain that could be studied as a stand-alone institutional entity (Heritage, 2001). His aim was to document the ritual procedures that inform the orderly conduct of everyday life (Seedhouse, 2004) by studying the ‘syntax’ of the ‘institution of interaction’.

I assume that the proper study of interaction is not the individual and his psychology, but rather the syntactical relations among the acts of different persons mutually present to one another. (Goffman, 1967, p. 2)

Despite criticism of Goffman’s methodology as being insufficiently developed (Heritage, 2001), his understanding of the interaction order as a social institution in its own right carved out a new conceptual space for researchers interested in uncovering and analysing institutionalised practices, and the organisation of them, through which ordinary interaction is managed.

Also during this time, Sacks met Emmanuel Schegloff who was to become his closest collaborator, and eventually his literary executor after Sacks’ accidental death in a car crash at the age of 40. Schegloff’s thorough reviews of Sacks’ lectures and introductions to them (Schegloff, 1989, 1999), along with his own additional writings (Schegloff, 2004, 2007) continued to build the tradition of CA. His series of fine-grained empirical studies, spanning over 35 years, established many of the major concepts and findings of CA showing that by treating language behaviour as ‘situated social action and
interaction’ and systematically studying its details, one could investigate human social behaviour (Heritage, 2003). His substantial body of work early on, sometimes co-authored with Sacks and Jefferson, identified the structural framework of interaction: turn-taking (Sacks et al., 1974), sequence organisation and the adjacency pair concept (Schegloff, 1972, 2007), repair (Schegloff et al., 1977), the overall structural organisation of conversations (Schegloff, 1968; Schegloff & Sacks, 1973) and word selection (Schegloff, 2004). These sequences and structures are further discussed below.

3.3.2 The study of social interaction

Conversation analysts are interested in finding a specific kind of systematic insight into the ways in which members of society 'do interaction' (ten Have, 1990). In this way, CA is not designed for the analysis of contexts where activities are progressed by means other than social interaction (Heritage, 2001), and conversation analysts are not so concerned with the talk itself nor the structure of language as a topic of analysis. Rather, their object of study is the social act; talk as practical social accomplishment. As such, “words used in talk are not studied as semantic units, but as products or objects which are designed and used in terms of the activities being negotiated in the talk” (Hutchby & Wooffitt, 1998, p. 14). The hallmark then of CA is its treatment of language behaviour as situated social action and interaction.

As a research method then, it is clear that the term ‘conversation analysis’ is misleading. It is not ‘conversation’ but ‘talk-in-interaction’ that is the broader and more inclusive characterisation of the phenomena of study (Psathas, 1995). By focusing on the production and interpretation of talk-in-interaction, CA seeks to discover its organisation. The idea that talk-in-interaction is orderly is fundamental to CA studies. Psathas (1995, p. 3) explains:

Its basic position is that social actions are meaningful for those who produce them and that they have a natural organisation that can be discovered and analysed by close examination. Its interest is in finding the machinery, the rules, the structures that produce and constitute that orderliness.
Sacks (1984a, p. 22) adopted this position by proposing that “it is perfectly possible... to suppose... that wherever we happen to attack the phenomenon we are going to find... detailed order... That is, we may alternatively take it that there is order at all points”. This idea of ‘order at all points’ terms talk-in-interaction as structurally organised and deeply ordered. Orderliness is seen as the product of the systematic deployment of specifiable interactional methods - 'devices', 'systems', an 'apparatus' - that are used by members as solutions to specifiable organisational problems in social interaction (ten Have, 1990). These rules and structures are adopted as actions within specific contexts and have a double-faced characteristic. In one sense they cannot be adequately understood without reference to the sequential environment in which they occur, while in another they allow for a fine-tuned adaptation to local circumstances by inevitably forming part of the sequential environment in which the next contribution will occur (Seedhouse, 2004).

Sacks et al. (1974) described the double-faced nature of talk-in-interaction as being both 'context-shaped' and 'context-renewing' whereby “speakers understand an utterance by reference to its turn-within-sequence character that provides a central resource for both the participants and the overhearing analyst to make sense of talk” (as cited in Atkinson & Heritage, 1984, p. 7). Contributions are context-shaped in that they cannot be adequately understood except by reference to the sequential environment in which they occur and in which the participants design them to occur. Contributions are context-renewing in that they inevitably form part of the sequential environment in which a next contribution will occur (Seedhouse, 2005). As Heritage (1984) explained, “[t]he context of a next action is repeatedly renewed with every current action, and is transformable at any moment” (p. 242). The understanding here is that participants actually build the context of their talk in and through their talk (Heritage, 2005). In this way, the context of talk-in-interaction can only be understood in view of the sequence from which it emerges. This is a distinguishing feature of CA; linking both meaning and context to the idea of sequence (Heritage, 2005).
3.3.3 Conversational sequences and structures

At the heart of CA is the belief that social interaction is organised at a fine-grained level of detail, with the ‘engine room’ of such interaction being sequence organisation (Heritage, 2005). The goal of the conversation analyst is one of identifying the sequences that underlie talk-in-interaction in an effort to describe the intertwined construction of practices, actions and activities, and the overall structure of the interactions themselves (Maynard, 2012). Sacks (1984a) explains his work as trying to find out ‘what happened’ by treating interactions “as products of a machinery” (p. 26). Schegloff’s (1968, 2004) studies of identification and recognition sequences in telephone conversation openings, Sacks et al.’s (1974) work on the systematic properties of turn-taking in conversation and Pomerantz’s (1978) work on wrongdoings have been instrumental in pioneering the discovery of such sequences. The aim of these studies has been “to discover how participants understand and respond to one another in their turns-at-talk, with a central focus on how sequences of action are generated” (Hutchby & Wooffitt, 2008, p. 14).

Similarly in classrooms, CA allows the researcher to trace how students and teachers analyse and interpret each other’s actions and develop a shared understanding of the progress of the interaction (Seedhouse, 2005).

Fundamental to the study of practices for talk-in-interaction is the sequential organisation of turn-taking, adjacency pairs and repair. Together they combine in a mutually reinforcing fashion to provide normative points of reference which enable interactants (and analysts) to orient themselves (Seedhouse, 2004). Because each element can only be understood in terms of the other, a model of interactional competence that “does not treat turn taking, repair, and sequence organisation as integrated practices is flawed” (Markee, 2008, p. 405). Each is discussed in detail below.

Underpinning CA is a central theory about how participants orient themselves to interaction in sequences. Early studies by Sacks et al. (1974) found that all sequences involve the use of some kind of turn-taking. They noted that speakers spoke mainly one at a time, that speaker changes occurred quite smoothly, that overlapped speech was brief, and that transitions occurred from one turn to the next with very little gap and no
overlaps. Interaction, they explained, was always an action sequence in which “a turn’s talk will be heard as directed to a prior turn’s talk, unless special techniques are used to locate some other talk to which it is directed” (Sacks et al., 1974, p. 728). It was found that within the unfolding course of sequences of interaction, participants built an "architecture of intersubjectivity" (Heritage, 1984, p. 254) in which they displayed their ongoing and ever-updating orientations toward the topic at hand and emerging turns-at-talk (Heath & Hindmarsh, 2002).

In these emerging turns-at-talk, participants used both turn-allocational and turn-constructional techniques to ensure one-talking-at-a-time across change of speakers while minimising both ‘gaps’ and ‘overlaps’ between turns (Sacks, 2004). Turn-allocational techniques include those that allocate next speakership via the current speaker selecting a next, and those that use self-selection for next speakership (Sacks, 2004). Turn-constructional techniques explain how participants’ knowledge of sentence level grammar determines how and when speaker change occurs, and also shapes turn design and the evolution of the talk-so-far (Sacks et al., 1974). By analysing the grammatical structure of turn-constructional units (the words, clauses, phrases, or sentences that constitute the building blocks of turns), the next speaker can tell when the current speaker has reached a possible transition relevant place and it is his/her turn to speak (Markee, 2008). The integration of these two techniques organises turn-taking in conversation.

The options available at these points of possible transition dynamically organise the ongoing production of both the talk and social action (Goodwin & Heritage, 1990) establishing opportunities for subsequent participation. In this way, different turn types can provide very different opportunities for participants to engage in the interaction. And, as a turn emerges, the kind of opportunity can change with each additional turn-constructional component (Lerner, 1995). To understand talk-in-interaction then, conversation analysts study how a turn can show how it fits into the sequence so far (past), how it performs its own social action or contribution to the sequence (present), and how it then provides a context for the next turn by another interactant (future) (Seedhouse, 2004). Pike (1967, p. 37) explains:
The etic viewpoint studies behaviour as from outside of a particular system, and as an essential initial approach to an alien system. The emic viewpoint results from studying behaviour as from inside the system...Descriptions or analyses from the etic standpoint are ‘alien’ in view, with criteria external to the system. Emic descriptions provide an internal view, with criteria chosen from within the system.

CA understands an emic perspective to be from the participants’ viewpoint within the interactional environment in which the talk occurs (Seedhouse, 2005). By focusing on such an emic analysis of how social actions are carried out by the moment-to-moment, turn-by-turn opportunities made available for that participation in the course of those activities themselves, conversation analysts can refrain from getting bogged down in the analysis and identification of turns in isolation. The analyst’s task then becomes one of uncovering the details of the "procedural infrastructure of situated action" (ten Have, 2007, p. 34), and specifically, by investigating the orientations and relevancies that participants display to each other through their interactional conduct (Schegloff, 1992). Thus, “participant orientations, relevancies, and intersubjectivity are not treated as states of mind that somehow lurk behind the interaction, but as local and sequential accomplishments that must be grounded in empirically observable conversational conduct” (Markee & Kasper, 2004, p. 496).

McHoul’s (1978) early work in geography lessons in Australian classrooms proposed that teachers oriented to a set of conversational rules that were modified from those of ordinary conversations. He found that the teacher was the one who allocated the turns-at-talking, not the students. With limited opportunities for students to self-select or select the next speaker, the potential for gaps and pauses in conversation was increased (Gardner, 1997). This resulted in depletion of the turn-taking system’s ability to transform and change. This thesis seeks to investigate the nature of these turns, gaps and pauses as discussed by Sacks et al. (1974) and McHoul (1978, 1990); how they are organised; how students and teachers accomplish orderly turn-taking in Year 6 and Year 7 classroom lessons; and the interactional options that are made available to students during the process (Hutchby & Wooffitt, 2008). A ‘gap’ is referred to as a between-turn silence.
and differs from a ‘pause’ which is considered in the context of this study as a within-turn silence (Schegloff, 2004, p. 40).

Adjacency pairs describe the elementary framework comprising a class of two-utterance sequences that is widely used in conversation, and from which participants inevitably display some analysis of one another’s actions (Goodwin & Heritage, 1990). According to Schegloff and Sacks (1973), adjacency pairs exhibit the following features: two utterances in length; adjacent positioning of the utterances; different speakers producing each utterance. They described conversational sequences as comprising two related turns-at-talk in which the occurrence of the first makes the occurrence of the second ‘expectable’ (Seedhouse, 2004). Instances of this paired talk include an offer and its acceptance or rejection, a greeting and a return greeting, a request and a grant or denial, and a question and its answer.

The typology of an adjacency pair operates in two ways: a ‘first pair part’ (the first part of the two-utterance sequence) followed by a ‘second pair part’. A basic rule of adjacency pair operation is that the ‘first pair part’ makes the occurrence of one of a set of related ‘second pair parts’ expectable (Seedhouse, 2004). As Schegloff (1973, p. 296) explained, “given the recognisable production of a first pair part, on its first possible completion its speaker should stop and a next speaker should start and produce a second pair part from the pair type of which the first is recognisably a member”. This can also be termed the next-turn proof procedure (Sacks et al., 1974), which is the basic tool which analysts can use to develop an emic perspective. The next turn, then, documents an analysis of the previous turn and displays this analysis not only to the other interactants, but also to the analyst (Seedhouse, 2004). This procedure is embedded in the EM principle of reflexivity and addresses one of CA’s most fundamental questions; how mutual understanding is accomplished and displayed in talk (Hutchby & Wooffitt, 2008).

Two utterances produced by two different speakers can reflect an understanding of what is being talked about by the second speaker. The first speaker can see if his/her intention was or was not accepted. In this way “a
two-utterance can be employed as a means for doing and checking some intendedly sequentially implicative occurrence in a way that a one-utterance sequence cannot” (Schegloff, 1973, p. 298). This ‘obligation to respond’ by the second speaker can reveal the constraining influence of conversational structures when the second speaker produces an unexpected response or does not respond at all (Mehan, 1979a). The adjacency pair concept therefore does not guarantee that the second part always follows the first part. Rather, it is a ‘normative frame of reference’ which provides a framework for understanding actions and providing accountability (Seedhouse, 2004). So if a teacher asks a question to a student who does not provide an answer, inferences can be drawn about the non-appearance of the second part. Perhaps the student didn’t hear the question properly, or does not know the answer, or is ignoring the teacher for some reason.

The notion of ‘preference’ further stems from the organisation of the adjacency pair and explains how, in adjacency pair sequences – of which the question-answer sequence is a typical example – respondents to the first pair part action routinely have available two or more normatively possible, though non-equivalent, responses (Stivers & Robinson, 2006). Analysis of both the position of the response turn (eg. whether it is delayed) and its design (eg. whether it includes an account for the response or just the response) makes it possible to understand certain responses as ‘preferred’ and other responses as ‘dispreferred’ (Schegloff et al., 1977). Atkinson and Heritage (1984, p. 55) state that “the institutionalised design features of preferred/dispreferred actions are both inherently structured and actively used so as to maximise cooperation and affiliation and to minimise conflict in conversational activities”. For instance, when a teacher asks a question that prefers agreement and a student responds by providing agreement, then the sequence tends to be accomplished more quickly, without internal delays and without extended accounts (Heritage, 2005). This ordering of preferences suggests that interactants are concerned with advancing in-progress activities through sequences (Stivers & Robinson, 2006).

Adjacency pairs can also be linked together to form chains or stretches of talk (Mehan, 1979a) and can be used to study a variety of interactional
sequences. Schegloff (2007) describes variations of these stretches of talk as sequence expansions. One such sequence commonly found in classroom talk patterns, and discussed in the previous chapter, is the three-part ‘Initiation-Reply-Feedback’ (IRF) sequence which contains two coupled adjacency pairs whereby the first and third turns in a sequence are overwhelmingly produced by the teacher, and the second position turn by students (Mehan, 1979a).

While, all classroom talk clearly does not consist of an endless succession of adjacency pairs, the principles which underlie this straightforward analysis of talk-in-interaction will be used in this study as an example or an ‘action template’ of a generic phenomenon, namely, next-positioning and linked actions within sequence organisation (Seedhouse, 2004).

Different turn-taking systems produce differing opportunities to participate. Whenever next speakers make contributions to the unfolding talk, they typically do so without pauses, silences or overlaps (Sacks et al., 1974; Schegloff, 1992). However when these behaviours do occur, they often flag trouble that needs to be repaired. In other words, when a participant in a conversation has difficulty understanding something someone else has said, or a difficulty hearing what was said, or thinks what the other said might in some way be wrong, inaccurate or perhaps inappropriate, then he or she may (or may not) choose to take steps to rectify that difficulty by initiating its repair (Drew, 1997). This makes repair trajectories general sequential phenomenon (McHoul, 1990) that can be studied in all talk.

In some cases, repairs are made by the speaker responsible for the trouble (self-repair) and other times they are made by somebody else who corrects the mistake (other-repair); and in some cases, the repair is self-initiated by the speaker of the source of trouble (self-initiation), and in other instances the repair is initiated by any other party other than the speaker (other-initiation) (Schegloff et al., 1977). So in this way, the one who performs or accomplishes a repair is not necessarily the one who initiated the repair operation in the first place (Schegloff et al., 1977).

Repair is a sequential phenomenon involving repair 'segments' in the course of ongoing talk; segments which have an organisation of their own including the parts of ‘initiation’ and ‘outcome’. According to Hutchby and
Wooffitt (1998, p. 66), “[t]here are various ways in which turns are designed to facilitate self-repair, or display the speaker’s sensitivity to the appropriateness of self-repair and the (possible) impropriety of other-repair”.

As a result, interactants can make very different normative usage of the preference system for repair with very different outcomes. Schegloff et al. (1977, pp. 364-365) identified four varieties of repair sequences. These include:

1. Self-initiated self-repair: Repair is both initiated and carried out by the speaker of the trouble source.
2. Other-initiated self-repair: Repair is carried out by speaker of the trouble source but initiated by another party.
3. Self-initiated other-repair: The speaker of a trouble source may try and get the other party to repair the trouble; for instance if a name is proving difficult to remember.
4. Other-initiated other-repair: The other party to a trouble source turn both initiates and carries out the repair. This is closest to what is conventionally called ‘correction.’

According to Seedhouse (2004), self-initiated self-repair is the most preferred segment in the organisation of repair, and other-initiated other-repair is the least preferred. This order corresponds with frequency of usage in normal conversation, with self-initiated self-repair being used more often in conversation and other-initiated other-repair being used rarely.

Opportunities to repair trouble can differ from one turn-taking system to another. Self-initiated repairs have regular and clearly different locations in conversation and can be placed in three main positions: in the same turn as their trouble source, in that turn’s transition space, or in the third turn to the trouble source turn (Schegloff et al., 1977). On the other hand, other-initiated repairs occupy only one main position: the turn following the trouble source turn. The positioning of the repair can reveal how conversational troubles are pointed out, and then how the problem is corrected. McHoul’s (1990) research also described in detail specific practices of classroom repair and reported that teachers more overtly repair students’ talk than was the case in
ordinary conversation. He found that other-initiated repairs in the turn following the trouble source turn were more common than self-initiated repairs which contrasted with findings for ordinary conversation (Gardner, 2013). The analytic processes that conversation analysts use to display such findings are discussed in the next section.

3.3.4 Analytic processes of conversation analysis

CA differs from other qualitative methods for research on talk due to its emphasis on the importance of empirical evidence, in the form of actual data extracts, for any analytic claims (Peräkylä, 2004). In doing so, “it seeks to develop the key parameters of description qualitatively, in an inductive way, so as to ensure the context sensitivity of the analytic apparatus in each study” (Peräkylä, 2004, pp. 290-291). Researchers draw on these principles to explore the essential question of CA which ask at all stages of the analysis: ‘Why that, in that way, right now?’ (Seedhouse, 2005). This frames the perspective of interaction as action (why that), which is expressed by means of linguistic forms (in that way), in a developing sequence (right now) (Seedhouse, 2005).

As already established, people show their understanding of ‘what is going on’ in a conversation through sequencing. Through the fine grained inspection of audio recordings and transcriptions, researchers are able to uncover the “often tactic reasoning procedures and socio-linguistic competencies underlying the production and interpretation of talk in organised sequences of interaction” (Hutchby & Wooffitt, 2008, p. 12). In other words, they are able to explore how people show their understanding of ‘what is going on’ by responding to each other in their orderly turns of talk; to study the organisation of sequences, the structure of repair, the preference for certain types of conversational forms and how ordinary conversation relates to social structures (Maynard & Clayman, 1991).

Probably the most distinctive methodological trait of CA is its use of transcribed audio recordings of actual interactions (Hutchby & Wooffitt, 2008). Conversational analysts work with these materials from naturally occurring interactions; distinct from ones produced by ‘research intervention’
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such as an experiment or interview (Schegloff & Sacks, 1973). Heritage (2001) explains that “since orderliness inheres in the details of interaction, there is an insistence that these materials be recorded on audio or video tape rather than being noted, coded, or, worse, simply recollected or imagined” (p. 51). Sacks (1984b, p. 411) described this work as follows:

The gross aim of the work I am doing is to see how finely the details of actual, naturally occurring conversation can be subjected to analysis that will yield the technology of conversation. The idea is to take singular sequences of conversations and tear them apart in such a way as to find rules, techniques, procedures, methods, maxims... that can be used to generate the orderly features we find in the conversations we examine. The point is, then, to come back to the singular things we observe in a singular sequence, with some rules that handle those singular features, and also, necessarily, handle lots of other events.

In terms of methodology, Sacks (1984, 1992, 2004) approached the analysis of the orderliness of everyday interaction from a theoretical perspective that was data driven rather than data being used to support theory (Hutchby & Wooffitt, 2008). He maintained that research should begin with a process of ‘unmotivated looking’; not with generating a research idea and then going about finding data to support it. So, in CA terminology, the notion of analysis does not imply ‘conscious analysis’ (Markee, 2008). Instead, it refers to the moment-by-moment, members’ displays of understanding of what has been said in the turn-so-far, which therefore make particular courses of action contingently relevant in the next turn (Markee, 2008). In this way, CA refrains from producing a hypothesis and avoids injecting the formal analysis of transcripts with any preconceived ideas. Conversation analysts argue that if any power or social relationship exists, it must emerge in the analysis, as “a product of the local practices of participants” (Nicolini, 2012, p. 194).

So, rather than starting with a ‘bucket theory’ of context, CA starts with the view that is more dynamic and context renewing; where context is seen both as a ‘project and product’ of participants’ actions (Heritage, 2005). From this perspective, the conversation analyst is open to discovering new phenomena rather than searching the data with preconceptions or hypotheses (Seedhouse, 2004). Data therefore is never coded. Instead the
preparation of data involves detailed transcriptions of video or audio data; detailed enough that conversational analysts can investigate the fine-grained order of turns and sequences. CA works from raw data and notices patterns using “a combination of distributional regularities, commonalities in contexts of use, participant orientations and deviant case analysis” (Maynard, 2012, p. 2). In their CA work, both Seedhouse (2004) and Hutchby and Wooffitt (1998) also espouse the view of the constant, reflexive interaction between the specific instance and the underlying machinery; a process that is bottom-up and data driven. In this way, specific episodes can be analysed by reference to types of interactional organisation to help the researcher further elaborate on the underlying ‘machinery’ (Seedhouse, 2004).

Conversation analysts also believe that no order of detail within talk-in-interaction can be dismissed as disorderly, accidental or irrelevant (Heritage, 1984a), and so, they insist on capturing, not only what is said, but also details of how something is said, including how participants behave (Hepburn & Bolden, 2012). To capture all these details and “the rich subtlety of their delivery” (Hepburn & Bolden, 2012, p. 57), a meticulous transcription system must be used that reflects an accurate rendition of what is said and done. Interactional competence can be then studied through the features of talk “made available for analysis through transcription that deliberately and methodically seeks to record taken-for-granted features of social interaction” (Davidson, 2010, p. 115).

The system of transcription used universally by conversation analysts was first developed by Gail Jefferson in the 1960s. This set of shared conventions for transcription, commonly referred to as the Jeffersonian Transcription System, provides researchers with a core set of notational conventions that preserve the key features of talk (Psathas, 1995). Jefferson (2014) describes the process as “just something one does to prepare materials for analysis” (p. 13). The development and use of these symbols by conversation analysts is related to the kinds of interactional phenomena being studied at the time and therefore, as new topics are studied, additions are made to the notation system (Psathas, 1995). Taken-for-granted rules and features of social interaction that underpin talk such as only one person
speaking at a time, turn taking, how talk responds to prior talk and provides a context for further talk, how people open and close their conversations, can be deliberately and methodically investigated (Walsh, 2011). The transcription process, both as an interpretative and technical practice, was central to the work of the researcher as aspects of interaction frequently “invisible” were made visible and available for study (Davidson, 2010, p. 119). The use of Jeffersonian transcription in this thesis to analyse the talk-in-interaction across Year 6 and Year 7 classrooms is further discussed in the next chapter Study Design.

3.3.5 Conversation analysis and institutional talk

In recent years, the use of CA has broadened from its original domain of ordinary conversation to increasingly diverse social interactions including those from educational, legal, medical and other institutional settings. According to Heritage (2005), ‘institutional CA’ shifts its focus to explore and examine the operation of social institutions in talk. Although the boundaries between institutional and conversational talk are often difficult to separate (Drew & Heritage, 1992), the distinction is useful when studying the characteristic features of classroom interaction, with conversation analysts coming to an understanding of classroom talk as a type of institutional talk that is empirically distinct from the default speech exchange system of ordinary conversation (Sacks et al., 1974).

The application of CA to the classroom dates back to the 1970s to McHoul’s (1978) work investigating the turn-taking operation of classroom talk. Mehan and Griffin (1980) also looked at structures of classroom discourse discovering that participants use specialised ways of turn-taking. This suggested that things were done differently in classroom conversations when compared to ordinary conversations. Markee and Kasper (2004) claimed that “[w]hereas ordinary conversation is a locally managed, equal power speech exchange system, teacher-fronted classroom talk is an unequal power speech exchange system, in which teachers have privileged rights to assign topics and turns to learners and also to evaluate the quality of students’ contributions to the emerging interaction through other-initiated,
second-position repairs” (p. 492). The work of Austin, Dwyer, and Freebody (2005) showed that classroom talk could be studied in its own right to reveal how the concept of the child, like all categories of people, is locally driven. They explored how the mutually contingent categories of teacher and student were enacted in classrooms through the kinds of interactional options afforded by teachers to students in their turns-at-talk. Thus, the opportunities to initiate actions, what the actions can be intended to mean, and how they will be interpreted can all be significantly shaped by the turn-taking rules for interaction in a classroom (Heritage, 2005).

More recent work on classroom interaction has looked at talk unfolding in task-based, small group instruction during language lessons (Markee, 2004; Mori, 2002; Mori & Zuengler, 2008). These studies have re-positioned classroom talk as ”a nexus of interrelated speech exchange systems” rather than as a unified speech exchange system that is “characterised by a single set of question-answer-comment practices” (Markee & Kasper, 2004, p. 492). The existence of multiple speech exchange systems in classrooms has given rise to research into how participants move from one speech exchange system to another on a moment-by-moment basis. Classroom studies on moving between conversational floors (Edelsky, 1981) and moving from a single conversation to multiple conversations (Egbert, 1993, 1997a) are of particular interest to this research and are further discussed in the chapters 5, 6 and 7.

Other applications of a CA approach have been in the study of situated learning in technology-intensive interactions (Raudaskoski, 2006) and language disorders (Lesser, 2003) which have further examined how the varying semiotic possibilities of different environments shape the interactions that take place with or through them. Koshik (2002) used a CA approach to study teachers’ use of the pedagogical practice of designedly incomplete utterances in order to initiate self-correction by students. The aim of her analysis was “not to evaluate the pedagogy but to describe an institutional practice, showing how practices of ordinary conversation can be adapted for specialised institutional tasks” (Koshik, 2002, p. 278). Young and Miller (2004) also adopted CA to conduct longitudinal observation of ‘revision talk practice’
amongst students and teachers during writing conferences. Their research explored how novices acquired expertise in a new practice. By studying the overall sequential organisation of the acts that comprised a practice and by looking closely at the changes in the ways that participants used the system of turn-taking in conversation, Young and Miller (2004) were able to better understand how students changed roles over time from ‘peripheral to fuller participation’. They concluded that students participated more in the revision talk practice over time. Developing expertise in a new practice is a task that students face as they transition from primary school to secondary school contexts. Young and Miller (2004) showed that by studying the system of turn-taking in conversation, the researcher can contribute knowledge of how participants configure talk to create ‘fuller participation’ in a practice over time.

Also using CA to uncover complex interactions within the classroom was Hellermann (2006) whose study traced the development of the interactional practices of two learners in an L2 literacy class over three terms of study. The investigation demonstrated how learners were socialised into classroom interaction practices and how their ability to participate in these practices evolved. For the purpose of this study, CA provides the analytic framework to examine how teachers and students orient themselves to interaction in Year 6 and Year 7 lessons. By exploring interactional competence across each setting, the social organisation of transition can be studied from a new perspective.

3.4 Conclusion

This chapter has established the theoretical framework for the thesis by defining and positioning it within an EMCA perspective. An approach to studying transition by examining how students and teachers go about creating their social life through the everyday use of their talk practices (Heritage, 1987) is presented. Previous studies on primary to secondary school transition have largely identified and described the features of transition by gathering perceptions from the participants in the hope of greater success (Evangelou et al., 2008; Hopwood et al., 2016; Rice et al.,
They have offered a window through which to view transition by focusing on the developmental, social and academic changes during this often challenging time for students. An EMCA approach provides a new perspective by studying interaction in its own right to reveal how transition gets accomplished in the talk-in-interaction; how it gets done in each moment of every normal school day. Therefore, to gain an understanding of the transition process, the researcher must not only know *what* is getting done, but also *how* participants make sense of what is happening (Garfinkel, 1967). It is in the study of the interactional accomplishment of everyday lessons that new understandings can reveal how students interpret, adopt and adapt to the doing of transition. The following chapter sets out to describe the participants and the design of the study, detailing the collection and analysis of data.
CHAPTER 4

STUDY DESIGN

4.1 Introduction

The previous chapter detailed a theoretical framework espousing an approach to researching the topic of transition from an ethnomethodological (EM), conversation analysis (CA) perspective. It was argued that, in the use of such a methodology, primary to secondary transition could be studied as occurring in the everyday social interactions of students and teachers as they orient to sequential patterns of classroom talk during Year 6 and Year 7 lessons. The key task of this research is to examine classroom talk in lessons at the end of Year 6 and at the beginning of Year 7. This approach studies each site as an interactive environment for learning about transition. It compares the interactive work done by teachers and students, and thereby is able to document the different interactive options available to students across the transition process.

This chapter presents the design of the research project. It begins with a brief explanation of the general approach to the research, locating the investigation in relation to an understanding of context. It then provides details of the participants in the study, and why they were selected, followed by ethical issues and how they were accommodated. The next part of the chapter describes the two settings in which empirical material for analysis was generated and collected. The chapter then closes with an introduction to the analytic chapters that follow.

4.2 Framing the study

The design of this project is framed within an EMCA approach to the study of primary to secondary school transition, consequently addressing the following theoretical questions:
Research question:

- How is transition to secondary school interactionally accomplished in the classroom talk practices of students and teachers?

Sub-questions:

- What sequences produce talk-in-interaction during lessons at the end of Year 6 and the beginning of Year 7?
- What does the fine-grained analysis of talk-in-interaction reveal about practices in Year 6 and Year 7 lessons?
- How are interactional resources used by students as they transition to Year 7?

The general outline for the study design of this thesis involved the spiralling and overlapping phases of:

1. Selecting the research sites
2. Capturing classroom talk-in-interaction through video and audio recordings and indexed field notes
3. Unmotivated exploration of the data
4. Transcribing parts of the recordings using Jefferson’s system of notation
5. Identifying the phenomena to be examined
6. Analysing selected episodes of the phenomena
7. Reporting on the research.

Interwoven through these seven phases was a gradual elaboration of answers to the research questions. What started as more general became more intricate and rich as the study unfolded and as the analysis was completed by the researcher (ten Have, 2007). The scope of this doctoral project allows for transition to be studied in the everyday social interactions of the students who do it. By studying the sequence organisation of talk-in-interaction in Year 6 and Year 7 lessons, this thesis can contribute new understandings towards how transition unfolds in real time across primary and secondary settings.
4.3 Context

In order to develop a deep and richly contextualised understanding of the doing of transition, the study design was informed by a situated view of context. Using this perspective, ongoing practical accomplishments are seen as locally produced, in situ, in the ‘there and then’ and the ‘here and now’ (Psathas, 1995). In this way, practices emerge moment-by-moment in situations and circumstances that are accomplished by the participants themselves from ‘within’ those settings (Heath & Hindmarsh, 2002). Methodologically and ontologically, this view of context is well supported within an EM framework which explains it as essentially contingent on how members display their participation within a setting. Context is clearly formulated by Zimmerman and Pollner (1970, p. 48) as “occasioned corpus of setting features”. This captures the notion that the features of a setting are not 'given' but rather are achieved by the participants who 'assemble' the corpus (Hak, 1995). "[E]ach social setting and every one of its recognised features is construed as the accomplishment of the situated work of displaying and detecting those features at the time they are made visible" (Zimmerman & Pollner, 1970, p. 94). In this way, context is not viewed as a product but rather as a process where participants make choices in their practices around what counts as appropriate to its ongoing composition (Zimmerman & Pollner, 1970).

Similarly, conversation analysts share this “dynamic, complex, highly empirical perspective on context” (Seedhouse, 2004, p. 42). By establishing an emic perspective, they can determine which elements of context are relevant to the interactants at any point in the interaction as participants ‘talk a context into being’ (Seedhouse, 2004). It is dynamic in that, as Heritage (Atkinson & Heritage, 1984, p. 242) puts it, “the context of a next action is repeatedly renewed with every current action” and is transformable at any moment. As noted earlier, a basic assumption of CA is that contributions to interaction are both context-shaped and context-renewing. This view can be traced back to the EM principle of reflexivity. Also, the principle of indexicality of utterances as discussed by Garfinkel and Sacks (1970) is clearly incorporated in the conversation analyst’s view of context, where utterances
reflect the participants’ understanding of context. As such, data in this study were seen as context-dependent: locally produced in situ, context-shaped, context-renewing and context-rich.

This project employed a highly empirical, bottom-up approach to the specification of context. According to Schegloff (1987), much CA work “can be seen as an extended effort to elaborate just what a context is and what its explication or description might entail” (p. 221). Evidence for the characterisation of a context has to derive primarily from the orientations of the participants as documented in the details of the interactional data rather than from a description of the physical setting or the participants (Seedhouse, 2004). Here, the interest is in discovering the organisation of talk-in-interaction, the orderliness of phenomena that is independent of cohort particulars (Garfinkel & Sacks, 1970); that is, the orderliness does not depend on particular persons or particular settings. In this way, the researcher was concerned with interaction in its own right, rather than with the particular persons or places or institutions providing the data (Psathas, 1995). So, rather than starting with a preconceived ‘bucket theory’ of context, what transition is like across Year 6 or Year 7 settings, the researcher started with a view that was more dynamic and context renewing; where context was seen both as a ‘project and product’ of participants’ actions (Heritage, 2005).

The setting, from which the context emerged in this study, involved two co-educational schools in the same regional city in north east Victoria, Australia. Data were collected from audio and video recordings of naturally occurring classroom talk-in-interaction and field notes. Talk data were captured across two phases.

- Phase One: Year 6 primary classroom data collection conducted in December 2015
- Phase Two: Year 7 secondary classroom data collection in February 2016.

Purposive sampling was used to select the two sites where a substantial proportion of Year 6 students from the chosen primary school made the transition to Year 7 in the chosen secondary school. Purposive sampling strategies are designed to enhance understandings of selected individuals or
groups’ experience(s) or for developing theories and concepts (Devers & Frankel, 2000). The following selection criteria were used to ascertain the appropriateness of the research sites:

1. **Proximity:** Schools were in regional Victoria, Australia and were within close proximity to each other. They were within accessible travel distances for the researcher.

2. **Acceptance:** The education authority was accepting of the proposed research.

3. **Topic of interest:** Primary to secondary school transition was considered an interesting and relevant topic by school principals and classroom teachers.

4. **Feeder school patterns:** A high proportion of Year 6 students from the primary class transitioned to the secondary school.

5. **Classroom content:** Similar content recorded in the Year 6 class, as negotiated with the classroom teacher, could be recorded in the Year 7 classroom/s.

Principals were personally approached via phone during October 2015 to organise an opportunity to discuss the project. After initial informal interest in participation had been gained, the researcher formally contacted the education system. Once formal ethics permission was obtained from the relevant education authority and the school, then preliminary site visits were organised to each school to explain the project and answer any questions. These site visits occurred on 19 November, 2015 for the primary school and 20 November, 2015 for the secondary school.

During these visits, a curriculum focus across the two sites for data collection was negotiated and identified by participating teachers and principals as ‘integrated inquiry’. According to their school based planning documents, teachers at the selected primary school used ‘integrated inquiry’ lessons to create opportunities for students to apply the knowledge they had learnt during literacy, numeracy, science, the humanities and the arts to solve real problems, promote high order thinking and encourage students to pose questions. Learning experiences were structured to provide support and scaffolding to enable students to make choices and take responsibility for
their learning. In the Year 7 classes, the subject titled Communication and Culture addressed an ‘integrated inquiry’ approach to Humanities. The topic covered in Term 1 was ‘Belonging’ with students investigating their place in a variety of different contexts including school, home and community. The common set of knowledge and skills associated with an ‘integrated inquiry’ curriculum model allowed the researcher to investigate classroom lessons using the same data collection methods across the two sites.

Site One was a north east Victorian regional Foundation-Year 6 Catholic primary school. The school of 315 students and 16 classroom teachers was situated in the regional city’s CBD. There were four Year 5/6 cohorts in the school. According to The Index of Community Socio-educational Advantage (ICSEA)\(^1\), the school’s score was 1049 (ACARA, 2014). One Year 5/6 classroom space was used as the specific site from which to gather data during nine-hour sessions over the final three weeks of the 2015 school year. The classroom space consisted of a large group area where all the students could easily meet for whole class activities with their teacher/s, and two smaller, separate spaces or ‘withdrawal rooms’ for group work. The larger group space was equipped with an interactive whiteboard. Students moved fluidly between these spaces during lessons, working often on the floor with their individual laptops. Furniture was frequently moved to meet students’ working needs. Students did not have designated seating and could find their own space in the classroom depending on what and who they were working with at the time.

Site Two was the only Catholic secondary school in the same regional city as the selected Catholic primary school. Historically, the limited options for Catholic secondary schools in the city had resulted in a high proportion of Year 6 students transitioning from Site One to Site Two. The secondary school catered for Years 7-12, had 1130 students and 81 teaching staff, and was located five kilometres from the CBD and the selected primary school. There were seven separate classes of Year 7 and three of these, 7.1, 7.3 and 7.7,

\(^1\) ICSEA values are calculated on a scale which has a median of 1000 and a standard deviation of 100. ICSEA values typically range from approximately 500 (representing extremely educationally disadvantaged backgrounds) to about 1300 (representing schools with students with very educationally advantaged backgrounds)
were invited to participate in the research. According to The ICSEA, the school’s score was 1046 (ACARA, 2014). Three Year 7 classroom spaces were used as the specific sites from which to gather data during nine-70 minute sessions over the first three weeks of classroom lessons in the 2016 school year. The classroom space occupied by 7.1 consisted of a large area where all students worked at individual tables usually in organised into rows. Students from 7.1 often joined with 7.3 in their classroom space at the beginning of sessions so that teachers could explain the intention and outline of each lesson. The classroom space for 7.3 was more informal with students sitting on a four tiered ‘grandstand’ and on the floor either on wheeled ottomans or on the floor itself. Students in 7.1 and 7.3 did not have designated seating and could find their own space in the classroom spaces depending on what and who they were working with at the time. The space occupied by 7.7 was a more traditionally organised classroom with tables arranged to cater for groups of four to six students. In some lessons, students were assigned seating depending on the content of the lesson. All students worked on individual laptops and all classroom spaces were equipped with interactive whiteboards that were mounted to walls and used extensively by classroom teachers for teaching and learning.

4.4 Participants

The design of the research project meant that classrooms were studied as natural contexts without intervention from the researcher and without any modifications to standard educational practices in which the students and teachers already participated. Participation in the project was voluntary and involved consent from principals, teachers, students and parents from the two regional Victorian schools.

Principals were approached in the first instance via telephone to gauge their initial interest in progressing their participation in the research. Then follow-up visits occurred to the potential schools to discuss further the project and organise consent once ethics approval was received. A formal letter to the principal (Appendix B) and a principal’s information sheet (Appendix C) was provided at this visit. The researcher requested that the
school executive discuss the study with school staff, and the researcher attended staff meetings at both sites to answer any questions and provide information sheets about the research (Appendix E). From these meetings, participating teachers for Phase One (primary school site) and Phase Two (secondary school site) of the project were recruited, and opportunities for teachers to provide consent by completing the teacher consent form were offered (Appendix D). All participating teachers expressed to the researcher their interest in the topic primary to secondary school transition, and agreed to partake in the audio and video recordings of their lessons. Participation in the research was then conducted over the two phases of fieldwork data collection.

Phase One: Two teachers and 45 students from two Year 5/6 primary school classes were invited to participate in the project from the first educational site. While Year 5 students were involved in the study due to the composition of the classes in this school, only Year 6 students were invited to participate as focus children. Originally it was thought that only one class would participate in the research but, as two different classes were timetabled to use the designated classroom space over the three week data collection period, it was agreed by the researcher, the principal and teachers that both classes should have the opportunity to participate. Information sheets (Appendix H, K) and consent forms (Appendix G, J) were distributed, and consent was received from 19 out of 21 Year 6 students and their parents, all 24 Year 5 students and their parents, and the two classroom teachers. The two Year 6 students, who did not wish to participate in the research and whose parents did not wish their children to participate, were not included in classroom recordings. Alternative arrangements for these students to work in the non-participating Year 5/6 classrooms were made in consultation with the teachers and school principal. These students engaged in similar classroom activities to those who were participating in the project but were situated out of range of the recording devices.

Further interest was sought from only Year 6 participants to volunteer as focus children. The criteria for a focus child was that the Year 6 participants must have been enrolled to attend the selected secondary school and express
eagerness to volunteer in this aspect of the project. Focus children were required to wear hands-free, portable digital audio recorders to capture specific classroom conversations in both the primary school and secondary school sites. Seven of the 19 Year 6 participants provided their consent (Appendix I), and their parents’ consent (Appendix F), to participate in the research as focus children.

Phase Two: Three teachers and 64 students from three Year 7 secondary school classes participated in the project from the second educational site. As the seven focus children were distributed across six of the seven classes of Year 7, Phase Two of the data collection involved participation from only three of these classes (7.1, 7.3 and 7.7) where four of the focus children from Phase One were then situated. Year 7 classes were selected in conjunction with the Year 7 coordinator after considering factors such as timetabling, level of teacher enthusiasm for the project and the number of focus children in each class. One Year 7 teacher chose not to participate in the research and so his class was withdrawn from the project. This meant that the two target children from his class were omitted from the second phase of the study.

Year 7 students from other primary feeder schools, who were not participants in Phase One of the study, and who were classmates of the four focus children, were also invited to take part in Phase Two of the research, and information sheets were distributed to them (Appendix O) and their parents (Appendix M). Consent was received from the selected three Year 7 teachers and 54 Year 7 students (Appendix N) and their parents (Appendix L) across the three Year 7 classes. Prior consent had been obtained in Phase One of the study from 10 students who had transitioned from the selected primary school; although these students were reminded by the researcher prior to data collection that they could withdraw from the study without penalty at any time. The two non-participating students from Phase One were not in any of the three Phase Two classes. However, two Year 7 students from 7.1 elected not to participate in the research so they were not included in classroom recordings. Alternative arrangements for these students to work in the non-participating 7.2 class were made in consultation with the teacher.
and Year 7 coordinator. These students engaged in similar classroom activities to those who were participating in the project but worked out of range of the recording devices.

From the outset, the researcher provided all participants with information sheets and sought informed consent, and at every stage participants were assured that the project was voluntary and that they had the opportunity to 'withdraw' at any stage without prejudice. Teachers participating in the research were invited to volunteer after they expressed their interest in the topic of transition following the initial information session led by the researcher at their school. In the two weeks prior to data collection in both phases, the researcher visited the sites, each on two separate occasions, to familiarise herself with classroom environments and to seek opportunities to further discuss data collection with the teachers. On one such visit during Phase Two of the project, a Year 7 teacher indicated to the researcher his reluctance to participate which resulted in the withdrawal of his consent. His class was also withdrawn from the study. Subsequently, another class was approached by the researcher and Year 7 coordinator, and consent was obtained. The withdrawal of consent by the Year 7 teacher and his class did not impact data collection timelines or procedures.

Of the 99 students who participated in the research, not one withdrew consent. Students were informed of the project by the researcher and their teachers during a class visit prior to data collection. Written information was provided separately to both students and parents about the research purpose, time commitment and responsibilities of both the participants and the researcher. Student and parent consent statements outlined who would see and hear the recordings, and explained limited access to users, namely the researcher and her two supervisors. A description of how recordings were to be used to select talk-in-interaction segments for transcription and analysis was also provided. In addition, there was a statement about how long the recordings would be kept with a specific date for destruction of data provided.

All participants were provided with multiple opportunities to discuss informed consent, voice their concerns and interpretations, and revise their
authorisation even after the recordings had taken place. Careful attention was taken by the researcher to communicate effectively with students about the research, ensuring that they had a more central role in decision-making about participation. Opportunities for dialogue between participating students, particularly focus children, and the researcher occurred before each day of data gathering to allow students time to discuss any concerns or raise any issues.

4.5 Data gathering techniques and procedures

Data were collected directly from the participants over two phases of data collection across the two educational sites. During Phase One, the researcher attended the site for nine lessons over nine days in the last three weeks of two Year 5/6 classrooms. This timeframe was identified as appropriate for the study to capture the social interactions of students and teachers during everyday lessons in the final classroom learning experiences of Year 6. Data collection was disturbed on one occasion during the three week period due to the performance of the school’s annual Christmas Concert. The teacher contacted the researcher and a replacement day was mutually arranged. Phase Two of the data collection occurred over nine lessons (of comparable content and focus to those identified in Phase One) during the first three weeks of classroom lessons in Year 7 during February, 2016. This timeframe was identified as appropriate for the study to capture the social interactions of students and teachers during everyday lessons in the initial classroom learning experiences of Year 7. Data collection was impacted by five consecutive days of Year 7 camp in the second week of term 1. It was also affected by the school swimming carnival, three days of teacher illness in Year 7.7, a fire drill, contractual issues with a newly recruited Year 7.3 teacher, immunisations, school photos and Progressive Achievement Tests (PAT) which were used to provide objective, norm-referenced information to teachers about their students’ skills and understandings in a range of key areas (ACER, 2016).

During the visits to classrooms, data were generated to best represent the regular practices at each site. Data included audio and video recordings
of teachers and students as they participated in ordinary classroom talk in Integrated Inquiry lessons. Fifty hours of video recorded lessons from two GoPro devices, and 75 hours of audio recorded talk from a six audio recorders, were collected across the two sites. The six hands-free, portable digital audio recorders (Zoom H1 Digital Audio Recorders) were shared between the seven focus children in Year 6 and their teachers; although the practising teacher always had access to one. The six audio recorders were again used in Phase Two of the project by the four focus children and their teachers ‘during the action’ to zoom in on a narrower view of “the unfolding production of action as it was locally accomplished” (Mondada, 2006, p. 60).

The two GoPro devices captured video footage of the interaction stream as it was constructed moment-by-moment. The two wide-angled cameras were positioned on tripods high in the corners of the classrooms. They ran continuously to capture an outside-in view of the whole scene (Derry, 2007), documenting the lessons from beginning to end, respecting the continuity of the activity and its particular ‘length’ and ‘rhythm’ (Mondada, 2006). It was necessary for the researcher to undertake small periods of field work prior to recording in both sites in order to be able to decide where to best place the cameras so that the most relevant activities were captured. Sometimes, as lessons unfolded and the focus children moved around the classroom space, the GoPros were re-positioned by the researcher to capture more particular instances of talk-in-interaction. By combining the ‘wide’ video footage with the targeted audio recordings, the researcher was able to distinguish between ‘wide’ and ‘follow’ perspectives (Derry, 2007). These perspectives were able to capture the interaction in such a way as to represent the everyday practices of classrooms as students and their teachers went about their everyday business during lessons. Extracts from these data served as a stimulus for discussions with doctoral supervisors. The key criterion for selection of the data to be shared for analysis was an extract’s relevance to the research question.

The researcher also made observations and took field notes to provide further insight into what was naturally occurring in each setting. These observations played a particularly crucial role in providing contextualised
snapshots of talk-in-interaction, and the interplay between participants as classroom activities and events unfolded. The notes were a combination of diagrams and descriptions of classroom practices, as well as the arrangements characterising each class (e.g., layout of furniture, images and symbols on walls and data projection screens, time of day, positioning of people and who was working with whom). While the researcher was able to make field notes during every lesson during Phase One of the data collection, teachers’ sensitivities around a third party being in the room (as further discussed in the Ethical Considerations section) during Phase Two resulted in fewer opportunities for extensive field notes in the secondary context. In response, the researcher often set up the equipment, left the classroom and returned to pack up once the lesson was over. This ‘packing up’ often incorporated a de-brief with the teacher who conveyed to the researcher various aspects of the lesson. Comprehensive notes were made about these encounters as soon as was practicable afterwards.

Video and audio recordings and field notes were transferred into a computer archive immediately after collection. Index structures for recordings allowed the researcher to match particular time-stamped field note entries with locations of interest in the recordings (Derry, 2007). Interactional sequences of interest to the researcher were highlighted during this process and these were used to establish a corpus of data for detailed analysis using a conversation analysis approach during data analysis.

4.6 Data analysis

According to Hutchby and Wooffitt (2008), effective transcript notation must involve two types of concerns: the dynamics of turn-taking and the characteristics of speech delivery. Jefferson’s system of notation encompasses symbols to represent aspects of each (Davidson, 2010). Hepburn and Bolden (2012) discussed Jefferson’s transcription conventions as being organised into five categories. These included:

1. A standard layout for setting out transcripts
2. Temporal and sequential relationships concerning how different parts of talk are related in time
3. Aspects of speech delivery, including changes in pitch, loudness, tempo, degrees of emphasis, and voice quality
4. Meta-commentary and uncertain hearings
5. Ways of representing various other activities in interaction that do not necessarily involve speech, such as sighing, laughing and crying. (Hepburn & Bolden, p. 58)

While the full details of Jefferson’s system of notation are presented in Appendix A, an example from the corpus is provided below to illustrate its detailed nature.

2. (0.5)
3. Tch: Two. (0.2) And by the time I get to:: one (0.2)
4. I’d like people to become _silent_ and ready to listen.
5. (1.0)
7. (0.5)
8. Tch: Okay (. ) so what I’ve jus told my class before.

The transcript above includes the following Jeffersonian symbols: (.) a micropause of no significant length; (0.5) a timed pause long enough to indicate a time; to:: colons to indicate a stretched sound; _silent_ underlining part of the text to indicate the speaker is emphasising speech.

When using this system, Antaki (2011) suggests that the researcher first identify some practices that seem significant. Then he or she could ask the questions, how often does that practice happen and how good is the evidence that is affects what happens next? In this study, after detailed viewing of data extracts and listening to the related recordings, only what was necessary for the specific purpose of the research was used in transcription. The researcher adopted the procedure explained below by Hutchby and Wooffitt (2008) for analysis after recording, transcription and unmotivated
looking had taken place so that a single extract to focus upon could be identified.

1. Locate an action sequence or sequences.
2. Characterise the actions in the sequence or sequences where a first speaker initiates an action which is responded to in some way by a second speaker and ends when the speakers move to perform a different action or series of actions.
3. Examine the action sequence(s) in terms of the organisation of turn taking, focusing especially on any disturbances in the working of the system.
4. Examine the action sequence(s) in terms of sequence organisation. Here we are looking at adjacency pairs and preference organisation but more widely at any action undertaken in response to other actions.
5. Examine the action sequence(s) in terms of the organisation of repair.
6. Examine how the speakers package their actions in terms of the actual linguistic forms which they select from the alternatives available and consider the significance of these.
7. Uncover any roles, identities, or relationships which emerge in the details of the interaction.
8. Having completed a preliminary analysis which portrays the interactional organisation and the participants’ orientations, attempt to locate this particular sequence within a bigger picture. (Hutchby & Wooffitt, 2008, pp. 120-130)

As such, the data analysis process can be summarised as a constant, reflexive interaction between the specific instance, the underlying machinery and the social practices in which they are situated; a process that is bottom-up and data driven (Hutchby & Wooffitt, 2008; Seedhouse, 2004).

4.6.1 Corpus and single case analysis

This study employed the two approaches used by conversation analysts to inductively examine naturally occurring interaction: both an analysis of a collection or corpus of similar interactional phenomena, and an analysis of two single bounded sequences (Drew, 2005; ten Have, 2007). Analysis of a corpus of lesson openings across Year 6 and Year 7 classrooms allowed the researcher an opportunity to examine multiple fragments of sequences of talk-in-interaction from a collection of instances from a larger group of data (see Chapter 5). In doing so, the ‘aboutness’ of a set or pattern of interactional practices from the same register across settings was able to be studied (Mackiewicz & Thompson, 2016). The researcher followed three general steps recommended by Drew (2015) in the doing of corpus analysis.
They included: identifying a possible phenomenon by noticing patterns in the talk; selecting the phenomena that displayed the identified pattern to build a collection, or corpus, of examples; examining the selected phenomena to systemically discover a sequential pattern and make an account of it (Drew, 2015). Using this process, the social organisation of the opening phases of Year 6 and Year 7 lessons could be analysed and compared.

Single case analysis was also used by the researcher in the intense study of two particular ‘telling’ instances (ten Have, 2007) within the data: one from a Year 6 lesson (see Chapter 6) and the other from a Year 7 lesson (see Chapter 7). Schegloff (1987a) claimed that by explicating single episodes of interaction and analysing them as single fragments of talk, social action could be formulated “on a case by case, action by action, basis” (p. 102). The two single segments analysed in this research were selected as representations of the broader interactional phenomena of informings, or what Mehan (1979a) termed ‘the instructional phase’, occurring immediately after the lesson opening. In-depth analysis of these two focal cases provides a level of detail and understanding of phenomena that can be compared between the instances themselves (ten Have, 2007).

4.7 Ethical considerations

Social researchers have a professional and ethical responsibility to the subjects they work with. They are “guests in the private spaces of the world” so their “manners should be good and their code of ethics strict” (Stake, 1994, p. 224). Qualitative researchers must take into account the effects of the research on their participants and act in such an ethical way to preserve the participants’ dignity as human beings (Cohen et al., 2007). The ethical, humane, dignified treatment for human participants required in this study that subjects were fully informed about the purposes, risks, and potential reward of the research; that given this information, they participated voluntarily; that they were allowed to comfortably withdraw their participation during a study without penalty; and that their expectations and rights to privacy and confidentiality were honoured (Derry, 2007). In this study, the researcher accepted responsibility for addressing ethical issues
concerned with the approach of participants during fieldwork, the recordings of video and audio data, their transcription and their analysis.

The researcher received ethics approval for the doctoral project on 13 November 2015. This process involved the completion of the National Ethics Application Form and its submission to the Charles Sturt University Human Ethics Research Committee. The researcher also completed an Application to Conduct Research in Catholic Schools for the associated Diocese which was approved on 15 October 2015. Underpinning these applications was an ethnomethodological (EM) perspective of research, where researchers are seen, not as neutral conduits for the collection of data, but as part of the social worlds they inhabit (Speer, 2014). Under this view, ethical research practice comes not only from the development of increasingly stringent research guidelines and codes, but also from understanding the possible effects of the researcher’s actions on participants, and of participants’ actions on her (Speer, 2014). Rather than treating ethical issues as always methodological problems that need to be solved by the researcher before data collection and analysis can begin, an EM framework, re-specifies research questions, including ethical issues, as “members’ problems” (Mondada, 2014, p. 180), treating them as “a topic for scientific inquiry in their own right” (Mondada, 2014, p. 181). From this perspective, ethical matters in this project were also studied as practical issues as they were raised, oriented to, and then were managed locally by members, in situ, in the course of their participation in the social activities of their research participation (Mondada, 2014). In this study, ethics was discussed in terms of both ‘ethics in action’ (achieved by both the researcher and participants in the course of the unfolding recorded interactions) and in the more traditional sense where remedies for the difficulties the researcher encountered were anticipated and discussed prior to commencement of the study.

Examples of ‘ethics in action’ occurred as a consequence of the researcher being present in classrooms, working the audio and video equipment and making field notes. As such, there was an investigator-participant relationship to consider that unfolded as the data collection process progressed. This relationship raised ethical questions for both the
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researcher and the participants. In both phases, the researcher was accepted very quickly into the culture of the classrooms with students, and other teachers, regularly approaching her to discuss the study. However, because the researcher was present in the classroom, working the audio and video equipment, it became obvious in Phase Two that some participants, including some teachers, felt uncomfortable with her presence. This resulted in a discussion with these Year 7 teachers where the researcher offered to leave the room once the recording had started to prevent any feelings of uneasiness. Some Year 7 students also questioned the researcher about what would happen if they said something that was inappropriate or embarrassing and it was recorded. The researcher was able to reassure them, as per the information sheet that such instances of talk would not be appropriate for the study and would not be used.

It was also acknowledged that video and audio taping could disrupt normal social interaction and participants could potentially ‘stage’ their interactions for the benefit of the researcher. Examples of this were found early in both phases of the study where students intentionally talked into the microphones, usually leaving a greeting for the researcher. Because of this, the researcher approached the use of video and audio recording, not as hindrance to interaction which could inevitably and negatively distort the data, but as an integral part of the research process that was negotiated and used in situ as a participants’ interactional resource. Five decades of findings have been drawn from research being conducted using such methods. While the issue of participants’ orientation to recording devices has been flagged, it is also acknowledged that, over time, participants become less oriented to the devices and more oriented to the learning. Cicourel (1981) found that while recording devices could disrupt the initial episodes of investigation and perhaps the beginning of subsequent episodes, their interference could usually be detected. After being left in the classroom on a continuous basis, the devices soon seemed to be ignored by children in the classroom (Cicourel, 1981). This was found to be true in this study.

The purpose for using video recordings was to provide the availability of relevant details that could make the analysis of participants’ orientation to
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Lessons possible (Mondada, 2006). Video recordings were viewed as an important resource for data construction (Erickson, 2006). However, one disadvantage of using this type of instrument considered by the researcher was the potential for the act of recording to intimidate participants (Erickson, 2006), even if the participants were accustomed to the use of video cameras in their classrooms. With this in mind, the researcher chose the least obtrusive camera types and method of operation. Three GoPros were positioned around classrooms, not on tripods, but on bookshelves, window ledges and tables to reduce their conspicuousness.

Furthermore, in keeping with an EM approach, a reflexive approach to consent was adopted by the researcher whereby the research plan and its background were openly disclosed and discussed amongst the participants, rather than being only “embedded and disguised as self-evident information in the consent letter” (Fatigante & Orletti, 2014, p. 235). Fatigante and Orletti (2014) suggested that participants should be offered “the opportunity to discuss informed consent… voice their concerns and interpretations, and revise - if they feel the need - their authorisation even soon after the visit” (p. 236) in order to properly respect the participants’ autonomy and right to “full awareness of what they consented to” (Fatigante & Orletti, 2014, p. 236).

Careful attention was made by the researcher to communicate effectively with children about the research, ensuring that they had a more central role in decision-making about participation. The researcher engaged with the students who participated in the study, and was mindful not to carry out research on them. A ‘partnership approach’ was adopted where participants were treated as equal stakeholders in the process. Their expertise and knowledge was acknowledged, and their right to be heard was recognised and honoured. In this way, children were viewed, not as vulnerable passive victims, but as social actors who played an important part in the decision to participate in the research (Powell & Kalina, 2009). Students were invited at regular intervals to talk with the researcher about any concerns or questions arising during the course of the study. Most of these were around the use of recording instruments and how the images would be used in the thesis.
The consent process clearly identified the use of video and audio recording of participants. The use of recording in classrooms required the researcher to be cautious and impose rigorous and thoughtful procedures to guide how that data would be reviewed and stored. The consent statement and discussion outlined who would see or hear the recordings, and explained limited access to users namely the researcher and her two PhD supervisors. A description of how recordings would be used to select talk-in-interaction segments for transcription and analysis was also provided. In addition, there was a written statement about how long the recordings would be kept with a specific date for destruction of data provided. As the recordings would not travel any further from the research project in which they were collected, there were no concerns around other users and uses of the video which could create potential for inappropriate selection, use and interpretation (Derry, 2007). In this way, participants who were recorded could be assured of anonymity as their identities were known only to the researcher herself.

Also, the anonymity and privacy of participants were protected in this study in two other ways. Firstly, the names of all participants were systematically substituted with pseudonyms, which were selected in a way that preserved some of their original features (Mondada, 2014) including the first letters of student Christian names. In the development of transcripts, place names and personal references referred to in the talk, were replaced by pseudonyms too. Extra information was also anonymised including descriptions referring to the context of the excerpts and the site or the activity in which participants were engaged (Mondada, 2014). Secondly, the researcher viewed all recorded data in private (Roberts & Robinson, 2004). No other people were authorised to view the data apart from the researcher and her supervisors.

Confidentiality was protected by restricting access to recordings and to personal information such as the names of the participants or the schools in which data were collected. The researcher withheld identifying information about participants and the location of the research in any personal or written statements about the project (Cohen et al., 2007). The external hard drive storing recorded data was protected from access by unauthorised persons by
being secured in a locked cabinet and office when not in use; and data was saved under password-protected computers at Charles Sturt University, and in the researcher’s home (Derry, 2007). As students were engaged in everyday learning activities that were set up and managed by their classroom teacher, no highly confidential information was revealed in the taping of the lessons. Teachers were able to manage any irrelevant or highly confidential talk. In the case where personal information was recorded (feelings and opinions about other students and teachers), the information was not deemed of relevance to the study and was not transcribed for analysis.

4.8 Validity and reliability

Central to the study design of any project are the issues of reliability and validity; the objectivity and the credibility of the research. While it is unwise to think that threats to reliability and validity can be erased completely, by addressing their potential impact on this study, such threats can be weakened (Cohen et al., 2007). Reliability is often taken to be established in a quantitative fashion by techniques such as test-retest correlations or inter-rater reliability (Potter, 1996). In the same way, validity is frequently referred to as a tool of positivist epistemology and discussed in terms of the established congruence between different instruments, or perhaps a triangulation from different research methods (Potter, 1996). For this study, the trustworthiness of the research was embedded in the CA methods used by the researcher (Peräkylä, 2004a; Sacks et al., 1974) and positioned in the uniqueness and idiosyncratic nature of situations in real world, social contexts. Any considerations around validity and reliability were framed within the ontological and epistemological ideals of an interpretivist methodological approach. From this perspective then, issues of data collection and analysis can be discussed in relation to the reflexive relationship between reliability and validity where reliability is viewed as “a fit between what researchers record as data and what actually occurs in the natural setting” (Cohen et al., 2007, p. 119), and validity approached as the qualifying check or measure used to establish reliability. This section will outline efforts by the researcher to ensure the accuracy and inclusiveness of
recordings (reliability), as well as ways to test the truthfulness of the analytic claims that are made (validity).

In research practice, enhancing reliability is a very concrete activity (Peräkylä, 2011). According to Peräkylä (1997), there are three key factors in relation to reliability in a study using a CA approach. They include the selection of what is recorded, the technical quality of recordings and the adequacy of transcripts. Hammersley and Atkinson (1983) further suggested that videotaping, while a rich source, can produce an oversupply of data resulting in “too much data to analyse in a meaningful way” (Clement, 2000, p. 572). To manage this issue, the researcher must decide “what aspects of such a continuous stream of behaviour are most relevant to the purpose and context of the study” and “what is relevant depending on the level of the research question in which he or she is interested” (Clement, 2000, p. 572). This implies that choice is a fundamental part of the video research, and selective emphasis is inevitable by researchers as they decide what to include in a transcript (Lapadat & Lindsay, 1999).

Atkinson and Heritage (1984) further noted that transcripts are “necessarily selective” (p. 12) and, according to Erickson (1992), are “theoretically guided” (p. 219). Derry (2007) explained that this only becomes a negative if, in the researcher’s actions, the presence and operation of choice are concealed, disguised, or denied. Good orienting questions have helped the researcher maintain a perspective that prevented her from getting lost in the details that video records can include (Derry, 2007). Also, the researcher conducted the video research strategically by selecting appropriate video equipment, developing competent videography techniques, and planning and documenting systematic recording strategies consistent within the project’s clearly-defined research questions.

Derry (2007) claimed that the widespread availability of relatively inexpensive consumer digital equipment has made it possible for researchers, conducting even small research projects, to collect very high quality video and audio recordings. Minimal equipment that included GoPros fixed inconspicuously in classrooms, external microphones mounted on these cameras and pendant microphones allowed the researcher to be in control
while collecting these recordings. In an effort to develop more competent techniques, the researcher practised these prior to the study at home and on the first two days of filming. During these early days, the effect of the camera on participants’ behaviour was examined (Roschelle, 2000), however it was found that students soon forgot about their existence as the project developed over time.

Quality transcription can be viewed as the core analytic activity of this study and a central means of securing the validity and guaranteeing the publicly verifiable, transparent and cumulative nature of its claims and findings (Hutchby & Wooffitt, 2008; Peräkylä, 1997). Because transcripts are used in published research as the primary source of providing evidence to respond to the study’s key questions, the reliability and ‘correctness’ of the transcriber’s sense-making practices is fundamental to conversation analysis as an approach to research (Roberts & Robinson, 2004). The Jefferson system of transcription adopted by this study is used commonly by conversation analysts. While it is acknowledged that there is a necessary subjectivity in any transcription process, Jefferson’s set of conventions offers a detailed approach that can transfer the sound and sequential positioning of talk accurately to the page (Psathas & Anderson, 1990).

Reliability within transcription was established during the study in two ways. First, the process was tested and developed during one-on-one workshops with PhD supervisors to enhance the researcher-as-transcriber’s ability to reliably hear and record the same phenomenon as indexed by the Jefferson transcription system (Roberts & Robinson, 2004). The researcher worked with her supervisors to ensure that representations were indexed to produce consistent transcripts. As a result, focused re-transcription was required at certain stages by the researcher. Second, video stills are provided in the thesis as ‘visual evidence’ (Nevile, 2015) of the practices and actions represented in the transcript. Such stills can demonstrate the dependability of the transcription process by corroborating and authorising it in terms of what can be seen visually.

Another aspect of reliability pertinent to this study involved the question of whether the results can be made repeatable or replicable
The way this study presented data was of crucial significance. Many researchers using different methodologies do not present primary data in their final thesis, and hence the reliability of major sections of the researcher’s analyses is not available for scrutiny (Seedhouse, 2005). By contrast, this study has included the transcripts of the data. This makes the process of analysis transparent for the readers by enabling the analysis of the data for themselves, to assess the analytical procedures which the researcher has followed and the validity of her analysis, findings and claims (Seedhouse, 2005). In this way, all of the analyses of data in this study were rendered repeatable and replicable to the reader in so far as this is possible.

The validity of any research is also concerned with the interpretation of observation and whether or not the researcher is calling what is being observed and measured by the right name (Peräkylä, 2011). Bryman (2012) suggested that there are two kinds of validity that relate to this type of research: internal and external. Internal validity is concerned with the soundness, integrity and credibility of findings (Seedhouse, 2005). CA addresses internal validity by exploring an emic perspective that reflects the participants’ perspective rather than the analyst’s. Participants document their social actions to each other in the details of the interaction and then the conversation analyst accesses the emic perspective in the details of that interaction (Seedhouse, 2005). Any conventional, theoretical, political or ideological preconceptions that the analyst might have, which are used as taken-for-granted realities in other branches of the social sciences, are ‘bracketed’ to allow the study of the orientations of participants as they become visible in their moment-by-moment interactions (ten Have, 2007). In this way, the whole notion of internal validity is embedded in the emic perspective of CA, where the analyst is not licensed to make any claims beyond what is demonstrated by the interactional detail itself.

External validity is concerned with generalisability or the extent to which the findings can be generalised beyond the specific research context to the wider population (Cohen et al., 2007). Within the literature, critics of quantitative methods claim that generalisability is irrelevant in this approach to research because results are seen to be ‘produced’, rather than ‘identified’,
by the research (Goodman, 2008). On the contrary, others have agreed with Schofield (1993) when he claimed that “generalisability in the sense of producing laws that apply universally is not a useful standard or goal for qualitative research” (p. 207). According to Seedhouse (2005), all CA studies in effect work on the particular and the general simultaneously. He suggested that by analysing individual instances, the machinery which produced these individual instances can be revealed. Pomerantz (1990) considered the value of EM and CA studies in their ability to identify features of interactants’ interpretive work that otherwise would remain “undefined, hazy, and undifferentiated” (p. 234). By identifying, differentiating and clarifying these features and offering them as proposals to the community of social scientists, she stated that “their generality can be determined by methods that are appropriate for determining distribution” (Pomerantz, 1990, p. 234).

Goodman (2008) conferred by adding that “findings can be seen to be generalisable as long as thorough analysis shows this to be the case” (p. 274). In this study, generalisability to larger populations, in the traditional positivist sense, was not the goal. Instead, the research sought to provide generalisations at an abstract conceptual or theoretical level; what Firestone (1993) referred to as ‘analytic generalisation’. This can be achieved by providing thick description, credible evidence, thorough data analysis, and appropriate representation of contexts and data so that readers can learn from others’ experiences and draw their own conclusions about transferability and relevance of the research (Duff, 2006). In this way, it becomes the responsibility of the reader to determine whether there is a congruence, fit, or connection between this study’s context, in all its complexity, and their own context, rather than have the researcher make these assumptions for them (Duff, 2006). As Denzin (2009) explained, “[w]e perform our interpretations and invite audiences to experience these performances, to live their way into the scenes, moments and lives we are writing, and talking about. Our empirical materials can’t be fudged, misrepresented, altered or distorted, because they are life experiences” (p. 151). The researcher has sought to achieve this by writing her findings in a credible and authentic manner; “a style of writing that draws the reader so
closely into the subjects’ worlds that these can be palpably felt” (Adler & Adler, 1994, p. 381). In doing so, the credibility of the research can be reflected in the sharing of convincing evidence and arguments to support the interpretations of the situated data.

4.9 Conclusion

This chapter has identified the design framing the study. It first located the study in an EMCA view of context to support explanation of the educational sites and the participants involved in the research. A review of CA data gathering techniques and procedures followed with particular consideration to video recording approaches and the development of transcripts. The processes of corpus and single case analysis were described as approaches to produce the analysis. Finally, ethical considerations were discussed along with the validity and credibility of this research.

The next three chapters (chapters 5, 6 and 7) present an analysis of selected audio and video extracts and their transcripts of real-life classroom talk-in-interaction during Year 6 and Year 7 lessons. A CA approach to analysing the data provides insight into the ways in which turns-at-talk are ordered and combined in the social organisation of classrooms. By studying how students and teachers orient themselves to each other during sequences of talk in classroom lessons, interactive options available to students at the end of primary school and the beginning of secondary school can be revealed. And by comparing the organisation of interaction from one context to another, a better understanding of the opportunities and challenges that face students as they do transition can be provided. The next chapter, the first of the analytic chapters, establishes through corpus analysis how students and their teachers work together in familiar ways to accomplish lesson openings.
CHAPTER 5

ACCOMPLISHING READINESS: THE ORGANISATIONAL STRUCTURE OF LESSON OPENINGS

5.1 Introduction

This chapter examines the interactional infrastructure of lesson openings in Year 6 and Year 7 classrooms. Such openings are defined as the first sequence in recurrent episodes of classroom interaction that precede the ‘instructional phase’ (Mehan, 1979a) or ‘informings’ part of the lesson (Gardner & Mushin, 2013). By detailing the sequential organisation of the talk-in-interaction in this part of the lesson, the social actions of teachers and students can be investigated. The chapter considers how readiness for the lesson to begin is co-constructed and how social order is assembled, maintained and restored. It explores the features of the talk to reveal what students are actually learning to do at the end of Year 6 and the beginning of Year 7, along with the interactive options made available to them across this time of transition.

This chapter is organised into two parts. An account of what is getting done in Year 6 classrooms is presented through the analysis of five extracts from five lesson openings. This is followed by a similar analysis of another 10 extracts from four lessons in Year 7 classrooms. First, across both Year 6 and Year 7 extracts, evidence of a broad interactional pattern that follows a generic structure of regularities is revealed. Second, the analytical relationship between a predictable “class of practices” (Schegloff, 1996, p. 171), and its associated actions to assemble social order, is explored, along with the notion that the recycling of this sequence type occurs in Year 7 lesson openings with the addition of extra interactional business. Third, the postural orientation of participants to the talk (McHoul, 1978) along with a combined competence of teachers and students to co-produce silence are recognised as resources for achieving readiness for the lesson to begin. Finally, the conclusion maintains that students are interactionally competent
to accomplish readiness during lesson openings by orienting to a routine class of practices, familiar across Year 6 and Year 7 settings that establish social order and provide the go ahead for the lesson to begin.

5.2 Key concepts

5.2.1 Activities, practices and actions

An understanding of different classroom activities, practices and actions is framed in the analysis by a conversation analytic (CA) perspective of social interaction. CA is concerned with “the study of conversation as an activity in its own right” (Schegloff & Sacks, 1973, p. 290). So when studying conversation as activity, the emphasis of analysis is on practical social accomplishment that is locally situated within a particular context or environment (Goodwin & Heritage, 1990). In this way, activities encapsulate multiple interactional states including engagement and disengagement, and can be accomplished individually or with others (Szymanski, 1999). Heritage and Sorjonen (1994, p. 4) describe them as “a unit or course of action” that characterise the work that is achieved across a sequence or series of sequences. Therefore, a classroom activity might include such things as reading aloud a picture book, explaining to the class what to do next or marking the roll.

As previously discussed in Chapter 3, the practices of talk-in-interaction constitute the activity. In CA, they are locally occasioned and organised in sequences that act as a framework or scaffold for the implementation of courses of action through talk (Schegloff, 2007). Thus, they are the sorts of things that produce and mobilise particular actions. Schegloff (1997, p. 505) states that “[p]ractices, deployed always in some position, can accomplish different actions; and actions can be accomplished through a variety of situated practices”. General sequential patterns, or general practices of turn-taking, hang together according to their shape and organisation in batches or clumps (Schegloff, 2007). The sequence type analysed in this chapter relates to the practices of issuing a summons, giving directives, becoming silent and transitioning to next activities. Such practices are characterised as routine in the opening turns of lessons.
CA is interested in the practices of talking. What is getting done by those practices is known as actions. In this way, practices yield action, and action is an enactment of the talk that gets done through turns-at-talk (Schegloff, 2007). Every action is simultaneously context-shaped (emerging from the organisational structure) and context-renewing (shaping subsequent actions) (Heritage, 1984). Together, they serve to co-produce social order as participants orient to one another in relation to their social type or membership category (Sacks, 1989). Teachers use their membership to the category ‘teacher’ to manage their class and construct social order (Sacks, 1989) by cohorting students into one unit (IcBay, 2011); addressing them as one party in a two-party conversation (Sacks et al., 1974). Students use their membership to the category ‘student’ to frame ‘where they’re from’ and ‘what they do’ (Sacks, 1989). A comparison of the actions of, not only the two-set class of ‘teacher-student’, but also ‘Year 6 student-Year 7 student’ and ‘Year 6 teacher-Year 7 teacher’, can reveal the interactional resources students use to negotiate their participation in lessons during the transition process. With the interpretation of these terms now explained, the data in which such activities, practices and actions unfold moment-by-moment can be described.

5.2.2 Data

Data were drawn from a corpus of 75 hours of audio recordings and 50 hours of video footage captured by the researcher in inquiry based lessons during the final three weeks of Year 6 and the initial three weeks of Year 7. The first set of extracts was taken from recordings and transcripts of lesson openings from everyday interactions in Year 6 classrooms. The second set of extracts was from recordings and transcripts of Year 7 lessons. Both investigated the go-before talk; the talk that preceded the reason-for-the-lesson (Sacks, 1992) by announcing its official start and prefacing the teacher’s description and explanation of the as-yet-unspecified, learning activity (Schegloff, 2007) known as the activity of ‘informings’ (Gardner & Mushin, 2013). Beginnings are a proper time in a lesson for relevant social identities to be made available by and to the assembled parties (Payne &
Hustler, 1980). Participants inform each other of what they are going to do and how they are going to do it (Mehan, 1979a). The interactional work in the lesson opening gives rise to the orderly ways in which “what ends up being talked about gets to be talked about” (Schegloff, 1998, p. 113). The findings of this chapter, however, do not rule out the influence of other classroom practices that may establish readiness for the next activity to begin.

5.2.3 The extracts

The 15 extracts provide instances of the interactional achievement of lesson openings which mark entry into each new joint activity (Bangerter & Clark, 2003) and herald the go-ahead for students and teachers to continue with the work awaiting launching. Such lesson openings were identified by the researcher using a process that is bottom-up and data driven (Seedhouse, 2004; Hutchby & Wooffitt, 1998). Contexts emerged as a phenomenon from unmotivated looking rather than from a preconception that this was a suitable topic to focus on. A detailed analysis of the corpus revealed 15 extracts from which the emic particulars of the pattern were uncovered, and then a more generalised account (Table 5.1) was produced to establish how students and teachers demonstrate their coordination with each other (Schegloff, 1968).

Such analysis reveals the collaborative social work or “class of practices” (Schegloff, 1996b, p. 171) teachers and students co-produce to accomplish the determinate and routine actions involved in getting to the anchor position (Schegloff, 1986). The broad organisational structure of lesson openings, or as Psathas (1999) terms a ‘sequence type’, as discussed in each extract, is shown in Table 5.1. The sequence type in lesson openings displays all the routine features which are found in the opening turns of lessons (Schegloff, 1986). They are invoked to mobilise actions which are taken to be preparatory and pre-requisite to the incipient activity (Schegloff, 2007). A class of opening practices, comprising the summons, series of directives, co-produced silence and the transitional device, implement the actions associated with assembling social order by cohorting students into a single unit (IcBay, 2011) to establish the two-party exchange system (Sacks et
al., 1974). These actions include mobilising attention, reinforcing attentiveness, formulating readiness, and responding to prior actions and prefiguring next-positioned matters.

Table 5.1 Organisational Structure of Chapter 5 Extracts: Class of practices and their recognisable actions

| 1.1 Summons: mobilising attention |
| 1.2 Series of directives: reinforcing attentiveness |
| 1.3 Co-produced silence: formulating readiness |
| 1.4 Transitional device: responding to prior actions and prefiguring next-positioned matters |

5.3 Accomplishing readiness in Year 6 lesson openings

5.3.1 Year 6: The first extract

This extract follows the broad organisational structure to lesson openings as displayed in Table 5.1. The teacher does not formally announce the start of the lesson. It is through the organisation of her talk, and the series of turns shaping its structure that actions associated with the lesson’s beginning are made available to the students.

Extract 5.1

1. Tch: ((Tch stands and clasps hands)) OKAY::
2. (0.8)
3. Tch: >Jus watching please boys (.) >you probably don't need to be on the chairs and stu::ff. These people can't see<.
4. (1.0)
6. (1.0)
7. Tch: Great so Daisy can still see.
8. (1.0)
9. Tch: Okay. .hhh So::: we've got a little bit of a maths task that we'd like you to complete sort-of between now and the end of term.
The teacher’s body position and gaze shifts to the group as she generates the first turn (Figure 5.1); the summons with a louder-than-usual voice (line 1). Her raised voice ensures it is heard over the top of already ongoing interactions, asserting her authority, and right as the teacher, to interrupt and shut down subsidiary talk. As the summoner and ‘cohorting party’, Miss M displays her power to organise the rules (IcBay, 2010) and retain the right to speak (Psathas, 1999). From “OKAY::” (line 1), the rules associated with routine conversation are suspended as students orient to the sequence type associated with lesson openings (Psathas, 1999) and the practices associated with classroom turn taking (McHoul, 1978). The two parties, teacher and students, orient to each other in terms of the summoner/answerer membership categorisation generated by this turn (Psathas, 1999). Thus, the summons indicates a shift from multi-party talk to the two-party speech exchange system central to constructing classroom order (Macbeth, 1990).

Schegloff (2007) suggests that either a go-ahead response or a blocking response follows a summons. In the pause of line 2, participants display to one another their alignment towards the activity of the moment through, not only their silence, but also their embodied actions (Goodwin, 2006). A go-ahead response would see students disengage from simultaneous activities and re-direct their gaze and re-orient their posture in the direction of the teacher (Goodwin, 2006). Miss M’s expanded sequence of directives (lines 3-9) indicates that the summons in itself has not attracted the full attention of all students, and she continues her turn with a quick succession of directives designed to “prepare the field” (Schegloff, 2007, p. 51). She identifies, describes and assembles particular actions related to assembling
social order. “Boys” need to be “watching” and off “chairs and stuff” because “people can’t see” (lines 3-5). The management of students from individuals to collectivities in “boys” and “people” reflects the teacher’s use of directives to cohort students (Payne & Huslter, 1980). By addressing students as a whole and getting them to act as a unit, she sets up the interaction as ‘one against the rest’. Miss M, as the teacher, makes the claim for a single identity as one member acting over and against the rest (Payne & Huslter, 1980).

In line 7, Miss M directs Eddie to “move back a little bit” so “Daisy can still see” (line 8). This prior assembling of students into some specifiable composition constitutes a recognition, by students and the teacher, of the occasion and the role they are expected to perform when participating in it (Turner, 1972). It also reinforces the principal rule that when the teacher gazes at students, they should be gazing back at her as one (Goodwin, 1984). When the teacher locates any violations to this rule, pauses are produced in an effort to impair conversational progress and alert students to a change in their actions (lines 5, 7). These pauses are not treated by participants as transition spaces where the turn is passed naturally from one speaker to the next (Sacks et al., 1974). Instead they provide a vehicle for students and the teacher to orient to the different actions that display social order; ready for the lesson to begin. Accomplishment of silence here serves as a signal to proceed, to implement the next action it is designed to support (Schegloff, 2007). In this way, the interaction is shaped in a manner that makes visible entry into the setting, preparing students and the teacher for the activity of informings to come.

The silence in line 9, by recognising the aligned recipiency of students and their teacher to establish attentiveness (Schegloff, 2007), formulates the shift in activity (Beach & Metzger, 1997) and proposes “let’s start a new topic” (Jefferson, 1984, p. 193). This joint project is shared by both parties. It gets them to a place in the sequence that allows the next phase of the talk to begin. It is made apparent by Miss M’s use of “Okay” (line 8) with an audible inhalation followed by a prolonged “So::”. This recycled use of “okay” and its pairing with “so” responds to the state of readiness shown by the class and moves the conversation forward by establishing a bridge or linking device.
between the lesson opening and next-positioned matters. In doing so, the work to assemble the social order is acknowledged as completed, and the closure of the lesson opening is marked. The interactional business of the next part of the lesson is ready to be launched.

5.3.2 Year 6: The second extract

This extract is taken from a different Year 6 lesson. Central to the analysis is the teacher’s use of her body to constitute a visual display of the type of talk that is being produced (Goodwin, 1984). How the teacher and students demonstrate their orientation towards the practices of Table 5.1 is also examined.

Extract 5.2

1. Tch: ((Tch stands and looks at students who are seated))
2. Al::right.
3. Dai: I hit it.
4. Tch: >We right? All good< Dais?
6. Tch: Yep. (0.2) Fantastic.
7. (0.8)
8. Tch: Okay (.) so someone asked <why are we do::ing::> in
9. (0.2) more space pictures? So obviously it's fitting
10. with our inquiry (.).so for inquiry we've been
11. looking at:: space.

The teacher adopts a distinctive body position. She clasps her hands together, stands upright and gazes towards the students (Figure 5.2). With this posture, she displays full orientation towards the addressed recipients.
and a lack of involvement in any activity other than the conversation (Goodwin, 1984). Her body position and gaze is used to summon the gaze of the hearers (Heath, 1984) and marks the beginning of a focused, extended turn-at-talk by the teacher (Goodwin, 1984). Students display their recipiency through their own body movements and gaze by turning their bodies and looking up towards the teacher from a seated position. Without saying a word, the teacher’s physical actions constitute the occasion and students resume the familiar identity of one unit (Payne & Hustler, 1980).

The teacher begins her utterance with emphasis and a prolonged sound to mobilise attention. As the authorised first starter (Sacks et al., 1974; McHoul, 1978), her summons “Al::right” (line 2) proffers an assessment of readiness for the lesson to begin. The body positions, gaze direction and physical arrangements between students and teacher support this sense of readiness and the joint accomplishment of attentiveness. In line 3, it becomes evident that the teacher’s summons has not captured Daisy’s full attention. Daisy initiates some off-topic talk with the girl beside her stating “I hit it” in response to the accidental hitting of the microphone around her neck. Miss M continues in a rush of talk with the question “We right?” (line 4). In the use of “we”, Miss M addresses the class as a whole, making Daisy’s individual fate collectively interdependent. Anyone’s right to talk off-topic from now on is being made dependent on the behaviour of the others. Her rising intonation on “right?” indicates a declarative question (Heritage, 2002). She frames the question in a positive way favouring a “best case” or “no problem” type of response (Heritage, 2005). In doing so, she assumes good news that everyone is “right” and seeks affirmative confirmation of this. Miss M could have said “we not right” with rising intonation. In this case, students would have had to convey the good news that they were “right” by rejecting the state of affairs described in the declarative question. By using this turn design, Miss M is setting up the sequence of talk to evoke the least amount of resistance. She is also demonstrating a shared knowledge between herself and the students around preferred classroom practices associated with “right” and being ready.
Miss M subsequently poses a second question, which is also framed positively and spoken quickly to Daisy; “All good< Dais?” (line 4). Miss M’s follow up question to Daisy implies that being “good”, and therefore “right”, means attending. These utterances are shaped by the principle of optimisation (Heritage, 2005; Stivers & Heritage, 2001) whereby Miss M’s questions embody assumptions and preferences that favour best case or no problem responses. In this way, Miss M can reinforce Daisy’s off topic talk as not good and needing to stop; enforcing the only one-at-a-time rule (Sacks et al., 1974) without causing disagreement or argument. Instead she provides a platform for the preferred, go-ahead response in line 5; Daisy’s acknowledgement token “Yep”. With this plus response (Pomerantz, 1984), Daisy indicates agreement; that she has nothing more to say, instinctively showing an alignment with the actions associated with “all good”. Miss M then repeats Daisy’s “yep” showing agreement, and adds a positive assessment in “Fantastic” to further reinforce the recognisable, desirable actions. Without being explicit, Miss M and students work together to assemble social order and the unspoken rule that while the teacher is talking, students are not (Macbeth, 1992).

The work of being ready is mutually accomplished by students and teacher in the shared silence of line 7. In this embodied action of stillness and silence a state of readiness is displayed. The students’ display of recipiency through appropriate gaze, posture and silence occasions the teacher’s next turn-at-talk (Heath, 1984). In her next action, Miss M flags the beginning of the forthcoming sequence with “Okay (. ) so” (line 8). In the following extracts, teachers routinely use “okay so” as a technique to simultaneously acknowledge receipt of the prior turn while also setting up next-positioned matters; as a projection device for what is to come next (Beach, 1995). Jefferson (1988) describes this use of “okay” as a shift-implicative moment in conversation with the speaker acting both responsively and transitionally, en route to continuation. In this way, Miss M is both acknowledging a state of readiness for moving to next-positioned matters and projecting forthcoming action-sequences in the accomplishment of the informings part of the lesson (Beach, 1993).
5.3.3 Year 6: The third extract

While the extract below keeps with the broad interactional pattern of practices identified in Table 5.1, the sequence includes a side comment (Jefferson, 1972), a spontaneous student self-selection, which emerges from the assemblage of social order. Research shows how talk in classrooms is both context-shaping, as guided by the organisational structure of lesson openings, and context-renewing, as it contributes to and thus impacts on next-positioned actions (Heritage, 1984). In this way, speakers’ choices are locally occasioned and managed (Sacks et al., 1974). Teachers and students constantly reshape and renew their context as they interact in methodically and systematically organised, yet constantly changing and updated, ways (Jefferson & Schenkein, 1977).

Extract 5.3

1. Tch: ((Tch looks up from laptop)) OKAY. ((Tch stands and turns to face class)) So. (0.2) To fin ish off (.)
2. Jake (.you might jus like to move forward so that you’re not so far back.<= ((Tch beckons with hand))
3. Dai: =We’re gonna do something fu::n!
4. Tch: Okay.
5. (0.5) ((Jak moves his chair forward))
6. Dav: ‘For once’.
7. (3.0) ((Tch continues to look at Jak))
8. Tch: Ouch David. ((Tch looks at Dav))
9. Dav: Hhh hhh=
11. (1.0)
12. Tch: Alright. So to finish off:: (. ou::r inquiry topic with (0.2) about space and things (. we thought we’d let you:: (. <create your own plan::et.>

Figure 5.3. Setting and participants of Extract 5.3.
Miss M begins her turn with a recognisable, straightforward call for attention “OKAY”. Upon turning to face the class, she self-interrupts with a directive for Jake to “move forward” so “you’re not so far back” (lines 2, 3). She observes that Jake is not displaying recipiency and the type of behaviour that reflects his register of the summons so she articulates, using faster than normal speech, conditions for attending. For the teacher to move on with the lesson opening, a display of recipiency must be achieved by all participants as a coordinated body. As Jake moves his body into an appropriate physical configuration, she waves her hand in a forward motion. The lexical choice of the words “might jus” (line 3), coupled with the beckoning hand movement, suggests that her directive is more like an invitation; indicative of a less formal environment (Figure 5.3). Her directive also supports the assumption that the closer you are to the teacher, the easier it is to attend.

Daisy then takes advantage of Jake’s lack of readiness and the natural pause in Miss M’s turn to self-select and volunteer a parenthetical side comment (line 5) (Jefferson, 1972) that is loud enough for other members of the class to hear. This non-conforming, rule-breaking turn (McHoul, 1978) is made even though Miss M has not yet clarified exactly what the finishing off will entail. By offering a first assessment of the imminent activity (Heritage & Raymond, 2005), Daisy is asserting her opinion and making a claim to primary rights in its evaluation. Her use of “we’re” (line 5) indicates that she identifies with all the students collectively as one party to the talk (Payne & Hustler, 1980). This insertion by Daisy breaches the generic structure of the lesson opening by causing a re-distribution of the turns; carrying the opening forward in a different way than the routine sequence type by “offering a terrain within which agreement will be sought” (Heritage & Raymond, 2005, p. 16). While Miss M does not respond, instead managing the talk by using “Okay” to assert the continuation of her turn (Beach, 1997), David takes the opportunity to produce a responsive assessment (line 8). He self-selects and offers a second position assessment by providing an opposing stance towards the item being assessed. While he states “‘For once’” softly and in a playful way, his unfavourable comment is potentially hearable by Miss M due to David’s close proximity to her. Miss M does not respond at first to David’s
assesssment but waits until Jake has moved his chair forward. Miss M is managing Jake’s actions and ensuring that her directive is followed. She then turns to David and addresses what has just preceded by using the response cry “Ouch David” in a casual, tongue-in-cheek sort of way (line 9). In doing so, she diverts from the organisational structure of Table 5.1. While the routine rules of lesson openings are oriented to, in this instance, they are not slavishly followed. The conditions of the sequence are temporarily interrupted as Miss M adapts to the local, less formal exigencies of the talk.

David then responds to Miss M with a laugh, indicating that he has been teasing. Despite Daisy’s bid to re-take the floor with a request for information (line 11), Miss M, responds not to Daisy, but in the usual way to the interactional work achieved in the shared silence in line 13. The familiar pattern around the organisation of turns in this part of the lesson guides the degree of pre-allocation around who should speak next (McHoul, 1978). Miss M hears and interprets the silence as being ready and the next phase of the talk is realised in “Alright So” (line 14). In this precise moment of transition, Miss M simultaneously acknowledges that the social order of the classroom has been established with students operating as a collectivity, she closes down the preceding topic and talk, including Daisy’s, and also projects new priorities for subsequent talk (Beach, 1995). Schegloff (2007) refers to this silence as “an event in its own right”; the “glue that binds actions together into coherent sequences” (p. 21) setting up the moments just following it. Miss M then completes some cohorting work by continuing what they did from ‘last time’ with “So to finish off:: (.) ou::r inquiry topic with (0.2) about space and things” (lines 14, 15). She is resuming work already started and, in doing so, makes the relevant category of all those who are finishing off the same topic (Payne & Hustler, 1980). In this way, the organisation of the talk provides for an organisation of students as a single cohort.

5.3.4 Year 6: The fourth extract

The next extract further supports the notion that while teachers and students orient to the routine features of the sequence type in opening lessons, they also adapt to local, spontaneous circumstances. In this way, the
structures of interaction which are observable across the turns-at-talk can be seen to be also highly sensitive to the specific conditions displayed in the talk.

Extract 5.4

1. Tch: **(Tch stands)** C’MON girls. **(Tch looks at two girls entering the room)**
2. girls entering the room)
3. (9.0) **(Girls sit on the floor)**
4. Tch: Skye (. ) jus (. ) come over a lil’l bit further please.
5. (1.5)
6. Tch: ’Thanks’.
7. (6.0)
8. Tch: Okay.
9. (1.0)
10. Tch: Just come forward a lil bit forward for me Abe
11. (. ) jus so I don’t have ta
12. (1.5)
13. Tch: worry about where you all are. Okay. With your
14. Writing (0.2) we did the plans yesterday.
15.

Figure 5.4. Setting and participants of Extract 5.4.

The teacher adopts the distinctive physical position of main speaker (Goodwin, 1984) (Figure 5.4) and opens her lesson with a typical call for attention in a louder than usual voice; “C’MON girls” (line 1). By nominating “girls” in her summons, she is mobilising the attention of a specific cohort that has not yet displayed the preferred response to her position and stance, and is trying to hurry them along. The work of aligned recipiency (Schegloff, 2007) is also being done to all students in the class who orient to actions associated with attentiveness in the extended pause in line 3. Students instinctively assemble into an identifiable physical configuration in front of
the teacher, positioning their bodies and gaze towards her as a sign of establishing social order. Miss M still does not go-ahead with the reason-for-lesson but instead provides expanded directives, framed in similar patterns, targeting next actions (Schegloff, 1997) to set up the conditions for beginning the lesson. Her talk becomes more specific nominating “Skye” in line 4, and “Abe” in line 12. In addressing Skye and Abe, Miss M is not merely giving them individual directives, but she is also presenting to the other students directions on where they can best sit to attend. Each usage is a directive, not only with regard to its participants, but also in some way to the other students as a whole.

By repeating and stressing “come” (lines 1, 4, 11), the primacy of the teacher’s right to direct student action is asserted. This gives the impression that physical configuration is very important to the opening of a lesson. In fact, if you sit in the correct position, the teacher won’t “have ta worry where you all are” (lines 12-14). Miss M’s use of “jus” (lines 4, 12) signals a less officious way of seeking compliance; a toned down instruction that sounds more like a casual request. Miss M’s use of a soft “˚Thanks˚” to Skye (line 7) is tied to such a request and indicates approval of the completed action.

Silences embody the sequence (lines 3, 6, 8, 10, 13) as attentiveness and the embodiment of being ready are formed up in the preferred actions of the students and the teacher. But it is in the strategically positioned silence of line 13 where transition-readiness is achieved (Jefferson, 1986); the co-produced, locally adaptable resource whereby the parties collaborate in bringing to closure of the lesson opening and initiating the next activity with “Okay” (line 14). While this silence produces the comparable segue that moves the talk on, it is situated mid-sentence. Miss M is obliged to complete her thought before moving to next-positioned matters.

5.3.5 Year 6: The fifth extract

In this final Year 6 extract, four classes (72 students in all) have combined. Despite the increased number of students, analysis shows that the orderly agenda of the lesson opening remains. Students and the teacher
continue to act in such a way that is ‘presumptively representative’ of the social category in which they belong (Sacks, 1992).

Extract 5.5

1. Tch: ((Tch turns and looks at class)) Is that everyone?
2. (1.0)
3. Tch: ALRIGHT. THANK YOU:
4. (4.0)
5. Tch: There’s a lot of you in here (. ) okay. So if one person talks it makes for a really noisy room. So (. )
6. I promise it’ll take five minutes of you listening.
7. (0.5)
9. We’ve got a couple of different options for you
11. (3.0)
12. Tch: Okay. Some people in my class started (. ) doing >like
13. the boxes< last week but that’s fine you can still listen as well.

Figure 5.5. Setting and participants of Extract 5.5.

As in previous extracts, the teacher opens the lesson with first starter rights (Sacks et al., 1974; McHoul, 1978). She initiates the first turn with a shift of gaze and postural orientation toward the class (Figure 5.5) and immediately works to construct order by turning individual students into a single unit with “Is that everyone?” (line 1). She then calls for attention in a raised voice “ALRIGHT. THANK YOU::” (line 3). By saying “thank you”, Miss M, as the primary speaker, is both acknowledging and anticipating, the attentive actions she is seeking prior to their execution. Students orient to the implied actions in the pause in line 4. What is meant by attentiveness is already agreed, and does need to be made explicit. In lines 5 and 6, Miss M re-frames the directive by making an announcement “if one person talks it makes for a
really noisy room”. In this way, and again in line 13 where she states “Some people in my class”, she provides for the organisation of the talk as two-party. She addresses students as a collective; students as one party to the talk must pay attention to the teacher as the other party. Then she expands on the terms of the listening and sets up next-positioned matters by providing a “promise” (line 7) via a restriction on her own talking. This implies she is working alongside the students; doing them a favour by getting her explanation over quickly so they can get on with the task.

The work of being ready is co-produced in the shared silence of line 8, and Miss M goes on to flag her longer turn with “Okay↑” (line 9). Unlike previous extracts, where students accept the teacher’s use of ‘okay’ as an incontestable clue signalling a shift that must be aligned with and abided by (Beach, 1993), Miss M’s extended turn is interrupted by Nathan’s overlapping talk. At the end of her turn and in the natural flow of her talk, Miss M addresses the trouble in “Na↓than” with falling intonation, sending him a veiled warning to follow the unspoken rule of when the teacher talks, students listen (line 11). Nathan is not expected to respond despite the use of his name. The silence in line 12 provides opportunity for Nathan to modify his behaviour to the expected action. In line 13, Miss M recycles “Okay” indicating that classroom order has been quickly reconstructed. She then continues with the reason-for-the-talk without explicitly naming the unsuitable action or acknowledging its cessation. Miss M continues to enforce the actions associated with attending as she holds the floor. So, like in other instances in the Year 6 extracts, the work of being ready is getting done in the turns-at-talk as participants produce actions that are “fitted to” or displayed as “congruent” with their particular categorisation of ‘teacher’ or ‘student’ (Psathas, 1999, p. 154).

5.4 Accomplishing readiness in Year 7 lesson openings

The familiar class of practices that construct social order and invoke readiness in Year 6 lesson openings is found to produce similar actions in Year 7 lesson openings. Across the two separate sites, teachers and students act in ways that are embedded in the social setting of ‘school’; that are
‘predicatively bound’ based on their orientation to the category in which participants place themselves (Psathas, 1999). Holding in place the exchanges is the maintenance of a particular routine that directs the ways teachers and students organise their talk in lesson beginnings. The teacher continues to generate the first turn with a summons. The students, in the social role of ‘students’, continue to respond to the summons with the embodied action of stillness and silence. Then the teacher, who retains the right to speak, issues directives. Once readiness has been co-produced, the teacher moves onto next positioned matters.

However, the analysis of classroom talk across Year 7 lesson openings reveals some differences when compared to those in Year 6. The accomplishment of ‘other activities’ results in extra interactional business being included in Year 7 lesson openings as orderly “sequences of sequences” appear (Schegloff, 2007, p. 195). Teachers must then make repeat attempts to use this pattern of practices to maintain, and re-maintain, the social order of the classroom after each activity. This results in sequences of practices becoming recycled, and the openings becoming both longer and more repetitive.

5.4.1 Year 7: The first extracts

The extracts below reflect the broad organisational structure of lesson openings as displayed in Table 5.1. Analysis reveals that within the course of beginning the lesson, the Year 7 teacher and her students orient initially to the task-specific activity of ‘roll marking’. In this way, the interactional work of being ready is accomplished first for the roll marking activity (Extract 5.6) and then is recycled in a second sequence to establish readiness for the teacher’s description of the informings activity to come (Extract 5.7). With the start of a new activity, the teacher must regain the ‘cohortness’ lost in the transition from one activity to another (IcBay, 2010). As in the Year 6 extracts, the interaction requires a precise coordination between speech and body movements (Heath, 1984).
Extract 5.6

1. Tch:  **AL(.)RIGHT. QUICKLY. >TAKE A SEAT<.** ((Tch turns to work on laptop))
2.       (18.0)  ((Tch stands up and faces the class))
3. Tch:  Alright. I've jus gotta do the roll **first** guys.
4.       (8.0)  ((Tch bends to work on laptop. Students chat))
5. Tch:  OKAY:: ((Tch stands and faces the class)) SHH::.
6.       (0.5)  ((Tch bends over laptop))
10. Mat:  Here.
12.       (3.0)  ((Tch works on laptop))
14. Sas:  Yes.

**Figure 5.6. Setting and participant of Extracts 5.6.**

The Year 7 teacher stands upright and still at the front of the room gazing towards the class (Figure 5.6). In doing so, she provides a familiar display about the type of talk to be produced and the type of actions to be elicited (Goodwin, 1984). As in the Year 6 extracts, she opens the sequence as the authorised starter (Sacks et al., 1974; McHoul, 1978) with an identifiable and loud call for attention in “**AL(.) RIGHT”** (line 1). Her summons not only projects further talk as relevant (Wootton, 1981), but the loud speech suggests it is a “topic initial elicitor” (Button & Casey, 1985, p. 47) used to command student attention and attribute the projected talk as noteworthy (Button & Casey, 1985; Sacks, 1995; Schegloff & Sacks, 1973; Schegloff, 1979, 1986). The directive quickly following is said at a faster rate than the surrounding speech; “**QUICKLY. >TAKE A SEAT<” (line 1). Students display
their recipiency of the occasion’s properties by moving to a seat and sitting down. After the lapse in line 2 where Miss E works on her laptop, she re-engages the talk by repeating the summons “Alright”. She then sets up next-positioned matters with “I’ve jus gotta do the roll first guys” (line 4). By emphasising “first”, she flags the introduction of a new compulsory activity that’s “gotta” be accomplished before the next part of the lesson can begin. By using the term “guys”, she moves to construct social order by cohorting students into the one unit ‘guys’. In doing so, the students are constituted as one party to the talk and the teacher as the other party.

A lengthy pause follows as Miss E bends over her laptop to access the on-line roll (line 5). She then stands upright, faces the group and uses “OKAY::” loud and with a prolonged ending sound (line 6) to re-establish order and close down the multi-party ‘student chatter’. Once students engage in private talk, the social order of the classroom is lost because students no longer function as one unit (IcBay, 2011). Miss E routinely relies on “okays” not only to bid for speakership, but to mark the shift to a different activity (Beach, 1993). This is followed immediately by the directive “SHH::” and “Thanks” which reinforces the ongoing work of the one-at-a-time rule getting done. Miss E then singles out a target in “Joe” and asks the rhetorical question in fast speech “>Why is your laptop open?<” (line 7). This question acts as an implied rebuke to Joe for having his laptop open and sends a warning to other students to close their laptops.

The shared silence of line 8, although short, acts as the resource for displaying order and accomplishing the work of being ready. Miss E then signals the transition to the roll calling activity with “Alright. Um::” (line 9). What ensues is a sequential stretch of talk organised in a particular way where turns are pre-allocated as the teacher selects a student by name and the targeted student responds briefly, acknowledging receipt of the talk. In this activity, both teacher and students orient to their institutional identities of speaker and recipients (McCarthy, 2003), teacher and students, whereby the teacher is seen as responsible for the local management of turns-at-talk, and students retain their status as recipients of the talk without taking over the role of main speaker. The teacher and her students are engaged in a local,
situated analysis not only of the talk in progress but also of their participation in it (Goodwin, 1984). Early in the lesson opening, the interactional dimensions and formalities of ‘the work of the classroom’ are enforced where constraints are placed on the types of contributions different participants can make (Heritage, 2005).

After Miss E has completed the roll marking activity, she raises her head and shifts her gaze from the laptop to the class. In order to move on to the explanation of today’s lesson, she must work to restore the order lost in the shift between activities. She achieves this by employing the same sequence of practices used to accomplish readiness only minutes ago (Extract 5.7).

Extract 5.7

1. Tch: OKAY.
2. (0.5)
3. Tch: Um (.). gentlemen you will need to be sitting at a desk somewhere there are chairs around. You can drag some chairs over to tables but you need to be sitting on a chair at a table please.
4. (0.5)
5. Tch: There's plenty of room (.). there.
6. (3.5)
7. Tch: Why is there laptops open?
8. (5.0)
9. Tch: Thank you. Okay. Just to re:mem:bar(0.2) or just a reminder(.). you need to make sure that your laptops stay closed until you’re asked to open them. Okay?
10. (0.5)
11. Tch: .hhh Um so
12. (1.0)
13. Tch: Today we:: are going to be moving on to look at picture storybook elements.

Miss E uses “OKAY” loud and with rising intonation to signal the start of this new sequence (line 1). As in Year 6, students instinctively end their simultaneous conversations and re-orient their bodies and gazes toward Miss E. She pauses (line 2) and then begins assembling students with a series of
directives; reinforcing actions characteristic of attentiveness that target next actions by students; “you will need to be sitting at a desk”; “you need to be sitting on a chair at a table” (lines 4, 5, 6); “you need to make sure that your laptops stay closed until you’re asked to open them” (lines 13, 14). Such actions constitute a display, on the part of the students and the teacher that the lesson cannot start without their achievement. By shaping actions, participants make visible their entry into the setting and their preparedness for what is about to come.

Miss E pauses within her multi-unit turn and between directives so the actions associated with creating social order can be mutually accomplished to a state where the reason for the summons can go-ahead. By repeating and stressing the words “you need to” (lines 4, 5, 13), she is making clear to all students, as one unit, that such actions must be undertaken to secure the attention required to move on. Her right as the teacher, and primary speaker, to direct action is asserted. In line 10, Miss E ties the question “Why is there laptops open?” to a previous turn in line 7 of Extract 5.6 where she asks Joe “>Why is your laptop open<?”. ‘Tying’ is a key technique governing transitions from one event to another (Sacks, 1992) where “the previous turns in a conversation build the locally constructed context for the participants to find references to their next or previous turns” (IcBay, 2011, p. 240). By using a tying term, the teacher creates an opportunity in the talk to re-start her turn as the ‘cohort-maker party’ (IcBay, 2011), leading the move from one part of the lesson opening to another. In this way, she is constantly attending to her students as active co-participants while systematically modifying her talk so as to take into account what they are doing (Goodwin & Goodwin, 2004). Within these utterances, she adapts to the kind of engagement or disengagement her students display “through constant adjustments of their bodies and talk” (Goodwin & Goodwin, 2004, p. 222) so that the class can collaboratively move to the new event. The teacher’s directive in lines 13 and 14, “you need to make sure that your laptops stay closed”, displays her further efforts to make the students one cohort.

The co-produced silence in line 15 provides the green light for Miss E to begin her next turn (Schegloff, 1992), and reason-for-the-talk. With the
transitional device “Um so” (line 16), she sets up next-positioned matters. In the same way as “okay”, “umm so” is both closure-relevant and continuative (Beach, 1993) as the teacher acknowledges the accomplishment of readiness and prefaces her forthcoming fuller turn; the explanation of the activity to come.

5.4.2 Year 7: The second extracts

The following three extracts, from a single Year 7 lesson opening, further illustrate a recycling of the generic class of practices from Table 5.1. Analysis reveals how the broad organisational sequence is repeated in a persistent cycle of re-engagement as the teacher, and her students, transition from one activity to another. The sequential structure of the lesson opening begins with accomplishing readiness for the activity of marking the roll (Extract 5.8). This is followed by the teacher re-maintaining classroom order, which has been yielded as the activity changes, so that students can get ready to move from one location to another (Extract 5.9). In the final extract, the teacher and her students orient to a third activity. Practices associated with re-assembling social order are once again set in motion (Extract 5.10).

Extract 5.8

1. Tch: **ALRIGHTY. SEVEN ONE LISTENING UP PLEA::;SE.** (0.2)
2. Who’s what now?
3. S1: Me.
4. Tch: What?
5. S1: Are we staying here?
6. Tch: No (.) we’re all going in there in a minute.
7. (0.5)
8. **ALRIGHT. STILL WAITING FOR A FEW PEOPLE TO BE QUIET.**
9. (1.0)
10. Thanks.
11. (4.0) ((Tch bends down and works on laptop))
12. OKAY. Keely.
15. Yep. ((Tch continues to mark the on-line roll))
The opening sequence follows the broad organisational structure found at the beginning of lesson openings. Students have entered the classroom and are sitting at their desks ready for the lesson to start. Miss E begins with a routine summons “ALRIGHTY” (Figure 5.7). Similar to the use of “okay”, Bangerter and Clark (2003) suggest that “alright” can be understood as a pre-turn marker to flag upcoming talk as entry into a new joint project. The subsequent directive, loud and with rising intonation, “SEVEN ONE LISTENING UP PLEA::↑SE” (line 1) is latched to this marker. The teacher then sets up the next turn-at-talk by attending to an anonymous stoppage (Jefferson, 1972) with the question “Who’s what now?”. The reason for the stoppage is unclear, although the pause at the end of line 1 suggests that Miss E might be responding to indiscernible student chatter. S1 responds with “Me” (line 3) and Miss E asks her directly to repeat the partially heard reason for the disruption (line 4). In a bid to seek clarification on the location of today’s lesson, S1 replies with a yes/no question (line 5) (Schegloff, 2007; Raymond, 2003). Miss E, in her normal voice, makes a straightforward, type-conforming response “No” (Raymond, 2003) and then elaborates “we’re all going in there in a minute” (line 6). In line 7, Miss E pauses but S1 does not take this as the turn being passed back to her, and she refrains from re-entering the conversation. This demonstrates an assumed understanding between speaker and recipient that Miss E, despite the natural pause in her talk, does not have to yield her turn. While students can direct speakership in a formal classroom setting, according to McHoul (1978) they are bound by their limited rights as speakers. Their only options are to continue or rebound the turn to the teacher, as is done in this case.
In line 7, Miss E re-cycles the lexical item “ALRIGHT” to reinforce the transition to the upcoming activity (Bangerter & Clark, 2003). A directive cohorting students into a collective by commanding their joint attentiveness follows with “STILL WAITING FOR A FEW PEOPLE TO BE QUIET”. This is said in a loud voice with emphasis on the nominated action of “BE QUIET”. The silences of lines 9 and 11 provide spaces for the work of being ready to be accomplished. While the roll marking activity is not explicitly announced in the talk, the physical positioning and work of the teacher as she bends down to work on her laptop, cues participants to this particular task. The go-ahead for the activity to begin is realised in Miss E’s “OKAY” in line 12. Then the roll marking activity begins as teacher and students orient to its interactional structure whereby turns are exchanged quickly and are characterised by single word utterances. The brief responsive turns that occur in this talk would seem superficially to conform to a principle of communicative economy whereby responses are more transactional in nature (McCarthy, 2003). Students systematically select tokens that satisfy the minimal requirements of acknowledging receipt, showing understanding of the incoming talk of the teacher, and providing the required response (Sacks et al., 1974). In the case of marking the roll, “yep”, “yeah”, “here” and “yes” are enough to maintain the economy and transactional efficiency of the talk, to show agreement, and to function as an appropriate second-pair-part in an adjacency pair oriented to by the teacher and her students.

After completing the roll marking activity, Miss E looks up from her laptop towards the class. As the first party, she has holds the power to organise the rules (IcBay, 2011). She then moves to instigate a change in activity; that of moving classrooms (Extract 5.9). To move the students as a cohort from one activity to another, Miss E must restore social order by recycling the same generic class of practices.
Extract 5.9

1. Tch: THE BOYS who have opened their laptops (.) can you make sure they’re closed please.
2. (0.5)
3. Tch: You know the drill.
4. (5.0)
5. Tch: Gentlemen in the middle (.) can you please take your hats off your heads.
6. (0.5)
7. Tch: Thank you:. I promise you you will not get sunburnt in here.
8. (3.0)
9. Tch: .hhh Okay:: So what’s goin to happen today umm:: is we’re goin to >in a moment< we’re gonna go into:: all
10. the classes are gonna go into the umm::
11. (1.0)
12. Tch: that thingy. Grandstand area. Thank you. And:: we’re gonna go through some answers. ((Students move))

In line 1, Miss E uses a loud voice to call the class back to attention and deliver the directive “THE BOYS who have opened their laptops (.) can you make sure they’re closed please”. Through the teacher’s re-explanation of this rule (see Extracts 5.6 and 5.7), the teacher and students reconstruct the previously established order. Another directive reinforcing another rule follows in lines 6 and 7 with “Gentlemen in the middle (.) can you please take your hats off your heads”. By accomplishing the recognisable actions of closing laptops and taking hats off, students are displaying readiness for the next activity to begin. Miss E’s selection and usage of words such as “Gentlemen” (line 6) and “BOYS” (line 1) reflect the cohorting practice of targeting nonspecific groups as a whole rather than individual students. Miss E elaborates on her directive “take your hats off” with the justification “you will not get sunburnt in here” (lines 8, 9). In the shared silence of line 11, teacher and students display their orientation to the conception of readiness where laptops are closed and hats are off heads, and the talk shifts to an explanation of what is to come next signposted by Miss E’s audible inhalation
followed by the transitional device “Okay:: So” (line 12). Transition to the next activity is accomplished.

After the activities of roll marking and moving from one classroom space to another have been completed, classroom order must again be restored in preparation for the next joint activity - the informings part of the lesson (Extract 5.10). Here, a different teacher assumes the role of primary speaker to recycle the same sequence of practices and initiate the interactional work that invokes readiness.

Extract 5.10

10 (0.5)
11 Tch: Two. (0.2) And by the time I get to:: one (0.2)
12 I'd like people to become silent and ready to listen.
13 (1.0)
14 Tch: Still a couple of people.
15 (0.5)
16 Tch: Okay (. ) so what I’ve jus told my class before.

Figure 5.8. Setting and participants of Extract 5.10.

A new teacher Mr M adopts the distinctive body position of standing at the front of the class (Figure 5.8) to open the sequence with the summons “Okay” (line 1). This is followed by a repeat enforcement of the one-party-at-a-time rule (Sacks et al., 1974); a countdown from three. The action of counting back 3, 2, 1 is provided for by the structure of the ongoing sequence; re-constructing the order in a formal and didactic way. In line 4, at the conclusion of his countback, he clarifies the expected action - for “people to become silent and ready to listen”. Given that a number of classes have joined together in the same teaching space, the group has become overly
large and the talk has broken up into smaller groups all participating in
different conversations. Mr M uses these cohorting practices to restore order
and resume the two-party exchange system.

Mr M continues with “I’d like” which suggests a softer way of
delivering a directive. The silence of line 5 allows the work of being ready to
be accomplished. However in line 6, Mr M again reinforces the one-at-a-time
rule with an implied directive for a “couple of people” to “become silent and
listen”. Again he organises students as a collective; students as one party to
the talk, paying attention to the teacher, the other party (Payne & Hustler,
1990). The shared silence of line 7 provides the go-ahead to launch next-
positioned matters. In line 8, Mr M orients to this co-produced state of
readiness with the transitional device “Okay(.) so” and, in doing so, moves the
conversation forward to explain the next joint activity; the reason for the
lesson.

5.4.3 Year 7: The third extracts

The following three extracts, 10 school days later, reveal a
transformation of the roll marking activity and its sequence organisation. By
this stage in Year 7, teachers and students are no longer strangers and are
more familiar with each other. This growing intimacy or display of relational
history (Hopper & Drummond, 1992) is reflected in changes to the roll
marking activity as it evolves into a teacher, self-checking task with minimal
student input. As the activity morphs and its prominence diminishes, so does
the significance of the sequence supporting readiness for its achievement.
The joint accomplishment of practices between teacher and students is no
longer required as the teacher reorganises and simplifies the activity.

Extract 5.11

1. Tch: ((Tch opens laptop and faces the class))
2. Alright. ‘Keely’. ((Tch looks up from laptop and
towards students after each name is announced))
3. ‘Matisse. Lasia. Sasha:: (0.2) Ben’s here. Joe’s
there. Zac’s here. Jack’.
4. (0.5)
The way the teacher opens this sequence of talk is recognisably similar to previous lesson openings. While Miss E’s summons of “Alright” (line 2) flags upcoming talk as entry into a new joint project, it is not stated in a louder-than-usual voice. Instead, she uses a normal tone that is not loud enough to solicit the attention of all students and shut down their subsidiary talk. She orients herself, and those students positioned close by and within hearing range, to the practices associated with the activity to come without bidding for general speakership. She then proceeds straight into the roll marking activity with “Keely” in a soft voice (line 2). Her turns-at-talk in lines 4 and 5 are noticeably softer than the surrounding talk and are produced for the relevant next action which is accomplished in the teacher’s shift of gaze towards the designated student. No responses are required from students. What follows is a re-organisation of the interactional structure of the class of practices used to accomplish the marking of the roll. By extending her own turn with incidences of self-talk and self-checking through gaze, Miss E limits opportunities for response tokens or follow-up moves from students. As such, a combined competence to establish readiness for the roll marking activity is no longer required. This reflects how talk can be both context-shaping and context-renewing (Heritage, 1984). While the orderliness of the roll marking
activity remains, the practices shaping it are renewed and updated as the teacher and students become more familiar with each other.

In line 9, Miss E embarks on a short passage of collaborative repair work (Schegloff et al., 1977; Schegloff, 1987) when she experiences trouble with her self-checking system in the identification of a particular student. She sets up the relinquishment of her turn with the information seeking question “Is Lucy here?” (Figure 5.9). She says this in a normal voice to engage only those students in close proximity. In line 10, a nearby student self-selects and replies “She just went up there. I saw her”. Miss E acknowledges the response with the straightforward response “Thank you” and then continues the activity in a soft voice with no further involvement from students.

In the extract below, once the roll marking activity has been completed, Miss E uses the lexical item “OKAY” to exit that project and mark entry to next-positioned matters (Bangerter & Clark, 2003). As in previous extracts, the teacher uses her body position and shift in gaze to announce a new beginning with a louder-than-usual voice. The organisational pattern of Table 5.1 is resumed to establish readiness for the next activity; moving classrooms (Extract 5.12).

Extract 5.12
1. Tch: ((Tch looks up from her laptop and stands up))
2. OKAY.
3. (5.0) ((Tch stands still))
4. Tch: Thank you.
5. (3.0)
6. Tch: Umm: Alright so in a moment umm:: when that class is ready (.) we’re gonna go in there. Arr:: so I can
7. explain the assignment to all of you.

The extended silence in line 3 allows participants occasion to co-produce embodied actions that display their readiness for the next joint activity to begin. Miss E reinforces this by enlisting agreement and thanking students in anticipation of such attentive actions being demonstrated. The actions themselves are implicit in this acknowledgment and assumed to be understood (line 4). They are assembled by the collaborative actions by two
parties, the teacher as the cohorting party and the students as the cohorted single party (IcBay, 2010). After the silence of line 5, Miss E then proceeds to signal the shift to the next joint project with the transitional device “Umm: Alright so”.

After students pack up their belongings and move spaces to join with another Year 7 group, the class of practices as described in Table 5.1 is again recycled in the episode below (Extract 5.13).

**Extract 5.13**

1. Tch: ((Tch stands at front of the room)) OKAY::
2. LISTENING UP. FOR THREE
3. (0.5)
4. Tch: TWO
5. (0.5)
6. Tch: ONE.
7. Tch2: Shh::
8. (1.0)
10. am here to talk to you about this afternoon
11. is part one of your two-part assignment.

*Figure 5.10. Setting and participants of Extract 5.13.*

In line 1, Miss E walks to the front of the room and starts the sequence with a loud and prolonged call for attention “OKAY::” (Figure 5.10). This is followed by another loud command “LISTENING UP” as verification of actions associated with the one-party-at-a-time rule (Sacks et al., 1974). The group is now much larger and the teacher has to work to transform multiple conversations into a two-party speech exchange system. She then adopts the ‘counting back from three’ technique as a cue for students to transition to a single entity. In line 7, after Miss E has completed the countback, another
teacher self-selects with the right of an “equi-first starter” (McHoul, 1978, p. 15) to enter the conversational floor, without invitation, and reinforce the expectation for silence with “Shh::”. The shared silence of line 8 provides the go-ahead for Miss E to take back the floor by providing an assessment of the students’ effort towards becoming quiet and then proceeding with the reason-for-the-lesson with the transitional device “Okay so:: arr::” (line 9). An interactional environment where students become silent recipients and teachers have the right to hold the floor for a long period of time has been co-produced. Order has been constructed and restored mutually by the teachers and students.

5.4.4 Year 7: The fourth extracts

Analysis of the final two extracts shows a different Year 7 teacher producing the same organisational structure to open her lesson. We enter the sequence as participants orient their actions to the accomplishment of a new activity that reframes the physical and social arrangements of the classroom. The successful achievement of this activity is prerequisite to the launch of the next sequence which then prepares the field (Schegloff, 2007) for the anchor position (Schegloff, 1986) where the reason for the lesson can then be explained by the teacher in the informings part of the lesson.

Extract 5.14

1. Tch: ((Tch walks to front of classroom)) OKAY:: THANK
2. YOU::
3. (0.5)
4. Tch: EYES ON ME::: LAPTOPS CLOSED.
5. (4.0)
6. Tch: CAN YOU ALL PLEASE (0.2) STAND UP >and move to the seat you were in yesterday<. ((Students move to find their name tag))
The teacher starts the first sequence by standing at the front of the room to issue a recognisable summons, loud and with emphasis (Figure 5.14). She thanks students in anticipation of their attention (lines 1, 2) and pauses to allow the work of establishing social order to get done (line 3). In line 4, she strings together two, short-and-sharp directives to enforce the achievement of such work and the embodiment of the one-party-at-time rule (Sacks et al., 1974) in “EYES ON ME::: LAPTOPS CLOSED”. Even during week 3, Miss S educes and emphasises the preferred actions associated with attentiveness, loud and with emphasis. In line 6, and after a long pause where these actions are worked up, Miss S invites students to move to pre-arranged seating positions. While she frames the directive as a request, “CAN YOU ALL PLEA↑SE (0.2) STAND UP >and move to the seat you were in yesterday<”, she does not expect a verbal response. Instead, students demonstrate their acceptance of the invitation, and receipt of the directive, in the doing of the moving. Students gather belongings and move to find their new location (lines 7, 8).

After the seating arrangements have been organised (Extract 5.14), Miss S says “OKAY” loud and with rising intonation to indicate she is moving onto next-positioned matters. What follows is an elaboration of what has come before in the previous sequence and the consequent accomplishment of readiness for the next activity.
Extract 5.15
1. Tch: OKAY.
2. (1.5)
3. Tch: If you work (. ) well today in these seats
4. (0.5)
5. Tch: then >I don't have you tomorrow (. ) that's that one
6. day where we don't see each other< (. ) on Friday
7. morning >if you work well today Friday morning (. )
8. you can pick your seats<. (0.2) Okay? So I'm gonna try
9. and work it like that. If (. ) Friday morning you pick
10. your own seats (. ) and then we're loud and >we don't
11. get our work done< we go back to:: (. ) me putting out
12. your name tags. So it's up to you as a class whether
13. you get to pick your own seats or not. By the way that
14. you behave (. ) and the amount of work that you get
15. done. So Mathew and Darcy please close ya laptops and
16. eyes on the board so you need to turn your bodies to
17. the board please.
18. (1.5)
19. Tch: Now. (0.2) Yesterday we went through part one.

After the recycled summons, Miss S brokers a deal with students
emphasising its importance by slowing the rate of her speech: “<If you work
(.) well today in these seats>” (line 3). She then elaborates on its details with
accelerated speech: “>if you work well today Friday morning (. ) you can pick
your seats<” (lines 7, 8). She frames the transaction to evoke a positive
response from students. Heritage (2005) suggests that in institutional
interaction, those in authority tend to develop routines which seem to
minimise the chance for their client’s resistance, by often presupposing their
goodwill and desire to do the right thing. Known as a wind tunnel effect, this
sees teachers endlessly repeating similar turn-designs that bring about
actions that become ‘smooth’ (Heritage, 2017). Further in her extended turn,
Miss S adds the stipulation “we're loud and >we don't get our work done< we
go back to:: (. ) me putting out your name tags” (lines 10-12). In her deal
brokering, Miss S asserts her authority as teacher to maintain control over the
physical arrangements of the classroom. She then goes on to elaborate the
actions of “working well” associating them with “the way that you behave (. )
and the amount of work that you get done” (lines 13-15). At the end of this stretch of talk, Miss S recycles the directives of the initial sequence with “close ya laptops and eyes on the board” (lines 15, 16). She particularises the directive with a reference to body position in “you need to turn your bodies to the board please” (lines 16, 17). Then in the shared silence of line 18, students and teacher display mutual orientation to the interactional work of being ready, and Miss S transitions to the reason-for-the-talk with “Now” (line 19). The opening to the lesson has been accomplished.

5.5 Conclusion

This chapter has established how teachers and students work together in patterned ways across Year 6 and Year 7 classrooms to accomplish lesson openings. The fine-grained analysis of talk-in-interaction has revealed the assembly of a routine class of practices that students and teachers orient to in their categories of ‘teacher’ and ‘student’ (Psathas, 1999). Such practices include a summons issued by the teacher that mobilises student attention and initiates a shift from multi-party talk to the two-party talk exchange system of the classroom where students act as one party and the teacher as the other. This is followed by the teacher issuing directives as a vehicle for students to produce the required actions associated with being ready for the lesson to begin. It is then in the accomplishment of silence that the go ahead to start the lesson is established. This serves as a signal for the teacher and students to proceed with prefiguring next-positioned matters. These cohorting practices are used by teachers to establish the social order of the classroom by assembling students into a single unit (Payne & Hustler, 1980; IcBay, 2011) so they are constituted as one party in a two-party conversation (Sacks et al., 1974). In this way, ‘being ready’ is achieved once the social order of the classroom has been accomplished; when students act as a cohort and teachers can address them collectively.

The analysis further reveals a notable difference across Year 6 and Year 7 classrooms. It suggests that, within the broad organisational structure of lesson openings, Year 7 teachers and students must get ready for extra activities. At the point of transition where one activity ends and the new
activity starts, classroom order is often lost as students break away from the
two-party exchange system to engage in multiple conversations (IcBay, 2011).
This results in the teacher recycling the same set of cohorting practices and
actions to re-establish the social order at each transition point. Repeat
attempts at ‘getting ready’ bring about longer and more repetitive episodes
of talk within Year 7 lesson openings.

Regardless of settings, students experience lessons getting done in
predictable ways across the primary to secondary school transition. What this
chapter shows is a common class of practices that teachers use to assemble,
maintain and re-maintain the social order of classrooms and accomplish
readiness for the rest of the lesson to unfold. The shared interactional
patterns of starting a lesson support a deep logic based on the maintenance
of the category pair ‘teacher-student’ (Freebody & Freiberg, 2006, 2011). The
durability of the participation framework (Goffman, 1981) shows how this
category pair traverses times of transition as teachers and students orient to
each other’s actions using similar practices. The ‘teacher-student’ category
pair comprises identities for talk that are central to the organisation of the
turns-at-talk in lesson openings. As such, teachers and students orient to the
sequential structure of lesson openings as a central, yet contingent,
interactional resource to negotiate the moment-by-moment unfolding of
primary to secondary school transition.

The following two chapters consider how teachers and students co-
produce the next activity, known as ‘informings’. Chapter 6 identifies what
actions get done and how practices are shaped during this part of the lesson
in a Year 6 classroom. It particularly investigates how conversational floors
are used by students to make sense of what to do and how to do it.
CHAPTER 6

SHIFTING FLOORS: THE CO-PRODUCTION OF INFORMINGS IN A YEAR 6 CLASSROOM

6.1 Introduction

The previous chapter established how students and teachers, across both Year 6 and Year 7 classrooms, orient to the beginning of lessons by displaying a combined competence to accomplish a routine class of practices that invokes actions associated with creating social order and achieving readiness. This chapter considers how the next phenomena of ‘teacher telling’, studied here as a single case of ‘informings’ (Gardner & Mushin, 2013), is interactionally achieved in one Year 6 classroom at the end of the school year. It investigates what happens once the two-party exchange system has been set up to allow the lesson to get underway with the exchange of information between teachers and students about what to do and how to do it (Sacks et al. 1974; Mehan, 1979a). Analysis indicates that the teacher and her students work together to co-produce sequences of talk across conversational floors that provide opportunities for students to become consociates (Lerner, 1992) to the activity. This chapter argues the important role of simultaneous conversations (schisming) to initiate repair of problematic topics and seek clarification by bringing such topics back to the main floor (merging) in a bid to make sense of what to do next.

First, the analysis of extracts from one Year 6 lesson reveals the interactional patterns that launch the next activity of informings. Second, the practice of schisming and the sort of actions getting done are investigated as simultaneous ‘covert’ conversations between students split off from the main talk onto side floors. Third, the chapter shows how students shift between main and side conversational floors as they work collaboratively with the teacher, and each other, to make sense of the teacher’s instructions. By tracing conversational threads, the analysis examines how the practice of shifting floors benefits meaning making as students bring back to the main
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floor problematic matters that require further clarification from the teacher. Finally, the conclusion maintains that the co-production of informings across conversational floors prefaces the launching of the next activity of independent work. This display of knowing what to do and how to do it in a Year 6 lesson can then be compared with the interactional patterns of a Year 7 lesson (Chapter 7). Any contrasting features of the talk can be investigated to inform a stronger understanding of how the social work of the classroom gets done between teachers and students at the end of primary school and then again at the beginning of secondary school.

6.2 Key concepts

6.2.1 Informings

The extracts in this chapter are examined as a class of turn-taking practices in an unfolding trajectory of passing on new information from speaker to listener through the activity of informings. In this part of the lesson, the teacher usually acts in the role of the knowing participant while students are treated as unknowing recipients of the objects of learning (Gardner & Mushin, 2013). Koole (2010) describes this phase in terms of instruction-informing-understanding; where the teacher conveys expert information during an “explanation activity” (p. 189). Gardner and Mushin (2013) discuss it in terms of informings (assertions or tellings) which are “a fundamental action type for transferring knowledge from a knowing participant to an unknowing one in an interaction” (p. 63). Here the teacher designs the talk to carry informational content about what students need to know in preparation for subsequent independent activity. This is not to say however that informings do not occur elsewhere in lessons. For example, in lesson openings, informings can impart information from the teacher to students about new classroom arrangements and behavioural expectations. Informings though, in the part of the lesson discussed in this chapter, are used widely by teachers, in the main, to transfer information to students.

According to Gardner and Mushin (2013), informings as a type of action consist of both factual informings and procedural informings. Factual informings involve the transfer of factual information as a first-pair-part (like
naming the planets in the solar system) (Gardner & Mushin, 2013). Here the teacher, as the single teller, usually occupies the interactional space and students take on the role of ‘off-floor participants’ (Hayashi, 1991) or ‘recipients’ of the talk (Lerner, 1992). In these instances, teacher and students orient to rules associated with more formal talk patterns where teachers enjoy maximised participation rights and students contribute with minimised participation rights (McHoul, 1978). Students, as an assemblage of individuals or an audience, are treated as (and act as) a single unit of participation (Lerner, 1993) with limited entry to the main floor. Findings from the Year 6 data suggest that factual informings are largely avoided by the teacher as a way of transferring knowledge-for-learning.

Procedural informings (or giving instructions) are used when the focus of the knowledge being transferred is around what to do and how to do it (such as how to make a model planet) (Gardner & Mushin, 2013). In the following extracts, the teacher is telling her Year 6 students how to create a fictitious planet by researching, writing and making a paper-mâché model. Students participate in the sequence of procedural informings by making announcements, issuing assessments, making anticipatory completions of the teacher’s prior turn and asking questions to seek clarification about how to complete the task. As a result, students act as ‘consociates’ to the procedural informings (Lerner, 1992) by gaining entry to the on-going sequence of talk. While they do not have equal rights to the content, they monitor and continue the talk by dipping in and out of the main floor to request further details from the teacher. In this way, opportunities for students to shape the turns-at-talk are provided which sustain the delivery of the procedural informing without derailing it.

Conversation analysis (CA) work often treats informings and questions as complementary actions. Sidnell (2012) claims that both involve conditions for the distribution of information by directing “the differential knowledge of speaker and recipient” (p. 299). Gardner and Mushin (2013) state that, in classrooms, informings impart information from the informer (teacher) to the recipient (students), while questions can seek information transfer from the recipient to the questioner. In the Year 6 data, questioning strategies such as
question-answer-follow-up sequences, or Initiation-Reply-Feedback (Sinclair & Coulthard, 1975; Mehan, 1979a, 1998), are used by participants as a way of transferring knowledge-for-learning in a bid to clarify what they have to do and how they are to do it. In the social organisation of classroom lessons, Heap (1985) claims that the production of knowledge is accomplished in the discourse structures and sequences that constitute the activity of interest. Thus, the IRF sequence is conceived as a discourse machinery to produce items for the lesson corpus of knowledge (Heap, 1985). In the Year 6 data, students initiate such question and answer sequences on the main conversational floor as well as on side floors in schismic sequences, 'opening up' the talk as self-selecting, first starters with first-turn rights (McHoul, 1978). The practice of schimming is discussed in further detail below.

6.3.2 Schimming

Schimming (Sacks et al., 1974; Edelsky, 1981; Goodwin, 1987; Parker, 1984; Egbert, 1993, 1997a) occurs in multi-person settings such as classrooms when one conversation splits off from the main talk into two (or more) simultaneous conversations with the co-occurrence of two (or more) turn-taking systems. Sacks et al. (1974) explains that schismic sequences occur “when at least four parties are present, since then there are enough parties for two conversations” (p. 713). In this way, several single conversations, each with its own turn-taking system, can coexist across different conversational floors (Goodwin, 1987; Sacks et al., 1974). Egbert (1993, 1997a) discusses the interface between these simultaneous conversations claiming that, during schimming, participation in one conversation must be understood by taking into account its relationship to the other conversation that is already established and sustained.

In a classroom, ‘talking at the back’ (McHoul, 1990) and ‘students chatting’ (Jones & Thornborrow, 2004) are classic cases of schimming where students interact on parallel conversational floors. Such conversations, when heard by the teacher, are often treated as “an illegitimate category of action” and “seemingly incompatible with the focus of the main activity at hand” (Jones & Thornborrow, 2004, p. 406), so the teacher responds with a call for
silence. Jones and Thornborrow (2004) found that while students cannot ‘chat’, they may ‘whisper’. In this way, covert conversations between students on side floors become allowable, although not officially ratified, because they can coexist alongside the main floor without obvious interruption to the activity in progress.

While main and side floor conversations can coexist in classrooms, Aoki et al. (2003) argued that participants in one do not orient to the turn-taking organisation of the other. This means that students in a side conversation can no longer align the initiation of their turns-at-talk with those on the main floor. This chapter contends that Year 6 students in the study maintain a dual orientation to conversations across floors by shifting seamlessly from one to the other (Hayashi, 1991), ‘re-engaging’ and ‘dis-engaging’ in talk (Szymanski, 1999) and ‘entering’ and ‘exiting’ ongoing conversations in multi-person interactions (Egbert, 1997b) during informings. Using the concepts of main floor and side floor, the chapter is able to identify instances of schisming as recorded by multiple microphones, one always worn by the teacher picking up talk on the main floor and the others worn by four of the seven Year 6 focus children capturing covert conversations of students on side floors. What Goffman (1978, 1981) describes as ‘topical runs’ are able to be investigated to show how threads of conversations move across floors as students make meaning of what to do next and how to do it.

6.2.3 Data

The chapter is based on video and audio-taped multi-person conversations of everyday interactions from a Year 6 classroom at the end of the school year. After analysis of the corpus of Year 6 data comprising 45 hours of audio recording and 30 hours of video footage, a single case was found to be representative of the recordings in the examination of the interactional phenomena known here as informings. This particular data set appears as relevant for a single case analysis as it is organised according to the same principles found in similar data across the full corpus of nine integrated inquiry lessons. By selecting this one Year 6 classroom-in-session, it is believed that common interactional methods that produce the activity of
informings can be examined. The activity of informings is occasioned by the main talk of the cohort as well as the side floor conversations students engage in as individuals. An understanding of how this activity unfolds in real time in a Year 6 classroom, at the end of one year, can then be placed alongside an analysis of data from the same phenomena as accomplished in a Year 7 classroom at the beginning of the next year (Chapter 7). Such an analysis can reveal interactional conditions which both create and constrain opportunities for student participation in the doing of lessons across settings. Despite the researcher’s confidence in the systematic and time-consuming approach used in case selection, the analysis must be approached with some caution because there still exists clear limitations in generalisability and external validity.

6.3 Co-producing informings in a Year 6 classroom

6.3.1 Launching the informings

This extract occurs immediately after the Year 6 lesson opening of Extract 5.3 in Chapter 5 where readiness was co-produced by Miss M and her students as they oriented to a routine class of practices that provided the go ahead for the commencement of the informings activity. The extract below shows how the teacher, in the position of primary speaker and floor initiator, begins the next sequence of talk to launch this part of the lesson. Central to the analysis is the teacher’s response to student participation on the main floor.

Extract 6.1

1. Tch: Alright (.) so to finish off:: (.) our inquiry
2. topic with (0.2) about space and things (.) we
3. thought we'd let you:: (.) <create your own
4. plan::<et>. O::kay. So:: (.) when we say create your
5. own planet (.). we mean (.). we want you to plan it
6. (0.2) we want you to research it (0.2) we want you
7. to write about it (.). and then (0.2) the fun par::<t
8. (.). we actually want you to create it.
9. (0.5)
10. Jak: Yee (.). [haa!].
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11. Tch: [Okay] (.) So <we will be doing paper-mâché
12. (.) on >we're thinking may be Thur::sday<.

Figure 6.1. Setting and participants of Extract 6.1.

Miss M initiates the sequence by framing the next activity (Sorjonen & Heritage, 1991; Schegloff, 2007) with the transitional device “Alright (.) so” (line 1). With a single first pair part (Schegloff, 2007), the teacher then launches into a procedural informing (Gardner & Mushin, 2013) preparing students for what to do next; “to finish off:: (.) ou::r inqu::ry topic with (0.2) about space and things” (lines 1, 2). In the extended turn to come, Miss M uses prolonged sounds, micro pauses between words, rising intonation and emphasis to build anticipation and excitement towards the upcoming activity. By saying “we'd let you:: (.)” (line 3) with a prolonged sound and short pause after “you”, Miss M suggests that this is something special that perhaps students aren’t ordinarily allowed to do. She then informs, slowly, and with emphasis, what the letting entails in “<create your own plan:::et>” (lines 3, 4). The requirements of the task, prerequisite to the ‘creating’ part, are then projected with “when we say create your own planet (.) we mean (.) we want you to” (lines 4, 5). She presents this as a chain of instructions; each separated by a within-turn pause. As she identifies each aspect of the activity, she repeats the sentence starter “we want you to” while using her left hand to point to another finger on her right hand. In each instance, the design of the utterance starting with “we want you to” builds recognisability of a list in progress (Jefferson, 1990; Lerner, 1991, 1994). Miss M emphasises the key procedural words “plan it” (line 5), “research it” (line 6) and “write about it”
(line 7) to stress to students what tasks they need to complete before the creating can begin.

In line 8, when setting up the fourth and final part of the list, ‘actually’ is deployed by Miss M in “we actually want you to create it”. This marks the part of the informing as noteworthy (Clift, 2001), as the exciting finale to the task. Just prior to this, Miss M declares “and then (0.2) the fun par::t”. The declaration incorporates Daisy’s fun assessment from line 3 in the previous chapter (Extract 5.3) where she states “We’re gonna do something fu::n!”. This confirms receipt and allusion in response to an earlier turn-constructional unit by another party (Schegloff, 1996c) and is an example of Miss M modifying her emerging talk to take into account Daisy’s previous entry to the main floor. By orienting her talk to Daisy’s, Miss M establishes agreement which intensifies the notion of ‘fun’ while recognising student participation on the main floor as acceptable.

The length of the pause in line 9 projects an end to the first unit (Schegloff, 1987) and an appropriate place for Jake to self-select and take a turn-at-talk by issuing an assessment of Miss M’s prior turn. Lerner (1994) describes how list construction provides a natural “receipt-slot” (p. 27) for either acceptance or rejection of its features. This pause then acts as a discrete place in the developing course of the teacher’s talk where possible transfer of the turn can become relevant (Schegloff, 1992). By talking in this way, with a list and a subsequent pause, Miss M provides an opportunity for the doing of some particular action (Schegloff, 2007). Without being nominated as next speaker by the teacher, Jake takes the floor and reacts to the completion of Miss M’s list with a response cry of audible glee (Goffman, 1978) in “Yee (.) haa!” (line 10) with outstretched arms (Figure 6.1). This exclamatory interjection displays evidence of positive alignment (Lerner, 2002), designed to match the tenor of the teacher’s voice and show his understanding that a larger unit of talk is in progress and is not yet complete (Schegloff, 1982). Jake is not heard to be vying for the role of primary speaker and he is not competing with the teacher to hold the floor for a longer turn. Instead he is co-producing the on-going talk by demonstrating receipt and matching his utterance to that emerging from the current speaker (Lerner,
The social accomplishment of transition: Investigating classroom talk practices as students move from primary to secondary school (2002). It is in that action of audible glee that the student, as a co-participant in the talk, reveals what is getting done by Miss M’s informing (Schegloff, 2007); this part of creating will be fun.

Miss M does not rebuke Jake for his outburst but rather resumes control of the turn space by constructing her talk to embody continuation of the on-going sequence (Jefferson, 1972) by tying it directly to her prior turn and overlapping Jake’s response cry. As Jake yields the floor to Miss M, line 11 marks her return to the target conversation (Schegloff, 1987) with “[Okay] (. ) So”. With an emphasis on “so”, Miss M indicates that she is moving on and plans to extend her turn by continuing with the explanation of how to create the planet. “Okay” is used as both a third-turn receipt of Jake’s response cry and an initiation of getting back on track with the informing (Beach, 1993); signalling satisfactory termination of Jake’s subsidiary comment and instructing a return to the on-going sequence (Jefferson, 1972). So, despite the interjection of line 10, there is no interruption to the social order of the classroom and Miss M can continue as the principal informer.

6.3.2 Constructing a side floor by schisming

This extract re-examines the previous sequence of talk in Extract 6.1 to capture schisming - the beginning of a simultaneous, covert conversation held between two whispering students. Analysis demonstrates how the topic of the main floor spills onto a parallel side floor, as students work to make sense of what to do and how to do it. The schismed conversation from the side floor is transcribed for analysis on the right hand side of the extract below. The left hand side presents the main floor conversation already discussed in the analysis of 6.3.1.

Extract 6.2

1. Tch: Alright (.) so to finish
2. off:: (. ) ou::r inquiry
3. topic with (0.2) about space
4. and things (.) we thought
5. we'd let you:: (.) <create
6. your own plan::: et>.
In lines 7 and 8, an attempt at schisming is produced by Daisy as she self-selects to initiate a side floor conversation with Abe. She responds to Miss M’s prior turn by overlapping her talk and whispering the assessment “‘So:: this is exciting.’”. She says this softly enough so that it is inaudible to Miss M but loud enough for Abe to hear. The snigger adds emphasis to Daisy’s positive assessment of Miss M’s explanation of what to do; she is anticipating something great to come; rubbing her hands together with anticipation. While, in this instance, Daisy’s comment does not entice Abe to engage in a break-away conversation, her shift in gaze and head position away from Miss
M and towards Abe (Figure 6.2) enlists him as the potential recipient of this, and future, schisming-inducing turns (Egbert, 1997a). It also implies a certain alliance between Daisy and Abe that is disguised from others who are still participating in the main conversation on the main floor.

In line 15, Daisy launches a second, follow-up covert response triggered by Miss M’s list of three. In direct contrast to the positive assessment of lines 7 and 8, Daisy’s response cry “‘What the hell” signals a shift in action (Egbert, 1997b). As the informing has unfolded on the main floor, Miss M’s use of the key words “plan it”, “research it” and “write” have transformed Daisy’s understanding of what she has to do. By seeking clarification with “How?”, she flags her exasperation by producing a negative formulation (Schegloff, 2007) of these aspects of the task. In his next action, Abe produces the receipt marker “‘Hhh’” (line 16) acknowledging Daisy’s growing frustration with a soft laugh. Thus, without directly requesting it, Daisy achieves Abe’s input in her covert practice.

In line 22, Daisy resumes her turn-at-talk on the side floor with the rhetorical summons “‘Wait’”. She returns to the shift in action of line 15 by naming and expanding the repairable trouble with the question “‘How (.) we supposta research? ’” (lines 23, 24). By reacting with a repair initiation (Drew, 1997), it becomes clear that Daisy’s position on the task as being fun and exciting has changed. She surreptitiously rehearses the brewing trouble for entry into the main conversation in the next extract (Extract 6.3 - line 2). Sacks (1992) describe this practice as ‘floor seeking’ whereby participants strive to get the floor by having a ‘trial run’ first before hopefully, being selected as next speaker. They then get to repeat their turn (in this case from the side floor) legitimately on the main floor. Simultaneously, the main floor conversation progresses without any impediment to the teacher’s informing.

6.3.3 Shifting floors to initiate repair

This next sequence commences after the previous extract. The analysis explores how ‘topical runs’ (Goffman, 1978) merge main and side floor conversations as Daisy moves between floors in a bid to repair some trouble with her teacher’s earlier informing. In this way, the talk is made
relevant by covert comments from a side floor which are then brought back for discussion to the main floor. Daisy becomes a consociate to the activity, and the teacher is provided with important information around an aspect of the task that needs clarifying. It also shows how speakers decide whether to speak more or not. The following excerpt shows how Daisy makes the contingent decision to not continue her talk on the main floor.

**Extract 6.3**

1. Tch: Okay↑ (. ) Dais?
2. Dai: What do you mean thas we have to re::search it it?
3. [Like I thought we::]
4. Tch: [Okay (. ) so] you can't go and make a planet
5. (0.5)
6. that is com (. ) ple::tely::
7. (0.8)
9. Tch: >can't exist< (. )
10. Dai: Ar::rh=
11. Abe: =Or::rh.

**Figure 6.3. Setting and participants of Extract 6.3.**

Miss M orients to the physical cue from Daisy’s hand-raising (Figure 6.3). Daisy’s initial movement alerts Miss M to what is coming next; a request for a forthcoming turn-at-talk in the form of a clarifying question or statement in response to her previous procedural informing. While, in one sense, Daisy is self-selecting by raising her hand, in another the teacher, as the current speaker, nominates her to take the next turn (McHoul, 1978). The intonation of Miss M’s nomination “Dais?” (line 1) projects the next action as a “question slot” (McHoul, 1990). In the act of requesting information, Daisy commits to a
lack of knowledge with regard to the matter at hand and projects the answerer, in Miss M, to be in a knowing position (Heritage, 2005).

In line 2, Daisy poses her question that seeks more than a ‘yes/no’ response from Miss M; “What do you mean that we have to re::search it?”. The formation of the information seeking question displays Daisy’s trouble in understanding Miss M’s earlier procedural informing “we want you to re::search it” (Extract 6.1 - line 6) and initiates its repair. By repeating “re::search” as the source of the confusion, Daisy uses an instance of a generalised repair initiator (Drew, 1997) whereby she gives an explicit account of the putative trouble that requires additional explanation. This follows on from Daisy’s “‘How (.) we supposta research?’” in the side floor conversation of Extract 6.2 (lines 23, 24). Daisy’s side floor question has made its way to the whole class discussion as a topic of conversation and a start to a new sequence. She has used the side floor to prepare entry into the main floor conversation.

In line 4, Miss M reclaims the floor in a response that is bounded by what Daisy’s question is asking (Schegloff & Sacks, 1973). By starting her next turn immediately after the repairable is spoken, Miss M overlaps Daisy’s ongoing talk with “Okay (.) so”. This marks receipt of the trouble source by Miss M and indicates an extended turn to follow. Daisy makes a decision to resolve the overlap, and this breach of the “one-at-a-time rule” (Sacks et al., 1974), by yielding her turn-in-progress in order for Miss M, as the authoritative speaker (Schegloff, 2007), to retain speaking rights (McHoul, 1990) with a response that is likely to “carry the burden of the talking” (Schegloff, 2007, p. 170). Miss M’s decision to speak just then is contingent upon and occasioned by Daisy’s prior turn and what her question is asking. Miss M displays unconditional access to the next turn as she provides her answer (Schegloff, 2000).

In line 8, Aaron, as the recipient of the ongoing turn, anticipates and produces a completion of Miss M’s utterance-in-progress (Sacks, 1967), allowing for the “construction of a single sentence across the talk of two speakers” (Lerner, 1991, p. 441). This collaboration is made possible in the work of Miss M’s prior turn “that is com (. ) ple::tely::” (line 6) and the lengthy
pause that follows (line 7). Her turn-so-far projects an upcoming slot or “opportunity space” (Lerner, 2004a) where another participant can produce the final component in the course of an ongoing turn (Lerner, 1991). With “Bonkers” (line 8), Aaron displays an orientation to maintaining progressivity by jointly producing Miss M’s emerging turn in a rendition of what she was going to say (Lerner, 2004a). In doing so, he does not make a bid for speakership, but rather gains conditional access to Miss M’s ongoing turn, which she allows. In line 9, Miss M resumes and completes the turn-in-progress without addressing Aaron’s ‘insert’ and without disrupting the trajectory of the utterance she is currently producing (Lerner, 1991). As a result, she maintains social order and authority over her turn’s talk (Lerner, 2004a).

In lines 10 and 11, and upon completion of the turn-constructional unit, both Daisy and Abe display their shift in knowledge with sequence-closing third actions (Schegloff, 2007). They provide assessments of Miss M’s explanation by quickly appending the change-of-state tokens “Ar::rh” and “Or::rh” to her completed turn.

6.3.4 Shifting floors to explore the topic

This extract provides further insight into schisming by showing how Daisy moves between conversational floors to explore the topic in more detail (Schegloff, 1990). Her orientation to conversations on both floors (main and side) establishes an interplay and fluidity between them. Again, the covert conversation on the parallel side floor is transcribed on the right hand side of the extract with the main conversation presented on the left hand side. The extract directly follows on from Extract 6.3.

Extract 6.4

1. Tch: Okay:: so the Idea (.) is that
2. you’re making a planet >and
3. yes while you can be very
4. creative with it< (0.2) it
5. still needs (0.2) to: consist
6. of information that you have
7. learnt about. (0.3) ((Tch turns to screen and points)) So >talk about how many moons< (.>) talk
8. about what gases it's made up of (.>if you were to place it in order)
9. from the sun.<
10. So ((Tch turns back to class))
11. if it’s closest to the sun (.>is it gunna be a super cold planet?
13. ((Dai turns to face Abe))
14. if it’s closest to the sun (.>‘It’s gunna be a lolly planet'.
15. Dai: ‘It’s gunna be a lolly planet'.
16. Tch: No it’s not.
17. Dai: ‘It’s gunna be a lolly planet'.
18. No.
20. Tch: No it's not.
21. ((0.2)
22. Okay. Are people? Are humans going to be able to live on it.
23. if it's closest to the sun?

Figure 6.4. Setting and participants of Extract 6.4.

Miss M continues her turn with “Okay:: so the lDea” (line 1). This flags a longer turn where she proceeds to elaborate on the conditions placed upon the task (lines 2-7). What follows is the construction of a list which proposes a series of instructions to support and justify her original depiction of the task as researched; “how many moons”, “what gases it’s made up of”, “where it is (.>if you were to place it in order from the sun” (lines 9-14). This part of the procedural informing is said at a faster pace than the surrounding speech. Schegloff and Sacks (1973) and Schegloff (1982) class this a ‘rush through’; a practice in which the speaker speeds up the pace of the talk and rushes
through a juncture without a breath to extend a turn-at-talk. In this way, Miss M is able to fill out her response in the continuation of the turn. Between these ‘rush throughs’, she employs inter-turn pauses thus demonstrating her entitlement to hold the floor and prolong her talk without interruption from her students (McHoul, 1978, 1990).

Miss M’s instruction in lines 9-11 “talk about what gases it’s made up of<” triggers a task-related, covert response from Daisy. Daisy turns to face Abe (Figure 6.4) soliciting his recipiency as a participant in her break-away conversation. She then self-selects as the next speaker to launch the schism-inducing turn (Egbert, 1997a), overlapping the ongoing talk of Miss M by offering an answer to her prior informing in the soft declarative “It’s made out of lol::ly gas” (lines 13, 14). This overlapping continuation of the main conversation on a side floor demonstrates the notion of recipiency; not as an example of a typical minimal response as in back-channel behaviour (Gardner, 1998) or receipt tokens (Heritage, 1984) but as a participant with equal rights to the main conversation. In this way, Daisy shifts the role of authoritative speaker (Schegloff, 2007) from the teacher to herself. She is not in competition with the teacher, and is not heard as vying for the role of primary speaker on the main floor. Instead she assumes the primary speaker’s role on a side floor she has instigated. While Abe does not respond verbally in this instance, he orients to Daisy’s talk by shifting his gaze from Miss M towards her (lines 15, 16).

Back on the main floor and at the start of line 15, Miss M uses the procedure of ‘cluing’ to launch a sequence of instructional yes/no questions to further lead students into identifying the correct way of approaching the task (McHoul, 1990). By initiating the known-information questions and offering a candidate answer (Mehan, 1979a), Miss M sets up replies where students can repair the trouble source (McHoul, 1990). In this context, the role of the student becomes one of guessing what the teacher has in mind (Heritage, 2005). This IRF sequence follows the regular three-turn trajectory where the teacher initiates a loaded question (cluing), students respond in the next turn with “No” (reply/repair) and then the teacher reaffirms the correctness of the student’s response by repeating “No” (direct acceptance).
This trajectory portrays a specifically instructional tenor (Heritage, 2005) as the teacher instructs the students on what to do and how to do it. It is recycled in lines 22 to 24 as a chorusing sequence where students produce responses that display close alignment with what the teacher is doing (Lerner, 1993). By joining in, students demonstrate active participation rather than passive listenership (Jones & Thornborrow, 2004). The structure of the question-answer sequence, along with the pause in the progressivity of the turn's talk, provides students with the form of the searched-for answer plus some entitlement to conditional entry into the turn in order to help clarify the task requirements by answering the teacher-initiated questions (Lerner, 1995).

This question-answer sequence from the main floor triggers a further response from Daisy who resumes her participation on the side floor. In line 20, she repeats her announcement from line 13 “It’s gonna be a lolly planet”. As in the simultaneous conversation of Extract 6.2, Miss M continues her turn-at-talk on the main floor without acknowledging any interruption to her ongoing sequence. Daisy switches seamlessly back to the main floor in line 25 when she answers Miss M’s question “Are humans going to be able to live on it if it’s closest to the sun?”. In doing so, she displays a dual orientation to active participation across both floors.

6.3.5 Returning to the main floor to seek clarification

This extract further establishes the interactional methods used by Daisy, as a consociate to the informing, to manage her understanding of what to do and how to do it. Topical runs can be traced as she shifts between floors, returning to the main floor to seek clarification on the terms of the task. In this way, the merging of floors is used by Daisy as an important interactional resource for making meaning of what she has to do next. The teacher is also made aware of a potential problem with student understanding of the impending task. The extract demonstrates how the properties of spontaneous speech and their contexts become repeatedly renewed with every current action (Heritage 1984). Teachers and students determine what to say based on what was said before. Whatever is said then
becomes the context from which the next choice of utterance is made (Lee et al., 2012). Therefore, classroom talk is not derived from pre-planned scripts or intentions. Instead, it is reflexive to speakers’ understanding of the adequacy and sufficiency of prior turns as they make strategic decisions, in the moment, to determine what to say next, or perhaps nothing at all (Lee, 2007). This episode follows on immediately from the previous one.

**Extract 6.5**

1. Tch: Okay. Dais?
2. Dai: So:: you can't make it out of lollies or anything (. ) but what happens if you can< make it out
3. of lollies (. ) [and then::]
4. Tch: (Well but <that's>)
5. Dai: and then (. ) there'll be a sun and a moon (. ) and then there'll also be wa:: ta .hhh and (0.2)
6. Tch: I would say to you then (. ) for the whole term that we've been doing space (. ) that you probably haven't learnt a whole lot.
7. Dai: ("wa water would be made of chocolate").
8. (1.0)
9. That would be my thinking (. ) if you go and create a planet about lollies (. ) cause that (0.2)
10. Dai: ("Sighs"))
11. Dai: n't quite exist in space.
12. Okay?
13. Dai: ['O:: kay::°]
14. Abe: ["Darn it"].

*Figure 6.5. Setting and participants of Extract 6.5.*
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The sequence starts with Miss M orienting to Daisy’s raised hand (Figure 6.5) and nominating her to take a turn with “Okay. Dais?” (line 1). Daisy responds with “So::” (line 2). By prolonging the ending sound, she sets up her turn-at-talk and signals the imminent taking of the main floor (Mahl, 1987). She then prefaces her turn with the pre-expansion (Schegloff, 2007) “you can’t make it out of lollies or anything” (lines 2, 3). This ‘prepares the field’ (Schegloff, 2007) by displaying an understanding of Miss M’s previous turn while making relevant the production of the next utterance and securing its viability. As in Extract 6.3, Daisy has already rehearsed her entry onto the main floor in the comments made to Abe on the side floor of Extract 6.4 - “It’s made out of lol::ly gas˚” (line 13) and “It’s gonna be a lolly planet˚” (line 20). This demonstrates Daisy’s ability to seamlessly shift between main and side floor conversations as a consociate to the informing. Daisy’s use of “but what >appens if” (lines 3, 4) prefigures an alternative position that is framed in the talk as a ‘what’ question. She is not seeking further information from the teacher (as in Extract 6.3), but rather is positioning a challenge to the requirements of the task. By emphasising the word “can”, Daisy demonstrates her commitment to the yet-to-be-delivered proposal “make it out of lollies”.

Miss M treats the short interval in line 5 as a possible completion of Daisy’s turn-constructional unit and an opportunity to interrupt and forestall progression of any further talk with the overlapping response “Well but <that's>” (line 6). Schegloff and Lerner (2009) report that “well”, when positioned as the first item in a turn responding to a ‘wh’ question, acts as “an indicator of incipient disaffiliation, rejection, misalignment, and the like” (p. 98). This sets into action an alert to the recipient that the prior turn is understood, not only as a question but also as a challenge, and the response to follow will not be an answer but a justification (Schegloff & Lerner, 2009). Miss M emphasises “Well” and stretches out “<that's>” as she competes against Daisy for the floor. In this moment, Daisy has an immediate decision to make as to whether she continues to say more or not (Lee, 2012). She shows her interest in saying more by producing the sound stretch “and then::” which allows her to avoid finishing her turn early. Miss M’s withdrawal from the overlap and silence seems to acknowledge the decision by Daisy to
talk more and Daisy emerges 'into the clear' (Schegloff, 2000). Saying more represents a particular choice (Schegloff 1986), and it turns out that speaker Daisy decides to offer an elaboration of her comment. She sets up an expectation that more of the turn is necessary as she provides further examples to complete her argument. This persistence in keeping the floor, reflects her investment in securing the turn space to get her point across and bring her own talk to its designed and projected completion (Schegloff, 2000). Once there, she repeats her just prior utterance “and then” (line 7), free of potential impairment by the simultaneous talk of Miss M. She then continues to elaborate on her proposal (lines 8, 9).

As soon as Daisy comes to the projected possible completion of her turn, Miss M starts up again. Miss M exploits the pause in Daisy’s explanation at the end of line 9 to re-format the talk, and Daisy drops out of the main floor. Daisy however continues her talk-in-progress quietly on a side floor (line 10). While Miss M’s withdrawal in line 6 cedes the turn space to Daisy, her re-start of the turn with “I would say to you then” (line 10) flags a strong return to the floor. The emphasis on “I” indicates an upgraded response (Lerner, 2004b). So, in effect, Miss M was able to sacrifice the earlier turn position in order to control longer-term aspects of the conversation (Schegloff, 2000). What follows subverts any possibility of Daisy’s proposal gaining traction. Miss M rejects Daisy’s suggestion and, in this action, provides a trigger for other actions to get done (Schegloff, 2007) that include acknowledging “that you probably haven’t learnt a whole lot” (lines 13, 14) if you support Daisy’s idea.

Miss M’s rejection and rebuttal is met with a soft sigh from Daisy (line 15) and overlapping responses from Daisy and Abe on their side floor (lines 20, 21). Daisy displays receipt of the prior turn with the sequence-closing third action ”˚O:: kay::˚” whispered softly and with prolonged middle and ending sounds. This points to that, although Daisy acknowledges the termination of the talk-in-progress and the moving onto next-positioned matters, she warily accepts Miss M’s explanation. Abe simultaneously voices his disappointment with the quiet response cry ”˚Darn it˚” (line 21). The discreetness of both remarks suggest they are not addressed to the teacher.
or meant for the main floor. Rather they are employed to give a desired impression to those in close proximity by providing a dispreferred and disappointed review of ongoing events (Goffman, 1978). In this way, students can make their position felt, make their alignment to what is occurring known, without committing others (namely the teacher) to address themselves openly to such communications (Goffman, 1981). They can preserve the appearance of alignment to the ongoing talk by taking their opposing opinions to a side floor.

6.3.6 Self-selecting to the main floor to seek clarification

In the following extract, the teacher is concluding her procedural informing on the main floor when a student 'opens up' the talk as a self-selecting, first starter (McHoul, 1978) to seek clarification on what has to be done and how to do it. Meanwhile, on the side floor, Daisy re-engages in the talk (Szymanski, 1999) by self-selecting to complain, albeit covertly, about the requirements of the task.

Extract 6.6

1. Tch: So: you have (. ) today and
2. _tomorrow (. ) throughout
3. your PLT\(^2\) time (. ) >to get
4. this information done<=
5. Cra: =Are we doin this for two
6. hours?
7. Tch: °No°. (0.2) ((Tch shakes
8. head))
9. Okay? ((Cra nods his head))
10. Tch: After you have completed
11. this aspect of the project
12. you will need to create a
13. model of your planet (. )
14. ((Tch turns to screen))
15. Tch: >which is what I talked
16. about.< ((Tch turns to face
17. the class))
18. There will be time given on

---

\(^2\) PLT refers to Personal Learning Time.
In line 1, Miss M uses the transitional device “So:” to flag the continuation of the procedural informing. What occurs next is a violation of McHoul’s rules of classroom interaction (McHoul, 1978). In this episode, without invitation from Miss M, Craig takes an opportunity in the natural pause of her explanation to initiate self-selection by latching, without a break, his turn-at-talk to her prior one. In line 5, Craig squeezes a turn into the main floor talk by blurtling out an information seeking, yes/no question “Are we doin this for two hours?” (Figure 6.6). In the action of requesting information, Craig, in the role of questioner, commits to a lack of knowledge with regard to the matter at hand and projects the answerer, Miss M, to be in a knowing position (Heritage, 2005). How Miss M deals with this potential violation of the ‘not more than one party should speak at a time’ rule in the next utterance reveals actions associated with ‘noticing’ (Sacks, 1992). Rather than naming the action in Craig’s prior turn as ‘interrupting’ or competing for the floor by talking loudly and simultaneously over the top the interrupter, Miss M allows him to finish his turn-at-talk and orients to his question by making a straightforward, type-conforming response “No” (line 7). Her soft voice suggests that her comment is like an aside, an ‘on the fly’ response inserted.
into the more official informing (Mortensen, 2011). She supports this verbal response with a shake of her head as she shifts her gaze towards him. In doing so, she shows that she is not really bothered by his butting-in, and that no violative or aggressive act has occurred that requires either an objection by the teacher or an apology by the student (Bilmes, 1997). She demonstrates her hearing of the question as being problematic only for Craig and not something representative of the whole cohort’s (mis)understanding of the task. She names it as an aside, as if just for his benefit. With “Okay?” Miss M then checks that Craig has understood. He responds with a nod of his head that communicates a shift in knowledge and indicate that the answer was informative to the questioner (Heritage, 2005).

This question-answer pattern is found in ordinary conversation where a request for information is completed with a sequence-closing third action (Schegloff, 2007) in this case Craig’s nod of the head. As a result, Miss M can then quickly regain the floor and resume her informing without leaving any space for a follow-up response from Craig. Craig’s request for information can also be viewed as an example of back-channel behaviour (Gardner, 1998); an understanding between the speaker and the listener that the turn has not been yielded, and Craig does not assume the main role of speaker. Instead he displays a typical practice by listeners who seek to vocalise their understanding as a minimal response in an effort to encourage the main speaker to go on (Gardner, 1997, 1998). Sacks (1992) describes this practice as asking an “appendor question” (p. 663) whereby the hearer latches his utterance as speaker to the formal speaker’s prior utterance so he can quickly retain the hearer role again.

Meanwhile, on a side floor, Daisy self-selects to contest the requirements of the task in an extended turn. By seemingly seeking clarification with two consecutive questions “<Why are we?> What?” (line 7), she flags impending trouble in response to Miss M’s explanation in line 1. The soft clarifying appendor “What?” displays Daisy’s use of an open class of repair initiators that leaves open the repairable trouble from the prior turn (Drew, 1996). Daisy re-enters the side floor in line 15 with an additional complaint disguised as a question “<We only have two days?>”, naming the
repairable trouble as the time constraint placed on completing the task. She turns towards Abe and Craig to engage them in a potential schimising (Figure 6.7). She has a scowl on her face.

While the boys do not provide any verbal response, they do acknowledge her turn-at-talk by shifting their gaze way from Miss M and towards Daisy. Craig leans forward in Daisy’s direction as trying to hear what she is saying. Daisy’s action of complaining as a dispreferred action suggests that she is continuing to build an association between herself and the boys as she grumbles surreptitiously about the task. Again in the main floor pause of line 21, Daisy re-engages talk on the side floor to repeat her disapproval. Daisy states her objection “’What?’” just loud enough to engage Abe and Craig but soft enough not to be heard by Miss M. Again Daisy uses the safety of the side floor to voice her rejection of the explanation without provoking reprisal from the teacher. Her combative stance is protected by the anonymity of the side floor, and she again preserves the appearance of alignment to the ongoing talk by taking her disagreements to a side floor.

6.3.7 Co-producing shared meaning across floors

The next extract shows collaborative work being interactionally achieved between teacher and students as they negotiate meaning across turns and conversational floors. It demonstrates how conversations on the main floor facilitate opportunities for ongoing talk on the side floor between Daisy and Abe. Through actions that disagree or agree with each other’s interpretations of the task, Daisy and Abe display their proficiency in managing what to do next and how to do it. It also demonstrates how student
entry to the main floor acts an interactional resource by offering the context from which the next choice of utterance is made (Lee, 2012).

Extract 6.7

1. Tch:  Okay so tell me (.)
2.  yeah so tell me the 
3.  proper name. (0.2)
4.  Okay.hhh  
5.  So (. ) you're more than  
6.  welcome to get started  
7.  with that now  
8.  (. ) if you have  
9.  finished your other  
10. inquiry or if you'd  
11. like a break  
12. from  
13. your maths or your  
14. religion or whatever.  
15. (0.2) At 10  
16. o'clo::ck  
17. (0.5)  
18. Tch:  I'm going to:: then  
19. explain to you our  
20. writing task. So >you  
21. have a bit< of a  
22. narrative writing task  
23. that we're going to work  
24. on as well=  
25. S2: =Are we doin space  
26. enemies?=  
27. Tch: ="No"= ((Shakes head))  
28. S2: =or our speeches?  
29. Tch: "No". Okay so I'll  
30. explain that to you as  
31. well.  

Abe: "No (. ) mine’s gonna  
be made out of (. ) it’s a  
balloon (. ) cover it in  
blue (. ) and then put  
marshmallows all over it’.

Dai: "No (. ) but you’re not  
allowed ta have  
marshmallows".

Abe: "Yeah".

Abe: “As long as you’ve learnt  
something”.

Dai: "Oh alright’.
In a similar pattern to previous extracts, Miss M extends her turn-at-talk with the transitional device “Okay so” (line 1). Abe uses the pause at the end of line 3 as a relevant place to self-select and launch his own turn-at-talk on the side floor. He overlaps Miss M’s informing with the dispreferred response “°No°” indicating disagreement with how to approach the task. He gestures with his hands as he announces what he is about to do (Figure 6.8). As the conversation unfolds, the two-party exchange system on Abe and Daisy’s side floor follows the same ‘one-speaker-at-a-time’ rule as the main floor, except both speakers are individuals and not one member within a single unit. Turns-at-talk alternate in an orderly fashion between Abe and Daisy as they discuss plans for the next part of the lesson. Daisy’s body is now positioned away from the main floor conversation towards Abe and Craig. In this way, their simultaneous talk does not compete with that of the main floor as its participants engage in a separate, yet physically nearby, conversation (Schegloff, 2000).

In line 9, Daisy disengages from the main floor talk to reject Abe’s plan with a forthright “°No (.) but°”, setting up a rebuttal based on her understanding of Miss M’s earlier stipulations from Extract 6.5. Daisy emphasises the word “°not°” in “°you’re not allowed ta have marshmallows°” to qualify her rejection of Abe’s response. Abe responds in line 12 by adopting the agreement + disagreement format (Schegloff, 2007) by prefacing his response with the agreement token “°Yeah°” before following it up with a second pair part renouncing his initial stance with the alternative response “°As long as you’ve learnt something°” (lines 15,16). In doing so, Abe provides an opportunity for Daisy to modify her understanding by accepting his assessment of the task requirements. Daisy’s sequence closing, change of
state token “Oh alright” (line 17) acknowledges receipt of this opposing view and a shift in her knowledge, thanks to Abe, about the particulars of the task.

Meanwhile on the main floor, Miss M is concluding the informings part of the lesson with some final instructions. In line 25, S2 seeks opportunistic clarification around the nature of the writing task by latching a yes/no question to Miss M’s prior utterance. Here, the intent of this clarifying appendor is not to disturb the telling by launching a new sequence, but rather it sets out to confirm or disconfirm the most recent part of the teacher’s explanation (Sacks, 1992). This prompts a responding action by Miss M who, without a break, latches a straightforward, type-conforming response to his question (line 27). She does so in a soft voice, as if addressing S2 individually, aside from the main conversation (Figure 6.9).

Figure 6.9. Setting and participants of Extract 6.7 (the main floor).

S2 immediately continues his still-in-progress turn with “=or our speeches?” (line 28). In doing so, he “skip-connects” (Sacks, 1992) across Miss M’s answer as a way of tying his current utterance back to his previous turn as a next increment to further prompt a response from Miss M. In line 29, Miss M targets S2 in another softly spoken “No”. S2 does not re-enter the main floor. Through this process of self-selection to request clarification, students show that they are orientating toward the talk of their teacher, and project and consolidate interactional and relational bonds in the same way that extended small talk episodes do (McCarthy, 2003).

S2’s self-initiated turns-at-talk are treated by Miss M, not as interruptions that disrupt the social order of the classroom, but as insertions that clarify something potentially of relevance to everyone and associated with the main business at hand. By stopping and responding to S2’s
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questions, Miss M endorses valid access to the main floor for students. She also is able to deal with some perceived deficiency in her explanation by resolving the problem at just that point (Lerner, 2004b) and then carrying on her turn-at-talk without departure from the subject. In this way, the continued progress of the informing, while delayed by the initiation of clarification, is only minimally disturbed. Furthermore, S2’s entry to the main floor sets up a sequential expectation that more turns by the teacher are necessary to complete the explanation. Miss M responds “Okay so I’ll explain that to you as well” (lines 29-31), and in doing so, acknowledges that her explanation is not sufficient and subsequent turns will be required. Miss M then seamlessly proceeds with her extended turn, resuming her role as the main speaker (a role that was never yielded in the first place).

6.3.8 Moving into independent work

The final extract in this chapter captures the talk that immediately follows the procedural informing. It shows how Year 6 students use certain practices to re-engage talk in their small group after the main floor has been disbanded. In the actions that unfold, students display their orientation to the next activity, that of independent work, now framed by a shared understanding of what to do and how to do it. Topical runs connect the activity of informing to that of students’ independent work showing how different activities are constituted and maintained across sequences of talk.

Extract 6.8

1. Bri: Well (.) on my planet (.) there are only >and I said
2. only< pigeons.
3. Dai: 'One two three four [five six seven eight nine ten’.]
4. Bri: [That's a waste (.). of planet.]
5. Dai: So my one (.) will be:: the
6. (0.5)
7. Dai: fifteenth [planet]=
8. Abe: [’No::’] ((Abe works on his laptop))
10. (2.0)
11. Dai: Wait (.) >should it be fifteenth?<
12. Abe: ((Abe shifts gaze to Bri)) The highest ever
13. [recorded temp on (.)) the marshmallow planet is (.)
14. minus 1202.]
15. Dai: ['My (0.2) planet (0.2) is (0.2) from'] ((Dai types on
16. her laptop))
17. Bri: Wait (.)) minus? ((Bri leans towards Abe’s laptop))
18. Dai: ((Dai looks towards Abe)) It can't be
19. [no offence< but it can't be out]
20. Bri: [Wouldn’t the marshmallows freeze?]  
21. Dai: of marshmallow. ((Bri laughs))
22. Abe: Yeah it can.
24. Abe: As long as it has a gas in it.
25. Dai: Aww::
26. Aar: 'A gas.' .hhh
27. Abe: That's why [I'm gunna]-
28. Dai: [YES!] I'm gonna make a chocolate river.
29. Bri: [You're gonna be popular 'with that'.]
30. Abe: [I'm making a:: (.) I'm putting balloon in it which is
31. carbon dioxide.]
32. Bri: Balloon?
33. Abe: Yeah no (.)) I'm putting a balloon (.)) the balloon's the
34. core:: (0.2) and then I just step in it an glue::
35. (0.5)
36. Abe: [and chuck marshmallows all over it].
37. Bri: [Ummm. Like there are (0.2)] pigeons? ((looks at her
38. computer))
40. Guy: Yours is? (0.2) [Darn it.]
41. Dai: [Mine] will be made out of melted
42. chocolate.
43. (0.5)
44. Dai: >I mean chocolate< (.)) and then it'll have a melted
45. chocolate (0.2)river. <And then> it'll have white
46. chocolate as grass (.)) but it will be dyed into:: green.
47. (0.5)
48. Bri: It's goin to BE A MASTERPIECE!
Brit re-engage the talk by opening the first sequence after the informings with a noteworthy comment about her work (Szymanski, 1999) in an announcement “W::ell (.) on my planet” which supports “only >and I said only< pigeons” (lines 1, 2). Brit’s turn initiates an occasion of talk that summons others in the group to respond to the topical run from the earlier informings about what constitutes a planet. Brit’s actions set the interactional stage for talk to occur. Daisy then enters the floor with an extended turn where she quietly locates the position of her planet using self-directed talk (Goffman, 1978). In line 4, Brit overlaps Daisy’s self-talk by responding to her own announcement and challenging the validity of her own idea with the negative assessment “That's a waste (.) of planet”. Abe, who is working independently on his laptop (Figure 6.10), makes a frustrated response cry “No:” (line 8) to which there is no response. Then Daisy poses an interrogative question to which nobody knows the answer (line 11). This public display of situationally appropriate self-talk engages the speaker as the officially-intended recipient along with all the other students in the physical space as over-hearers of the talk (Goffman, 1978). Students simultaneously display a dual orientation to their own talk while overhearing the self-directed talk of others.

In line 12, Abe looks up from his laptop and makes his own noteworthy announcement about the temperature on his marshmallow planet. This topic can be traced back to the side floor conversation with Daisy in Extract 6.7 (lines 4-8). Daisy continues to self-talk as she types words into her laptop. Brit resumes her turn-at-talk with the rhetorical summons “Wait”. She flags trouble with Abe’s announcement by posing the question “minus?” (line 17). Despite Daisy breaking into the conversation, Brit overlaps Daisy’s talk to name and expand the repairable trouble with “Wouldn’t the
marshmallows freeze?” (line 20). Abe does not respond to Brit’s question because Daisy, as an over-hearer of the talk, interjects to express her disagreement with the marshmallow topic altogether. She partially repeats her utterance from Extract 6.7 (lines 9-11) “you’re not allowed to have marshmallows” in the ongoing rejection of Abe’s plans claiming “it can’t be out of marshmallow” (lines 18, 19, 21). In line 22, Abe stands firm and confirms his position with “Yeah it can”. Daisy partially backs down in the change-of-state token “Aww” in line 23, and Abe continues his justification citing Miss M’s earlier informing “As long as it has a gas in it” (line 24). Daisy’s repeating of the token “Aww::” signifies understanding and a modification to her stance. Daisy is treating Abe’s prior talk as sufficient and thus displays acceptance of his idea.

In line 27, Abe continues to explain how he is going to incorporate gas into his marshmallow project but is interrupted by Daisy’s overlapping, loud response cry “YES” (line 28). What follows is an extended sequence whereby Daisy and Abe proceed turn-by-turn to explain what they are going to do and how they are going to do it. Abe’s “putting a balloon in it” (line 32) and then stepping “in it an glue” (line 34) followed by chucking “marshmallows all over it” (line 36). Daisy is “gonna make a chocolate river” (line 28) with “white chocolate as grass” (lines 45, 46) but “dyed into green” (line 46). Other students participate in the talk as they offer assessments of the informings “You’re gonna be popular with that” (line 29) and the triumphant “It’s goin to BE A MASTERPIECE!” (line 48). In doing so, students display their competence in working together interactionally to demonstrate their understanding of the task as it gets done. In the previous procedural informings, Miss M and her students have co-produced an understanding of what to do and how to do it, and as a result, an enthusiasm has been created for this next phase of the lesson to unfold; that of independent work.

6.4 Conclusion

This chapter has examined the interactional achievements of students and their teacher as they co-produce the activity of informings in a Year 6 classroom at the end of the school year. By focusing on the notion of topical
runs and the practice of floor shifting, analysis has revealed how students move seamlessly between conversational floors by aligning themselves to the talk on different floors at the same time. Main and side floor conversations become merged as students simultaneously access and process information from both floors to make sense of what the teacher is telling them to do. Such interactional arrangements provide enhanced opportunities for students to enter the main floor as consociates to the emerging talk whereby they display and use shared knowledge of the topic, often worked up on a side floor, to clarify potentially problematic matters. Students act as more than mere recipients of the information; rather they participate in the co-production of what to do and how to do it. As a result, actions displayed by students as they move to independent work demonstrate an informed approach to this next part of the lesson. This chapter argues that the practice of floor shifting is an important interactional resource used by students to make sense of what to do next.

The next chapter considers how Year 7 students and their teacher work together to accomplish this same phenomenon of informings at the beginning of the next year. By examining the contrasting features of classroom talk in these parts of a Year 7 lesson, the interactive options available to students during the transition process can be studied in the routineness of their school day.
CHAPTER 7

HOLDING THE FLOOR: OPPORTUNITIES FOR STUDENT PARTICIPATION IN YEAR 7 INFORMINGS

7.1 Introduction

Thus far, the thesis has established that students and teachers work together interactionally to achieve the mutual accomplishment of lesson beginnings. The previous chapter showed how Year 6 informings at the end of the school year are co-produced across conversational floors as the teacher and her students make sense of what to do next in the lesson. This chapter considers how the same phenomenon of informings is accomplished in a Year 7 classroom at the beginning of the next school year. Analysis reveals a turn-taking system that maintains a single main floor where students, as recipients of the talk (Lerner, 1992), act with few opportunities to address any problematic matters that require further clarification from the teacher. The chapter argues that the shaping of practices in this setting restricts student access to the main floor and limits chances to achieve a shared understanding of what to do and how to do it. An insight into how primary to secondary school transition unfolds in the altered turn-by-turn talk practices of the teacher and her students across Year 6 and Year 7 lessons is provided.

First, the chapter shows how the teacher, as the primary speaker, launches the informings part of the lesson by controlling the turn-taking procedures from the outset. Second, practices are investigated whereby students are invited to enter the main floor under restricted, teacher-imposed conditions such as question-answer sequences (Schegloff & Sacks, 1973). Third, various techniques used by the teacher to shut down student talk and hold the main floor for extended periods of time are explored. Fourth, the chapter highlights how students work collaboratively and covertly on side floors in orderly turns-at-talk to try to make sense of the teacher’s informings. Fifth, analysis reveals how students move into the next activity of independent work still trying to establish an understanding of the task to be
completed. Finally, the conclusion is that having fewer opportunities to access the main floor limits students’ understanding of what to do in the next activity of independent work.

7.2 Key concepts

7.2.1 Holding the floor

In this chapter, the phenomenon of conversational floors is further explored to consider how the Year 7 teacher controls the talk by maintaining first-turn rights on a single main floor. The teacher’s use of questioning sequences are investigated as a practice for ‘holding the floor’ by enforcing restrictions on what occurs next. Another technique identified by Sacks (1992) includes ‘piling up phrases’ in a “rather structurally complex and extended fashion” (p. 650) to give the impression that the speaker’s turn is not yet complete. Teachers use this strategy, along with that of ‘rushing through’ (Schegloff, 1973, 1982), to further extend their turns-at-talk. McHoul (1978, 1990) further suggests that teachers employ inter-turn pauses in their talk to demonstrate entitlement to holding the floor. He concluded that teachers are able to extend indefinitely their turns-at-talk without fear of any next starter beginning a turn at a possible completion point. Indeed the notion of 'possible completion point' is almost redundant in classroom talk he claims, resulting in what Mehan and Griffin (1980) describe as a feeling of formality.

A final practice that maintains teacher control of the floor involves the reprimanding of students when there is a violation of the 'one-party-talks-at-a-time' rule. In this way, interruptions are treated as a class of violations known as “being rude” (Sacks, 1992, p. 638). This strategy indicates authority structures that are tied to the administration of orderly procedures and their enforcement (Macbeth, 1991). Teachers frequently use non-word vocalisations like "shhhh" to pointedly call for 'no one next' (Goffman, 1978) and reinforce the two-party exchange system. As a result, the turn itself calls for 'no talk', and is thus produced as an audible sign of the silence it calls for. Such teacher practices cohort students into one single unit and provide limitations on their access to interactive options as they try to make sense of what to do next in the lesson.
7.2.2 Data

In the same way as Chapter 6, the single case of Year 7 informings in this chapter was identified after rigorous scrutiny of 30 hours of audio recordings and 20 hours of video footage across nine sessions of Year 7 inquiry lessons. It was selected because it was seen to be representative of the interactional phenomenon of informings across Year 7 recordings. This process, while detecting some examples of procedural informings, revealed a greater incidence of factual informings when compared to the Year 6 data. In factual informings, the teacher passes on factual knowledge in a base first-pair-part as something to be learnt while students absorb the information as recipients of the talk (Gardner & Mushin, 2013). According to Gardner and Mushin (2013), factual informings mobilise a weaker response in students when it comes to demonstrating shared knowledge of what is being learnt. As a result, teachers are provided with little guidance as to what students have actually understood. So while it may be logical to assume that knowledge is shared between teacher and students, Gardner and Mushin (2013) conclude that this logic does not necessarily transfer to the real world of classroom interaction.

Again as with any single case analysis, caution is applied by the researcher, as the findings here cannot be extrapolated to all Year 7 classrooms everywhere. However, for this thesis, the study of the social accomplishment of informings at the end of one year in a Year 6 classroom and at the beginning of the next year in Year 7 can provide insight into the interactional resources that students use to participate in lessons during this important time of transition.

7.3 Opportunities for student participation in Year 7 informings

7.3.1 Controlling access to the main floor

This extract occurs immediately after the Year 7 lesson opening of Chapter 5 and Extract 5.7. The extract below captures the very next turn-at-talk. It shows how the activity of informings is launched. Central to the analysis are the teacher’s early actions that enforce restrictions around student entry to the main floor, constraining the use by students of certain...
interactional resources. As in Chapter 6, side floor conversations are analysed on the right hand side of the transcript in parallel to the unfolding main floor talk.

Extract 7.1

1. Tch: Today we:: are going to be moving
2. on to look at picture storybook
3. el↑ements. Okay. So things like
4. line (. ) shape (. ) colour (. ) that
5. sort of thing. Um:: we’re goin-
6. to-be using (. ) the:: year seven
7. classroom (. ) have you all been
8. sent a link by one of the staff?
9. Sts: No. ((Chorusing by students))
10. Tch: Just no (. ) just don't (. ) just
11. nod or shake your (0.2) shake
12. your head.
13. (1.0)
14.
15.
16.
17. I'll show you what it is. ((Tch
18. turns to work on her computer))

Figure 7.1. Setting and participants of Extract 7.1.

In line 1, Miss E initiates next-positioned matters (Clark & Tree, 2002) by announcing the nature of the informings and focus of the lesson as “picture storybook el↑ements”, She then lists the topics in a three-part list (Jefferson, 1990) “line (. ) shape (. ) colour (. )”. This is a clear case of the teacher, in the position of primary speaker, instigating an extended sequence with the intent of passing on factual information to her students (Gardner &
Mushin, 2013). As she takes hold of the main floor and launches the sequence, she flags a potential problem (Clark & Tree, 2002) and starts searching for the right words with a prolonged “Um::” (line 5). She then makes the statement “we’re goin-to-be using (. ) the:: year seven classroom (. )” and follows up with a request for information from students in the form of the ‘yes/no’ question “have you all been sent a link by one of the staff?” (lines 5-8). By emphasising “all”, Miss E resumes the use of cohorting practices by addressing her question to the class as a whole, to one audience rather than a particular student. In doing so, she displays an orientation to the conjoined participation of her students as recipients and to her part in sustaining the interaction similar to that of an orator and audience (Lerner, 1993). This is a classic case of current speaker selects next through a question-answer action sequence (Schegloff & Sacks, 1973).

As in these sequences, questions as first pair parts invite answers as relevant second parts (Schegloff, 2007); so therefore, a question such as “have you all been sent a link by one of the staff?” marks an existing method of responding by recipients and a syntactically marked place for speaker transition (Lerner, 1994). At the completion of Miss E’s turn, multiple students, as an ensemble in unison, respond to the invitation with the relevant next action answer in the dispreferred response “No” (line 9). Miss E’s latched rebuke in line 10 “Just no (. ) just don’t (. )” rejects such a response as inappropriate and invalid. Students hear the question as an invitation to respond verbally, however Miss E’s next turn reveals that she is seeking, not a verbal response, but a non-verbal one. She emphasises the word “don’t” to stress the importance of not responding in such a way. This, followed by an informing “just nod or shake your head”, passes on information to students about constraints and expected behaviours in the Year 7 classroom. It cues students into conditions of access to the main floor that are controlled strictly by the teacher. The teacher’s turn in lines 10 to 12 violates the norms of informal conversation by not accepting a verbal answer. The rational property of this exchange is not related to the orderliness of an extended discourse but to the maintenance and continued orientation to the categorical order of teacher-student (Freebody & Freiberg, 2011).
In the pause of line 13, Abe and Jack turn their heads towards each other (Figure 7.1) and engage in the main topic of conversation via a parallel side floor. So while Miss E seemingly shuts down traces of illegitimate student talk in her reprimand “Just no (.) just don't (.)”, students continue to re-engage in further conversation through schiming. Abe quietly repeats his “N:: ay˚” from line 9 and then Jack overlaps his “Nay˚” in agreeance with Abe. By “voicing the same words in the same way at the same time” (Lerner, 2002, p. 17), Jack joins in the production of Abe’s turn, projecting a shared action. Jack follows the co-construction of the speaking turn (Lerner, 2002) with breathiness which indicates laughter. Abe then responds playfully in line 16 with “Just nay”. In this short exchange of turns, Abe and Jack establish agreement and build rapport through humour. Jack’s laughter increases their association and intimacy (Jefferson et al., 1987) and instils a feeling that they are operating on the same wavelength (Edelsky, 1981).

In line 17, Miss E continues her extended turn with the declarative “I'll show you what it is” flagging a teacher-led procedural informing to follow. Her emphasis on “I'll” further reinforces the notion that the teacher as the informer is about to impart the necessary information to her students, the recipients (Gardner & Mushin, 2013). Miss E then proceeds to work on her computer for 1min 10secs, looking up at the electronic whiteboard every so often as she attempts to locate the link to share with students.

7.3.2 Conditional entry to the main floor

The next extract investigates the very next sequence-initiating action in the lesson where the turn shifts from teacher to students and quickly back to the teacher, eliciting restricted entry (Lerner, 2002) to the main floor for students. The main floor has been left vacant for 1min 10secs and the talk around the classroom has become fragmented as multiple simultaneous conversations have unfolded on multiple floors. Upon her re-entry as primary speaker, Miss E returns to the class of practices associated with lesson openings to re-construct social order by cohorting students into a single unit and re-accomplish the interactional readiness required for her informings to continue.
Extract 7.2

1. Tch: OKAY. Thank you.
2. (3.0)
3. Tch: There's a few people not listening still.
4. (2.0)
5. Tch: Righto. <Have you seen> this before? ((Tch points to whiteboard))
6. Sts: Yes. ((Chorusing by multiple students))
7. Tch: Yes. Okay. Um:: so you will have been sent the link (.)
8. if you haven't (.) you will be able to let me know at the right time. Okay. After we've finished discussing what's on here. So for today (0.2) we'll be looking at (.). um
9. lesson three.

Figure 7.2. Setting and participants of Extract 7.2.

The teacher’s body position and gaze shifts towards the group as she stands from her sitting position and issues a summons in a raised voice so it can be heard over the chattering of the class. “OKAY. Thank you” (line 1), followed by a lengthy pause in line 2, launches the sequential framework and class of practices explored in Chapter 5. After the summons comes the directive “There’s a few people not listening still” (line 3) which again reinforces those actions associated with attentiveness and, in doing so, reminds students of the one-at-a-time rule (Sacks, et al., 1974) while shutting down any competitive student talk on side floors. The ensuing shared silence of line 4 provides opportunity for the work of ‘being ready’ to be re-accomplished by teacher and students. Once this sequence has been invoked as the resource to sustain orientation to the upcoming activity (Heritage & Sorjonen, 1994), Miss E can resume her talk on a single main floor maintained by the two-party exchange system.
Miss E moves into the informing with the familiar “Righto” (line 5), and, as she points to whiteboard, asks the information seeking, yes/no question “<Have you seen> this before?” (Figure 7.2). Her use of technology as an educational tool provides the impetus to shift to this new activity (Aoki et al., 2003). She says “<Have you seen>” at a slower rate than the surrounding speech indicating that what she is about to say is important. Her initial use of a question both begins the interaction and works as a prequel to her request (Schegloff, 1990). In doing so, it provides the ‘go ahead’ for the projected sequence type to move forward. As in the previous extract, the first-type action delivered as a question shapes the second-type action into an answer (Schegloff & Sacks, 1973) which is made relevant for the next turn. In this way, Miss E is inviting “you” to speak next by producing a turn-at-talk that includes an answer to her question in the response slot made available at the end of the utterance. Because Miss E does not gesture to anyone in particular, “you” is interpreted as ‘all of you’ by students and together they respond “Yes” (line 6).

Given Miss E’s response to student chorusing in the previous extract, it is surprising that she accepts a verbal response (in favour of a non-verbal one) and allows students transitory entry to the main floor. Heritage (2005) suggests that special turn-taking systems embedded within institutional interactions are largely pre-allocated, so when participants encounter a question-answer sequence that embodies a request for information, the question is routinely responded with an answer and completed by a sequence-closing third action (Schegloff, 2017, p. 118). In classrooms, McHoul (1987) claims that teachers, and only teachers, have the right and obligation to give, once an answer has been produced, a comment on the sufficiency of that answer. In this sequence, Miss E does not respond with a rebuke nor consider the students’ joint preferred response inappropriate. Instead she replies with a positive mark of acceptance towards the answer (Schegloff, 2007) in the sequence-closing third “Yes. Okay.” (line 8).

Then, with “Um:: so” (line 8), the teacher sets up her turn-at-talk. From this moment on, Miss E holds the main floor without opportunity for the turn to be changed in an extended sequence of talk.
7.3.3 Constructing a side floor

This extract captures the management of a side floor by students, alongside the main one of Extract 7.2, as a site of annotation, interpretation and elaboration. Analysis shows how students orient to and explore disparate topics in a coherent way (Schegloff, 1990) from both main floor and pre-existing conversations.

Extract 7.3

1. Tch: OKAY. Thank you.
2. (5.5) Abe: ‘Shaun’?
3. (1.0)
4. Abe: ‘Who the heck is Shaun’?
5. (3.5)
6. Tch: There’s a few people not listening still.
7. Abe: ‘Who is it’? ((Jac looks at Abe and points))
8. (2.0) ‘Awww::
10. (0.5)
11. Tch: Righto. <Have you seen> this before?
12. (Chorusing by multiple students) Abe: ‘Y-air::ss’.
13. Sts: Yes. (Chorusing by multiple students)
14. (0.2)
16. Um:: so you will have been sent the link.
17. (Jac: ‘Yippee-

As Miss E takes back the floor with a loud call for attention (line 1), Abe and Jack are continuing their talk-in-progress on their side floor. Abe displays ongoing trouble in understanding the identity of a particular student from the immediately preceding utterances with other students. This prompts
a short passage of collaborative repair work (Schegloff et al., 1977; Schegloff, 1987) where the identification of Shaun is pursued by Abe. In line 2, despite the loud summons by the teacher, Abe competes with the main floor conversation by keeping the side floor open. He expands the repairable trouble with the information seeking question “Who the heck is Shaun?” (line 4). A long pause follows without any response from Jack as Miss E, on the main floor, makes a veiled reprimand in the form of the declarative “There’s a few people not listening still” (lines 6, 7). While this utterance is hearable as being both for Abe and Jack, Abe persists by repeating the repairable trouble for a third time in a soft voice “Who is it?” (line 8). At this, Jack acknowledges Abe’s turn-at-talk, turns to face him and points in the general direction of Shaun without speaking (Figure 7.3). In his response, Jack demonstrates his orientation to the legitimacy of main floor conversation where his attention is now required. Abe replies with a change-of-state token (Heritage, 1984) “Awww::” (line 10) registering receipt of Jack’s information, indicating a change in understanding and marking closure of that talk sequence (Jefferson, 1972) and topic.

Switching quickly to the main floor topic of conversation, Abe immediately self-selects to start up a new side floor sequence in response to the image shown on the electronic whiteboard. He overlaps Miss E’s yes/no question “<Have you seen> this before?” with the declarative “I’ve got that” (line 11). He then follows this up with the preferred answer “Y-air::ss” in response to Miss E’s prior turn on the main floor (line 13). Jack responds both to Miss E’s question and Abe’s answer with the soft response cry that only Abe can hear “Yip↑pee-do-dar” (lines 16, 17). In this way, Abe and Jack participate in the orderly distribution of turns-at-talk that are shaped by a dual orientation to prior turns on both conversational floors. They demonstrate their expertise in orienting to the turn-taking organisation of both floors.

7.3.4 Shutting down side floors

This extract, 45 seconds later, shows how the teacher, without relinquishing the turn-at-talk, breaks from the activity of informing to impose
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the closure of subsidiary sequences of talk on side floors. Central to the analysis is Miss E’s use of reprimanding as a practice to reinforce the two-party exchange system that preserves the supremacy of the main floor and the main speaker.

Extract 7.4

1. Tch: Okay? So what you're going to be doing is for each of the yellow sentences you're going to be copying them out into your book (.). under the slide headings. Okay?

Abe: ‘Hmmpff.’

2. First we're just gonna go through them together. Alright?

Jac: ‘Same thing as we did last time’.

Abe: ‘Er hmm’.

3. <you don't need to write anything (.). yet> (.). I'll tell you when.

Jac: ‘Yeah yet’.

4. and you'll be using your workbook to do this.

Abe: ‘Damm’.

5. Unless told otherwise.

Jac: ‘I’m gonna do it without’.

6. So

25. (0.5)

24. Tch: Shhhhh::

26. (0.5)

23. Tch: You don't need anything open at the moment.

29. You don't (.)

30. need to start writing (.)

31. um or freak out when I

32. start going through the slides (hh) fairly quickly.

34. Okay? Again you'll be able

27. ((Abe flips through his book))

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35. to access the slides (.).
36. your own pace
37. (0.2)
38. after we look at it
39. together.

Abe: ‘Pbrrr::’.

This extract starts with Miss E continuing her telling-in-progress. In line 1, she uses “Okay?” both in response to her just prior talk and as a conversation technique to extend her single long turn (Beach, 1995) and project continued control of the main floor (Gardner & Mushin, 2013). The work of “Okay?” in line 7 again flags continuation of the procedural informing around how to approach the task at hand. In lines 8 and 9, Miss E arranges the telling in time order starting with “First we’re just gonna go through them together”. By using “First” as a list-initiating marker (Schegloff, 1992), she is projecting a multi-unit course of talk to follow; an extended turn where recipients are required to hold off talking until all the subsequent items in the list are produced. This is followed by a pause and then the familiar “Alright? So” (lines 11, 12) in a recycled turn beginning position (Schegloff, 1987) to introduce the supporting procedural informing “<you don't need to write anything (.). yet> (.). I'll tell you when” (lines 13-15). As this teacher-directed sequence continues in lines 17 to 24, Miss E employs inter-turn pauses as a demonstration of her entitlement to hold the floor and prolong her turn-at-talk at will (McHoul, 1978, 1990). At the end of line 21, Miss E uses the discourse marker “So” to indicate that her turn is ongoing.

In parallel to this extended turn-at-talk, Abe and Jack engage in a simultaneous schismed conversation on their side floor. This surreptitious sequence between the boys starts with Abe treating the natural pause at the
end Miss E’s informing of line 6 as a possible completion of a speaking unit (Sacks et al., 1974) and an opportunity for speaker transition. He overlaps Miss E’s ongoing talk and self-selects to the side floor he shares with Jack with an initial assessment, in the form of the response cry, “‘Hmmmff’”. In doing so, he shifts the next turn-at-talk from the main floor to a side floor where he can display his quiet disapproval of Miss E’s explanation without directing it to her.

Similarly, in line 9, Jack bridges conversational floors by responding both to the particulars of Miss E’s informing while showing agreement with Abe’s assessment in the soft declarative “‘Same thing as we did last time’”. By emphasising “‘Same’”, Jack provides a second assessment of the task (Pomerantz, 1984) in the form of a complaint about its repetitive nature. In proffering the complaint in the next turn, Jack shows agreement with Abe’s assessment; a preferred next action (Schegloff, 2007). Abe then further strengthens this shared sense of agreement in the follow up/third-turn receipt slot with the acknowledgement token “‘Er hmm’” (line 12). Jack then resumes the side floor talk in the main floor pause of line 16 with a sarcastic “‘Yeah yet’” as a response to Miss E’s informing “<you don’t need to write anything (.) yet>”. In the next possible turn (Lerner, 1993) in the pause of line 19, Abe self-selects and takes a turn as next speaker responding to Miss E’s “and you'll be using your workbook to do this”. He utters another quiet response cry “‘Damm’”, re-confirming his displeasure towards any task-related reference to workbooks and writing. In these instances, both Abe and Jack use the clandestineness of the side floor to orient to actions that invite agreement with each other by establishing disagreement with the teacher’s informing. Their turn-taking behaviours connect conversational floors as they make use of “transition relevance places” (Sacks et al., 1974, p. 703) occurring on the main floor to initiate a change of speakers to their side floor. So while Miss E continues her extended turn as the primary and only speaker, there is covert self-selection by other speakers on side floors as they take turns to talk about the current topic.

In line 24, Miss E self-interrupts to shut down, what she interprets as competing side floor talk, and restores her status as first speaker with first
speaker rights (Sacks, 1992) with the reprimand “Shhhh::”. She must regain the ‘cohortness’ lost during her long turn-at-talk. According to Macbeth (1992), the routine use of ‘shh’ pointedly calls for ‘no one’ next. In doing so, it accomplishes the important interactional work of reinforcing social order and signalling an immediate return to the one-at-a-time rule where the teacher maintains the floor with primary speaking rights (McHoul, 1978). At the same time, she cautions students on their use of the side floor as an interactional resource. Miss E stands upright and very still at the front of the classroom (Figure 7.4). She looks out at the class and, in the pause of line 25, waits for the work of ‘being ready’ to be re-accomplished so that the informing can continue. In lines 26 to 30, she recycles the directives “You don’t need anything open at the moment”, and “You don’t (. ) need to start writing”. This suggests that she can see students starting to write on their opened laptops and she is directing them to stop in order to keep them focused on her talk which she is indicating is not yet complete.

Despite Miss E’s bid to shut down side floor talk, Abe and Jack continue their back and forth turn-taking as they quietly assess what’s going on. Jack seizes upon the transition relevance place in Miss E’s pause of line 22 to self-select as the next speaker in response to her informing about “using your workbook to do this”. He quietly disagrees and boldly declares “I’m gonna do it without” to which Abe responds in agreement with the acknowledgement token “Yeah” (line 26). Jack then watches Abe flick through his workbook (Figure 7.4) and then offers Abe some advice with the directive “Start a new part” (line 29). In the pause of line 37, Abe again displays his irritation and disapproval of Miss E’s procedural informing with the response cry “Pbrrr::”. Jack and Abe continue to participate in the main floor conversation on their side floor, invoking natural turn-taking rules and speaker change across floors as they take advantage of transition relevance places in Miss E’s informing. This switching to a side floor enables the practice of schisming, and it is through such covert turns-at-talk that occur during schisming that the actions of answering, agreeing, disagreeing and complaining continue to get done.
7.3.5 Restricting participation on the main floor

From the end of the previous extract, the teacher has continued, as a matter of course, an on-going uninterrupted turn-at-talk. During this series of factual informings about the lines, shapes and colours in the book, primary speakership on the main floor has not shifted from the teacher, and she has not selected any students to speak nor have any students spoken to her. In this extract, Miss E uses the practice of ‘current speaker selects next’ (Sacks et al., 1974) to change the turn. Further analysis reveals the teacher shutting down student-initiated talk to the main floor.

Extract 7.5

1. Tch: Also (0.2) what (. ) can anyone else umm suggest maybe what red and yellow are also used for?
2.  
3. (1.0) ((Tch points to student with hand raised))
4. Tch: Yep?
5. S1: Um. Yellow’s >supposed to be< like slowing down at stop lights to make us stop.
6. Tch: Yep. Okay (. ) so often the red can make us um stop as well. ((Tch points to another student with hand raised))
7. S2: Yeah. I was going to say just stop.
8. Tch: Yep.
9. (0.5)
10. Tch: What about if I say to you McDonald’s?
11. S2: Yellow and red.
12. Tch: Yeah. SO THE PICTures the pic the pictures (. ) the images of McDonald’s (. ) the yellow and the red are actually designed to make us feel hungry.
13. (0.5)
14. Tch: Okay? Think about that one for a bit (. )I don’t know how it works (. ) but apparently it does.
15. S3: How can that happen?
16. Tch: I don’t know. Um. (0.2) Alright.
17. (1.5) ((Tch stands still looking towards class))
18. Tch: Listening up please. (0.2) Thanks.
19. (0.5)
20. Tch: Blue and green are cool all cold colours and suggest ca::lmness.
The first question-answer sequence begins in line 1 with Miss E asking “can anyone else umm suggest maybe what red and yellow are also used for?”. She then nominates a student to answer. She points directly at the student in the pause of line 3 (Figure 7.5) because she does not know their name. Instead she uses the invitation “Yep?” (line 4). This results in an exchange that is typical of classroom talk-in-interaction and used by teachers as an instructional tool (Heritage, 2005). It is composed of adjacency pairs (Sacks et al., 1974) sequentially organised in a three part pattern known as Initiation-Reply-Feedback (IRF) (Mehan, 1979a, 1998; Sinclair & Coulthard, 1975). S1 begins the second turn with “Um” signalling her imminent taking of the main floor (Mahl, 1987). She then replies with the answer “Yellow’s >supposed to be< like slowing down at stop lights to make us stop” (lines 5, 6). In the next turn, Miss E evaluates the answer by accepting it in the third position and elaborating on it with extra information “so often the red can make us um stop as well” (line 7). Miss E then selects another next speaker by pointing. This indicates that Miss E is open to other answers and that S1’s response is not fully adequate. S2 provides another second-pair part in line 9, and the teacher displays acceptance of it with the third-position receipt “Yep” (line 10). Miss E then extends the sequence to provide a hint about the sought-for answer she has in mind. She elicits a response by pausing and engaging S2 with the follow-up question “What about if I say to you McDonald’s?” (line 12). In doing so, Miss E acknowledges that S2’s previous response was insufficient and not really what she was looking for. By extending her turn in this way, the teacher provides additional turn-constructional resources to prompt a correct reply (Lerner, 1995).
S2 responds in line 13 with “Yellow and red” which is accepted by Miss E in the next turn. What follows is Miss E setting up next-positioned matters with a loud “SO” that prefaces the implicated answer to her own question with “yellow and the red are actually designed to make us feel hungry” (lines 15, 16). Miss E changes the opportunity to participate by changing what is implicated as a relevant next action (Lerner, 1995). Miss E’s initial question is not oriented to as a request for information, but rather as a request for a demonstration of knowledge that S1 and S2 have failed to deliver upon. The sequence is both initiated and closed down by the teacher who knows and owns the question, comments and answer turns.

In lines 18 and 19, Miss E further elaborates on her previous turn by revealing “I don't know how it works (.) but apparently it does”. This declarative prompts a spontaneous interruption from one student who self-selects to the main floor by blurt ing out the information seeking question “How can that happen?” (line 20). In doing so, he initiates repair of the trouble arising from Miss E’s prior turn about yellow and red making you feel hungry. Miss E orients to his question by attempting to shut down the topic (Jefferson, 1984) with the non-answer “I don’t know” (line 21). She then quickly terminates the conversation by moving straight into a closing (Jefferson, 1984, 1988). By immediately returning to the class of practices that re-establish readiness for the activity in progress to resume, she signals to students that clarifying questions are an interruption to the main floor. She attempts to get back to normal procedure as soon as possible by doing something normal which amounts to her holding the floor. She recycles “Alright” to signal the closure of that sequence and the recommencement of the next part of the informing. This is followed by a long pause (line 22) where she uses her body position and gaze to solicit attention. Miss E’s next turn (line 23) indicates that she still does not have the full attention of all students, and she continues with the directive “Listening up please”. Once the social order has been re-constructed and the joint production of ‘getting ready’ has been re-accomplished, Miss E is free to continue with a new topic and another extended turn. The trouble identified in line 20 is left unresolved and a new part to the informing begins. In this way, Miss E’s factual informing,
which is sustained over long stretches of her talk, is comprised of a series of sequence-closing sequences (Schegloff, 2007) that mark closure of one aspect of the telling before moving onto the next.

7.3.6 Keeping the floor

This extract begins 1min 3secs after the previous sequence and captures the next opportunity in the factual informing where a turn potentially could be taken by someone other than the teacher. The analysis explores how, despite the fleeting interruption, the teacher continues to maintain exclusive rights to primary speakership on the main floor.

Extract 7.6

1. Tch:  ((Tch reads from the whiteboard)) So the impression
2. of how a picture object feels is its texture (. ) it
3. might be rough or slick (. ) firm or spongy (. ) hard
4. or soft (. ) jagged or smoo::th. Okay (. ) ((Tch
5. turns to face class)) It it's the way they use
6. things like line (. ) shape and colour to create the
7. texture. Okay? Sometimes you'll look at a book and
8. (. ) you might have read those books before (. ) that
9. (0.2) look like you could actually <touch and feel>
10. the object.
11. S4:  [Yeahs.]
12. Tch:  [that] is being drawn. (0.2) Okay (. ) um:: without
13. it actually being one of those books that's got
14. bits of fabric (0.2) actually umm >stuck onto it<
15. it's it's just dra::wn in a way that makes you (.)
16. wanna touch the book.
Miss E continues her turn-at-talk with her body positioned towards the electronic whiteboard as she reads aloud the contents of the slide. She then turns to face the class at “Okay” (line 4) and continues to expand the sequence by elaborating upon the topic using examples. Her speech is characterised by frequent short pauses, prolonged sounds, emphasis within words and rising intonations. She alternates, without fear of losing her right as primary speaker, between the practices of reading directly from the electronic whiteboard, and then turning to face the students and explaining the PowerPoint’s main ideas. Her reference to “those books...that (0.2) look like you could actually <touch and feel> the object” (lines 9-10) prompts a response from an unnamed student. Without being nominated as next speaker, S4 takes the floor of his own initiative and overlaps Miss E’s explanation with the acknowledgement token “Yeahs” (line 11). Some students turn their heads towards the back of the classroom to glance at S4 (Figure 7.6). In this interruption, S4 shows his analysis of the extended telling so far and projects a path for the onward development of the sequence (Drummond & Hopper, 1993a) whereby he immediately resumes his not-talking role and the teacher, as the primary teller, continues her action trajectory unaffected (Sacks et al., 1974). S4 does not bid for speakership. While he briefly takes a turn, he does not take the floor (Jefferson, 1983, 1993; Drummond & Hooper, 1993b). His utterance is short, on topic and purely acts as a demonstration of his alignment with the on-going talk. In this instance, the utterance “Yeahs” serves the function of performing backward-looking acknowledgment of Miss E’s explanation while at the same time acts as a springboard for her ongoing telling (Drummond & Hopper, 1993b).

In line 12, Miss E continues, without pausing, her turn-at-talk for a further 2mins 31secs without any contribution from students. In the production of the ongoing factual informing and in an effort to keep the floor, she piles up sentence fragments in a rather structurally complex and systematic fashion (Sacks et al., 1974). By building these elaborated sentences, there is a chance that “when you've done what can be heard as a complete sentence you will be stopped by another starting up” (Sacks et al., 1974, p. 650). So in this instance, Miss E produces a string of sentence
fragments punctuated by frequent pauses indicating to students that she hasn’t got to the end of her turn-at-talk yet. This technique limits opportunities for students and their teacher to collaboratively develop the talk.

7.3.7 Returning to a side floor

This extract occurs 57secs after the conclusion of the previous extract. By the end of this sequence, the teacher has held the main floor for a turn-at-talk spanning 3mins 22 secs. Analysis shows how students, when denied access to the main floor (and the teacher), use the safety of the side floor to seek clarification from each other around what they have to do next. In this way, the side floor, despite its clandestine usage by Abe and Jack, maintains its legitimacy for the activity that gets it done (Jones & Thornborrow, 2004).

Extract 7.7

1. Tch: So that's
2. (0.2) they are the elements
3. that we will be looking at
4. (.) okay (.). over the next
5. um:: (0.2) part of the
6. lesson. What you will do
7. in a moment is:: you will::
8. be able to access the
9. classroom.
10. (0.5) ((Tch glances at desk))
11. Tch: If you don't have a link for
12. that please let me know and
13. I’ll email it to you.
14. (0.5)
15. Tch: But what you're going ta do
16. and >I'll pop it up on the
17. whiteboard< (0.2) is you're
18. going to access (0.2)
19. the:: website (0.2) the
20. correct lesson (0.2) and then
21. you're going to work your way
22. through (0.2) the:: elements
23. that we just talked about

Jac: 'What’s wrong'?

(Abe shrugs)

Abe: 'Are you allowed to draw on these'?
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24. (0.2) putting (.) the yellow
25. heading (. ) and then > copying
26. out the yellow<. Please::
27. don't copy out what's in
28. white. (0.2) Okay?
29. It will give you:: (0.2)
30. a massive headache
31. having to do that (. ) we just
32. want you to copy out the
33. yellow as it's the most
34. important part. Alright?
35. (0.5)
36. Tch: I'll pop the date up on the
37. boar::d. Open up your
38. workbooks please. ((Miss E
39. turns to whiteboard))

Jac: 'Arr:: This is going

to take forever'.

Simultaneously, and on an already established side floor, Jack turns to face Abe and seeks clarification around the nature of a preceding interruption with a soft "What's wrong?". While Abe does not get pulled into the new conversation, he does display recipiency with a non-vocal shrug of his shoulders. Jack turns his head back towards Miss E and orients to the next part of her informing. In line 10, Abe uses the pause on the main floor to pose another information-seeking question asking Jack "Are you allowed to draw on these"?". Jack seems to register Abe’s soft request for clarification in that he briefly shifts his gaze away from Miss E towards Abe; but he does not provide an answer (Figure 7.7). Miss E then continues with her procedural informing about “what you're going ta do” (line 15) and how you’re going to
do it. She presents this as a chain of directives punctuated by frequent within-turn pauses. As she identifies each aspect of the activity, she repeats “you're going to”, building recognisability of another list in progress (Jefferson, 1990; Lerner, 1991, 1994). There is no opportunity for Jack to invoke the interactional resource of shifting floors to seek clarification from the teacher.

Miss E’s “Okay?” at the end of line 28 is treated by Jack as an end to this unit of information (Schegloff, 1987) and an appropriate place to self-select and take a turn-at-talk by issuing an assessment of the task explained in her prior turn. Jack uses this turn relevant place at the completion of the list to softly share his noticing “˚Arr:: This is going to take forever” (lines 29, 30) to the side floor. The response cry “˚Arr::” forewarns Abe, as co-participant to the side floor, that Jack is feeling overwhelmed by the task requirements. He can preserve the appearance of alignment to the ongoing talk by taking his true feelings to a side floor. Simultaneously, Miss E continues the procedural informing with another instruction “we just want you to copy out the yellow as it's the most important part” (lines 30-33). This is followed by the final directive of the informing “Open up your workbooks please” (lines 37, 38) which marks the launching of the next part of the Year 7 lesson - the activity of independent work.

While the teacher’s turn is not relinquished in this final sequence of the informings, the organisation of talk in the main floor activity spills across floors to provide opportunities for Abe and Jack to participate in separate yet topically connected turns-at-talk. So while the practice of schimming is a participation framework with two simultaneous conversations, each with its own turn-taking system, it reveals a discernible interface between the main and side floors (Egbert, 1993).

7.3.8 Moving into independent work

The final extract in this chapter captures the very next sequence of talk following the informings. It shows what happens straight after the talk has lapsed on the main floor, and how two Year 7 students use certain actions to re-engage in talk. In the actions that unfold, Abe and Jack display their
collaborative effort in trying to make sense of what it is they have to do in the next activity, that of independent work.

Extract 7.8

1. Jac: This (. ) is going to take forever. ((Jac looks at Abe))
2. Abe Arr::: This is going to take for (. ) ever.
3. (47.0) ((Jac and Abe open their laptops))
4. Jac: Now. What do we have ta do?
5. (7.5)
6. Jac: Hey. Which ones do you go into?
7. Abe: Huh?
8. Jac: Which ones do you go into?
10. Jac: Be::longing.
11. Abe: Lesson three.
12. Jac: Three? (0.2) Sugar::: (0.2) No no no no no.
13. Abe: Wait?
14. (5.0)
16. (2.0)
17. Abe: I think it’s only that one. ((Abe points to Jac’s computer screen))
18. (1.5)
19. Jac: So all that? ((Jac points to his screen))
20. (2.0)
21. Abe: >I think it’s only< the one in bol::d.
22. (1.0)
23. Abe: Arrh wait (. ) oh no (. ) >it may not be<.

Figure 7.8. Setting and participants of Extract 7.8.

Jack re-engages the talk with a repeat of the noticing “This (. ) is going to take forever” (line 1). The negative assessment of the impending task reinforces his complaining from the previous extract. Jack’s noticing makes
relevant a response; typically agreeing or disagreeing; to the noticed claim (Szymanski, 1999). He looks toward Abe to solicit his attention, and Abe then replies in agreement “Arr::: This is going to take for (.) ever” (line 2). By repeating Jack’s initial assessment word-for-word from Extract 6, Abe displays a similar action of complaining towards the impending task (Pomerantz, 1984). Through his incipient speakership (Jefferson, 1984) and the repetition of the negative assessment, Abe is heard to be aligning with Jack’s assessment of the task as “going to take forever”.

In addition to soliciting a response, Jack’s noticing requires the recipient in Abe “to look somewhere or do something in order to verify the claim being made, or to resolve the issue being raised” (Szymanski, 1999, p. 6). Jack’s next action indicates the trouble he has with the task. Following his attempt to get started, he poses the question “What do we have ta do?” (line 4). After a significant pause of 7.5 seconds, in which Jack appears to work on his laptop and try to figure out what it is he has to do, he recycles the turn-continuing device (Schegloff, 1987b) to elaborate on the trouble with “Which ones do you go into?” (line 6). Abe responds with a request for clarification in “Huh?” to which Jack replies with a repeat question. In line 9, Abe begins his response with the change-of-state token “Arr:::" indicating receipt and follows this with his attempt to resolve the issue in “Belonging”. Jack makes a brief re-statement in line 10 to acknowledge Abe’s answer, and then Abe continues with his response building on where ‘belonging’ is situated.

Jack and Abe’s talk (lines 12-24), their pauses (lines 3, 5, 12, 14, 16, 19, 21, 23), restarts (lines 4, 6, 17) and continued gaze back and forth between their screens suggest they are trying to establish meaning around what has to be done next. Despite Jack indicating resolution of the trouble with “R:::ight. I’ve got it” (line 15), Abe continues to re-visit the channel of talk with a post-expansion turn (Schegloff, 2007) that shows he is still working his way into clarifying the terms of the task. Abe concludes the sequence with a change-of-state token “Arrh” followed by the declaration “wait >ohno (.) it may not be<” (line 24). This demonstrates an ongoing uncertainty with the previous answer he provided to Jack’s initial question “Which ones do you go into?”. In the production of the talk, Abe and Jack reflect their continued orientation to
what it is they should be doing. Their ongoing work to establish a joint understanding of task requirements suggests that they are yet to move on from the informings activity.

7.4 Conclusion

This chapter has examined the interactional achievements of Year 7 students and their teacher as they orient to the activity of informings at the beginning of the school year. By focussing on the notion of holding the floor, analysis has revealed a set of underlying normative practices for main floor turn-taking where the Year 7 teacher has special rights to speaker selection and lengthy first-pair parts while students act as a single unit of participation with limited opportunities to bid for a turn-at-talk. Along with questioning sequences, the Year 7 teacher reprimands students through ‘shhhing’. She also ‘piles up phrases’ and sentence fragments, and uses frequent inter-turn pauses to maintain speakership on the main floor. These interactional practices regard students as "collectivities (i.e. relevant multi-person units of participation) that go unnamed and are discursively unrecognised" (Lerner, 1993, p. 237). The teacher uses these practices to maintain and re-maintain the social order of the classroom by denying contributions by individual students to the ongoing management of the activity. However, Year 7 students continue to demonstrate a dual orientation to main and side floor conversations. As in Year 6, they use the practices of schismsing and floor shifting as interactional resources to both display and build their understanding of what the teacher is talking about. Nevertheless, such arrangements limit the interactive options made available to students to clarify potentially problematic matters with their teacher on the main floor. As a result, actions displayed by students as they move into independent work reflect an ongoing effort to establish what needs to get done in the next part of the lesson.

The chapter has shown, that by dominating the main floor and preventing others from entering it, the Year 7 teacher has restricted opportunities for important interactional work to get done around making sense of what to do next. This does not mean that ‘constraint’ is the main
intention of the teacher or the only consequence of such institutionalised practices. It suggests that in this data, student access to the main floor is constrained by certain practices. The next chapter presents a discussion of the main findings of this study drawn from the three analytic chapters. It explains how, in the study of the social accomplishment of classroom lessons across Year 6 and Year 7 settings, new understandings of primary to secondary school transition can be found.
CHAPTER 8

RECONCEPTUALISING PRIMARY TO SECONDARY SCHOOL TRANSITION: DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS

8.1 Introduction

Using the method of conversation analysis (CA) to investigate talk-in-interaction, the previous three chapters analysed how classroom lessons are socially organised and jointly accomplished at the end of primary school and the beginning of secondary school. The analytic chapters explored how teachers and students manage their participation in Year 6 and Year 7 lessons, along with the shared histories of the teacher-student category pair they have inherited and continue to inhabit across institutional borders (Schegloff, 1991). This chapter discusses findings of the analysis in relation to rethinking primary to secondary school transition and establishes the conclusion. First, the chapter reviews the aim and questions which have directed this research. Second, a summary of the analytic chapters is provided. Third, the chapter discusses three key findings that build upon, and go beyond, existing knowledge about this significant time for students and teachers (Galton et al. 1999; Akos & Galassi 2004; West et al. 2010). These are discussed in terms of conceptualising transition in a different way; from that of a predetermined social activity to ongoing social action as accomplished in the naturally occurring, everyday interactions of teachers and students during classroom lessons (Drew, 2005; Drew & Heritage, 1992; Wenger, 1999).

Contributions to new understandings are also presented in this chapter. They include findings about the different sequences that produce talk-in-interaction across Year 6 and Year 7 settings, practices and their associated actions that accomplish various classroom activities, and the interactional resources used by students when negotiating the transition to secondary school. Finally, the chapter establishes the conclusion and limitations of the study, identifies implications and methodological contributions, and suggests further directions for future research.
8.2 Research aim and questions

This research explored a gap in current knowledge around how transition is socially constructed by students and teachers. In the past, educational transitions have been conceptualised as temporary events that span particular phases as students move from one sector to another. The topic of primary to secondary school transition has been explored by focusing largely on its problems, challenges and opportunities with the aim of creating solutions for a smoother transition for predominantly those at risk. This thesis has sought to make sense of the shift from one context to another by asking the question ‘What is going on?’; examining how the phenomenon itself unfolds in real time. An ethnomethodological (EM) conversation analysis (CA) approach to the topic has allowed it to be conceptualised and studied from the level of social interaction by analysing the talk sequences in everyday lessons to reveal the interactive options available to students in the actual doing of transition. By looking at the social organisation of the classroom and viewing transition as social action, an understanding of how students transition from talking and acting as Year 6 students to talking and acting as Year 7 students has been formed. This work has been guided by the following research question and sub-questions:

- How is transition to secondary school interactionally accomplished in the classroom talk practices of students and teachers?
  - What sequences produce talk-in-interaction during lessons at the end of Year 6 and the beginning of Year 7?
  - What does the fine-grained analysis of talk-in-interaction reveal about practices in Year 6 and Year 7 lessons?
  - How are interactional resources used by students as they transition to Year 7?

8.3 Summary of analytic chapters

The three analytic chapters examined the sequential organisation of classroom talk during Year 6 and Year 7 lessons. The everyday activities of students and teachers were recorded as they participated in classroom
lessons during the final three weeks of primary school and the first three weeks of secondary school. The chapters provided a detailed analysis of the talk-in-interaction practices of students and teachers to reveal the interactive options made available to students across this time. As such, an understanding of how transition is socially organised, constructed and accomplished could be explored in the different ways students and teachers oriented to each other in their patterns of talk during classroom lessons. The summary below revisits the analytic focus of each data chapter to re-establish the interactional methods by which talk practices are produced by students and their teachers as students transition from primary to secondary school.

Chapter 5 argued that teachers and students, across both Year 6 and Year 7 settings, work together in familiar ways to accomplish lesson openings. A class of shared practices comprising the summons, series of directives, co-produced silence and the transitional device, implement the actions associated with mobilising attention, reinforcing attentiveness, formulating readiness, and responding to prior actions and prefiguring next-positioned matters. The accomplishment of these practices, and their related actions, completes the work of creating social order by cohorting students into a single unit and provides the go-ahead for the next activity in the lesson to begin. Holding in place this class of practices across Year 6 and Year 7 settings is the strength of the teacher-student category pair (Freebody & Freiberg, 2006, 2011) and the two-party exchange system (Sacks et al., 1974) which is maintained despite the significant physical, academic and social changes associated with such a time of transition (Ashton, 2008). The chapter also established that while teachers and students orient to a routine class of practices, they also adapt to local, spontaneous circumstances. In particular, Year 7 teachers and students must get ready for extra activities associated with starting a new year. This resulted in longer episodes of talk as the class of practices was recycled and repeat attempts at establishing social order and getting ready were interactionally achieved.

Chapter 6 established how one teacher and her students in a particular Year 6 classroom at the end of the school year co-produced the next activity, known as informings (Gardner & Mushin, 2013). Instances
where students maintained a dual orientation to both main and side floor conversations were investigated to show how they shift seamlessly from one to the other, re-engaging and dis-engaging in topical talk. These interactional arrangements provided students with enhanced opportunities to clarify potential problematic matters. As a result, students displayed an informed approach to navigating the next part of the lesson, that of independent work. The chapter argued that Year 6 students used schimming and the practice of ‘floor shifting’ as important interactional resources to make sense of what to do next. These everyday practices, embedded in the talk-in-interaction of Year 6 students and their teacher, were then studied in a Year 7 lesson to investigate the interactive options made available to students there (Chapter 7).

In Chapter 7, the same phenomenon of informing was analysed but in a single Year 7 classroom at the beginning of the next school year. A two-party turn-taking system that preserved a single conversation dominated by the teacher as the main floor holder was identified. Here students acted as recipients of the talk (Lerner, 1992) with limited opportunities to bring back to the main floor problematic matters requiring clarification. Reduced occasions for students to interactionally achieve a shared understanding of what to next, resulted in a lack of direction about how to approach the independent work that followed. The shift in students’ access to interactional resources provides insight into how students learn to talk and act in Year 7 classroom lessons.

This summary of the analytic focus of each data chapter presents an explanation and explication of the interactional achievements of Year 6 and Year 7 students and their teachers during lessons at the end of primary school and the beginning of secondary school. By studying a corpus of talk-in-interaction instances across both settings, patterns of practices associated with accomplishing readiness for next activities were identified (Chapter 5). Through single case analysis, the particular practices of schimming, floor shifting and floor holding were investigated (Chapters 6 and 7). In each case, such practices were used by students and teachers as interactional resources to support, and at times constrain, participation in classroom lessons.
The following discussion of the analytic chapters outlines the findings of this research and provides an account of transition as social action. By acknowledging the important work of other scholars in the field, it reconceptualises primary to secondary school transition as socially organised in the talk-in-interaction practices of students and teachers in everyday lessons, and seeks to understand how such practices are used by students as interactional resources. It presents an argument for transition to be studied from within; as it unfolds moment-by-moment in the patterns of talk in classroom lessons. In doing so however, it does not negate or dismiss other possible accounts of this time of transition. Such counter-hypotheses could include that similar transitions may be found to occur in other grade levels with the introduction of a new teacher. Another could be that primary to secondary school transition is just a stage-of-year phenomenon, whereby, early in the year, when teachers and students are less familiar to each other in an interactional sense, certain kinds of single-floor activities are undertaken. As the school year progresses, and there is more familiarity among teachers and students, practices such as ‘floor shifting’ may be more genially managed on both sides. Finally, as mentioned in the introductory chapters, because the structure of the secondary school day requires teachers to typically meet with their students intermittently rather than for the whole day, certain kinds of interactions may take place over a longer timeframe. There are no data sets provided or named in this thesis that would rule out other interpretations such as these.

8.4 Findings and discussion

The three key themes discussed below present the findings of this study in relation to how the talk practices of students and teachers, as they co-produce lessons, reveal new understandings about transition to secondary school. These themes address the research questions guiding the thesis by discussing each in terms of the sequences that produce the talk-in-interaction, the practices they reveal, and the resources of interaction that students employ when navigating the transition process. Each one is positioned and contextualised within existing literature, and this study’s contribution to a new way of approaching the phenomenon of transition as
socially accomplished in the sequential organisation of interaction in everyday classroom lessons is explored. The three main themes include:

- How students use different interactional resources in different ways during classroom lessons to navigate their transition from primary to secondary school
- How the local contingencies of classroom talk impact the social accomplishment of transition across settings
- The respecification of transition as social action from an EMCA perspective and the implications of this for theory, policy and practice.

8.4.1 Interactional resources and the social accomplishment of transition

Through the close analysis of talk-in-interaction, the research draws attention to the highly complex, yet often taken-for-granted practices, which students and teachers engage in during classroom lessons. A substantial body of conversation analytic (CA) research has discussed practices by describing the courses of action that organise them (Sacks, 1992; Schegloff, 1972, 1996c, 2007; Hutchby, 1992; Bilton, 1992; Drew & Walker, 2009; Hutchby, 1992). The practices that students and teachers employed in this study were multifaceted, and their actions drew on a number of interactional resources, sometimes simultaneously. By investigating the use of these interactional resources, the interactive options made available to students during this time of transition could be discussed.

First, this section considers how, in the predictable class of practices that signals the beginning of a lesson, students and teachers use the co-production of silence as an interactional resource for demonstrating readiness; second, how students use the practice of floor shifting as an interactional resource for orienting to the next activity; third, how teachers use the practice of floor holding to constrain student access to the main conversational floor; and finally, a discussion of how teachers and students deploy the interactional resource of the category pair ‘teacher-student’ to navigate the evolving contingency of talk-in-interaction in the doing of transition.
Chapter 5 provided a thorough treatment of the pattern of practices associated with creating social order and accomplishing readiness for a lesson to begin across Year 6 and Year 7 classrooms. Readiness emerged systematically across both settings out of a predictable and efficient sequence employed to cohort students into a single unit by mobilising attention, reinforcing attentiveness, formulating readiness and responding to prior actions while prefiguring next-positioned matters. Such practices provided for a familiar reconstitution of the occasion as a classroom lesson about to begin (Payne & Huslter, 1980). The practice of co-producing silence oriented students and teachers to actions that displayed and embodied ‘being ready’. It offered a shared space where students and teachers could display aligned recipiency towards a shift in activity (Beach & Metzger, 1997) and the start of a new topic (Jefferson, 1984). In this way, the practice of silence was being used in Year 6 and Year 7 lessons as an interactional resource to ‘do being ready’.

Findings from this study recognise the practice of co-producing silence as an interactional resource to implement the next action it is designed to support (Schegloff, 2007). In this way, silence is formulated in the embodied actions of students and their teachers to signal readiness for the next activity to begin. Existing CA research reflects variability amongst conversation analysts around the way silence is seen to function in interaction. Mushin and Gardner (2009) make a distinction between ‘conversational’ silences; gaps in the flow of talk within and between turns-at-talk that may result in conversation lapses; and other kinds of silences where individuals may choose not to talk at all. Pomerantz (1984) and Schegloff (2007) associate silence with flagging some type of interactional trouble, which could be related to finding the right word (Goodwin & Goodwin, 1986; Hayashi, 2003). However, as shown in Chapter 5, silence can also contribute to an impression of a different kind of interactional work, one where there is less emphasis on turn-taking and more on students and teachers orienting to actions associated with readiness.
The embodied practice of silence in this study provided an available interactional resource for students and teachers to organise their relevant participation in the ongoing lesson. In similar ways across Year 6 and Year 7 lessons, teachers mobilised their gaze and body positions to invite students’ co-participation in getting ready. In response, students utilised the projective resources made available through the teacher’s summons and directives to deploy actions that embodied behaviours that triggered the go ahead for next positioned matters. These verbal and nonverbal actions were produced in a tightly interwoven manner in simultaneous and collaborative co-ordination of talk, gaze and gesture. In these actions, students demonstrated their ongoing interactional competence; an implicit awareness of how to act so that the lesson could begin. In this way, readiness was jointly managed through the predictable work that teachers and students did together to constitute silence.

Teachers and students, in their work to co-produce silence, maintained similar motivations for achieving such work across settings. Year 6 and 7 teachers used silence as a cohorting practice to show their control over the whole class. Year 6 and 7 students used the same silence to display their collective identity; one where the teacher became their single focus of attention. So, in the transition to secondary school, the organisation of the occasion did not need to be explained. Year 7 teachers did not exactly tell their students what it was they were getting ready for, nor what a state of readiness might look like. Rather, the enduring and prevailing nature of the category pair ‘teacher-student’ directed the actions associated with the co-production of silence so that each party knew intuitively what was getting done. Being ready was understood across settings as students acting as a single party attending to the other party – the teacher.

8.4.1.2 Schisming as an interactional resource

A point of difference in this study was having the analytic and methodological tools to investigate the organisation of student to student talk-in-interaction as it was produced simultaneously to the main floor conversation. How students were able to co-construct their social interactions
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Across parallel conversational floors demonstrated their interactional competence at employing the practice of schisming as an interactional resource to participate in lessons. By splitting off from the main floor talk, students showed different ways of relating to the teacher’s talk, forming different alignments with the teacher, the topic and each other. These exchanges, with their own turn-taking systems, are referred to in the literature as ‘talking at the back’ (McHoul, 1990) and ‘students chatting’ (Jones & Thornborrow, 2004).

While research on schisming as a classroom talk practice is sparse, previous studies have investigated the topic in relation to two conversational floors occurring simultaneously. Sahlström (1999) in his doctoral work analysed how multi-party classroom interaction broke up into separate interactions. Jones and Thornborrow (2004) were interested in organisational features of concurrent classroom activities, in particular classroom talk. And most recently, Koole (2007) addressed student engagement in parallel activities. Other researchers such as Hayashi (1991) and Shultz, Florio, and Erickson (1982) observed the actions of larger groups when members of an on-going conversation split into subgroups on corresponding conversational floors.

Research for this current study looked closely at the practice of schisming as an interactional resource that students used in their classrooms to participate in the doing of lessons; a topic left uncharted by the literature.

Analysis of the sequence organisation of schisming during Year 6 and Year 7 informings found schismed sequences were instigated primarily by the teacher’s prior turn on the main floor. Therefore, participation in side floor conversations could only be understood by taking into account their relationship to established main floor conversations (Egbert, 1993, 1997a). Students displayed this engagement with the activity on the main floor by producing subsequent turns-at-talk on their side floors. Students used the clandestinness of the side floor to issue judgments, to ask questions and seek clarification on the teacher’s informings, and to elaborate on what was being talked about on the main floor. In these instances, schismed sequences between students can be viewed as legitimate and acceptable continuations of important on-going main floor talk. The work of Year 6 and 7 students on
their side conversational floors therefore co-produced the activity of informings in conjunction with those actions getting done on the main floor. This contradicts the perception that side floor conversations are off topic and require shutting down through ‘shhing’ and other teacher practices.

Along with these audible actions, in an effort to situate side floor action so that a response would be forthcoming, students were adept at ‘setting the stage’ to create a place for such talk to occur by using visible actions (Szymanski, 1999). They produced discreet physical movements such as shifting their gaze, turning or tilting their heads and shifting their body positions towards the intended recipient/s. These movements alerted other students to the possibility of upcoming schismed talk. In response, recipients displayed a range of bodily movements that included leaning in towards the speaker, shrugging shoulders and looking away from the teacher towards the student initiating the side floor talk. This ensemble of words and body movements accomplished a form of community competence among the interactants (Hayashi, 1990) resulting in the mutual orientation for side floor action in recurring, contextually-equivalent situations across Year 6 and Year 7 settings.

The verbal and nonverbal actions comprising the practice of schisming served as an interactional resource for students to establish alignment with what the main floor talk was about, by asserting or negotiating a shared understanding of it on their side floor. In these instances, side floors coexisted alongside the main floor, detached from main conversation, without obvious interruption to the activity in progress. Students used them to further explore issues and problems arising from the main conversation while preserving the appearance of alignment with the ongoing talk. This afforded them opportunities to agree, disagree, complain and question in an orderly fashion without reprisal from the teacher. The practice of schisming should therefore be perceived, not as off topic and a construct that distracts from learning, but rather as complementary to other actions performed by main floor talk practices. In this way, schisming should be viewed positively, as an interactional resource employed by students to participate more actively in lessons.
8.4.1.3 Shifting floors as an interactional resource

This study showed how students made use of another situated practice, ‘shifting floors’; an important interactional resource that allowed for the flexible organisation of talk within and between conversational floors. There is a distinct gap in the literature in the explanation of such a practice. Jones and Thornborrow’s (2004) work addressed the issue of the conversational floor in terms of different structures of participation in classroom settings, and Hayashi’s (1991) research investigated floor structure in English and Japanese conversation, but there has been no research to date on how students move between conversational floors during classroom lessons.

Chapter 6 established ways in which Year 6 students used this practice to enter (and re-enter) the main conversation after engaging in schismesd talk on a side floor. By gaining access back to the official or main floor, uncertainties and problems were able to be cleared up and solved in situ within one turn or a range of turns-at-talk. Issues were raised, and often rehearsed, during side floor conversations just prior to shifting floors to the main floor. In the research, Year 6 students changed floors frequently to initiate repair, explore the topic further and seek clarification. They enacted their right of entry to the main floor to address the teacher. In this way, access to the main floor was less constrained, as interactional spaces were negotiated between the teacher and students through mutual acknowledgement and a ‘working consensus’ (Goffman 1967). Likewise, the main floor in the Year 6 classroom appeared to accept changes in speakership; accomplished locally and flexibly without the teacher drawing particular attention to such changes. Once the insertion sequence resulting from the floor shifting was dealt with, the activity in progress resumed without trouble. When this interactional resource was employed, students responded with actions such as change-of-state tokens displaying an understanding of what to do next and how to do it.

During these cross-floor sequences, students continued to exhibit a dual orientation to each other as active participants in both side floor and main floor topics of conversation. In this way, they did not disengage
completely from talk on either floor, but displayed an ability to participate in both floors by switching seamlessly between conversations. This contradicts Aoki’s (2003) view who argued “when two simultaneous conversational floors are on-going, participants in one do not orient to the turn-taking organisation of the other conversation” (p. 427). Students who were engaged as participants on a side floor conversation continued to align the initiation of their turns with those of the main floor. Students frequently positioned their conversational turns as relative to both floors, responding to the teacher’s talk along with their peers’. This often resulted in overlapping talk between floors as turn-taking patterns appropriate for the main floor were oriented to by students on side floors. Students positioned these overlapping turns as if they were in sync with the main floor, yet were actually operating on a side floor. They demonstrated their mastery of attending to the teacher’s talk as it occurred; reasserting and acting on what was available in the contingently developing side floor sequence. In this interactional environment, students displayed their skill at performing circumscribed roles across different floors. Such proficiency attests to the interactional competence of students who used floor shifting as a central and important interactional resource to make sense of what the teacher was talking about.

Unlike the main floor conversation, schismed talk-in-interaction on side floors was not continuous. Students engaged and disengaged regularly in turns-by-turn talk, engaging even after the sequence had appeared to lapse or be terminated (Szymanski, 1999). After initial engagement in a side floor conversation, talk between students unfolded with an ongoing possibility of occurring at any other moment. This provided repeat opportunities for students to dip in and out of side floor sequences to produce a fragmentary, yet enduring, commentary of the main floor conversation. In this way, students established an incipient state of talk (Szymanski, 1999) which left open the occasion for subsequent re-engagement in response to the moment-by-moment production of what was getting done on the main floor.

This type of conversational exchange offered students an intuitive platform for making relevant the activity at hand and renewing their orientation to the main floor. It enabled them to locate the activity in which
they were engaged, instinctively. Such actions, positioned at the boundaries of side and main floor conversations, contributed to the interactional achievement of floor shifting. By breaching boundaries between floors, students were able clarify issues and problems with their Year 6 teacher in a bid to, not only participate in this part of the lesson, but also make sense of what to do next and how to do it.

8.4.1.4 Holding the floor as a constraint

So while, in this research, the same practices of co-producing silence and schisming were used by both Year 6 and Year 7 students as interactional resources to participate in lessons in similar ways, the practice of shifting floors was not evident in the Year 7 data. Data showed that the Year 7 teacher’s practices associated with ‘holding the floor’ placed constraints on how Year 7 students interacted throughout the informings part of the lesson. This resulted in restricted access to the practice of floor shifting; an already established, important interactional resource used by students to make sense of what was getting done on the main floor in Year 6. Students, once getting to secondary school, were required to reorganise their practices in response to the restructuring of the interactive options now available to them in the Year 7 classroom.

In Chapter 7, the Year 7 teacher used a variety of techniques to control the turns-at-talk and maintain primary speaking rights on a single conversational floor. For example, she tightly managed interactional sequences by: using the pre-allocated IRF sequence (Mehan, 1979a, 1998), piling up phrases (Sacks, 1992), pausing frequently in her turns-at-talk (McHoul, 1990) and shutting down side floor conversations with ‘shhing’ and reprimands (Macbeth, 1992). This resulted in a single interactional activity with only two participating parties, the teacher who dominated the interaction in extended turns-at-talk and the class as a single cohort. Rather than representing sites of interactional worth, side floor conversations were oriented to as competitors to the main floor. This enforced a particular participatory structure where students were denied access to an interactional space where they could re-distribute and commentate on information.
presented by the teacher. As a consequence, problems or issues did not return to the main floor for clarification by the teacher, leaving students ill-equipped to participate in the next part of the lesson.

Hayashi (1988, 1991) further argued that, because the floor is active, interactional activities can be constrained by turn-by-turn conversational structures. She found that when a floor operated positively, interactants created an ensemble of words and body movements that built reciprocity in the interactional environment. On the other hand, when floors were managed negatively, interactional discomfort resulted in blocking participation in the floor’s activity (Hayashi, 1990). Along with Edelsky (1981) and Tannen (1984), she claimed that simultaneous talk was not necessarily detrimental to floor maintenance but instead worked to support its interactional trajectory. Sacks (1992) warned that, by restricting access to the main floor, there was no assurance that students were listening. They argued that the actions of interrupting, making comments and asking questions were not evidence of trying to ‘heckle down a story’ but rather evidence of listening.

Limited participation could also lead to listeners abandoning the main floor due to loss of interest in the topic, or due to exhaustion from the speaker’s ongoing claim to the floor (Hayashi, 1991). van Lier (1996) points out that, while floor holding may have advantages of control and efficiency, the consequences are that “this efficiency comes at the cost of reduced student participation, less expressive language use, a loss of contingency, and severe limitations on the students’ employment of initiative and self-determination” (pp.184-185). Teachers’ interpretation of what constitutes student attentiveness may not be accurate in its depiction of what is really occurring as they try to make sense of what to do next. It might be the teachers’ practices of instruction that could be the most neglected (Macbeth, 2011).

8.4.2 Contingency and the social accomplishment of transition

From the outside looking in, it could appear that the Year 6 and Year 7 students and teachers in this study engaged in the same types of activities
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over and over again. Across settings, teachers opened their lessons in similar ways as a segue to teacher-led informings that provided information on the activity to come. Then students moved into independent work to complete the task. Despite teachers and students using accountable and repeated talk sequences common to both settings, interactions still remained contingent to each local context (Lee, 2010). In the moment, students and teachers were required to deal with the unexpected or unforeseeable contingencies of classroom interaction. So while the organisation of talk-in-interaction appears as orderly across settings, it is characterised by contingency at virtually every point (Schegloff, 1996d). By focusing on local contingencies and adopting a situative perspective, the research established how participants’ choices of actions steered sequences of talk in particular directions providing alternative interactional trajectories for classroom lessons. It also provides evidence of how orientation to the teacher-student category pair, embedded in these sequences of talk, supports the unforeseen range of contingent methods of actions that students and teachers carry out as participants of a lesson. In this way, local exigencies hang together within predictable sets of practices common across both primary and secondary school settings.

Following the ongoing work of Lee (2007, 2010, 2012), this study contributes further understandings of how sequences of talk are shaped and held together in response to the local situations of Year 6 and Year 7 classroom settings. This discussion considers, first, the contingency of talk-in-interaction sequences in lesson opening sequences; and second, the sequential organisation of informings sequences. It explores students’ intersubjective understanding of the context of the talk and how this is documented in their actions (Drew & Heritage 1992) and their understanding of the preceding turn (Sacks et al., 1974).

8.4.2.1 Lesson openings and contingency

CA research has explored how social interactions take place through orderly practices in talk (Schegloff 1968, 1998, 2002, 2007; Schegloff & Sacks 1973; Button & Casey 1984; Hellerman, 2006). Chapter 5 showed how students and teachers in Year 6 and Year 7 classroom lessons got interaction
underway in familiar ways by displaying a combined competence to implement a sequential framework that invoked a shared template for action and readiness. Prior to the lesson beginning, participants assembled in particular spatial arrangements that remain unique to this type of activity (McHoul, 1990). The achievement of the mutual physical orientation for beginning a lesson provided a relevant and discernible display about the type of talk sequence to be produced and the type of actions to be elicited (Goodwin, 1984). In this context, the lesson opening projected and made relevant the production of the informings (Gardner & Mushin, 2013).

Chapter 5 examined a corpus of excerpts demonstrating the different turn-by-turn choices that teachers and students made when coming to terms with the sequential context and contingent conditions that lesson openings entail. Key findings around the distinctive shapeliness and flexibility of the lesson opening as the first, and very efficient, sequence in an episode of classroom interaction were characterised by a series of teacher dominated turns that hang together in a predictable way and act as a vehicle for accomplishing a course of action which constituted being ready for the next activity. The contingent properties embedded in the teacher’s turns-at-talk did not represent unplanned and random work; rather, they showed the intelligible organisation of interaction to accomplish social order and readiness. As such, the organisational structure of a lesson opening was found to be characterised by the following pattern of practices:

i. Tch: Summons
ii. Tch: Directive/s
iii. Tch: Co-produced silence
iv. Tch: Transitional device

Findings from this study established the above sequence organisation for lesson openings as an orderly, dominant stretch of talk directed by teachers and oriented to by students in their particular roles as teacher and students. However, such a general class of practices on its own fails to reveal the whole story. Such a broad postulation does not retrieve and make known the actual
choices and constraints that face participants in producing lesson openings across different settings. Teachers and students were still required to come to terms with contingent variants and unexpected outcomes that real-time interactions occasioned. In this way, there seemed to be a tension inherent in conceiving sequences of talk-in-interaction as both projectable (thus recurrent and predictable) but at the same time deeply contingent and entirely dependent on the exigencies of collaborative activities between real teachers and students in specific moments of interaction (Ford, 2004).

The results of this study suggested that teachers and students used the organisational structure of lesson openings as a central interactional resource within the evolving contingency of classroom talk across settings. Changes to this organisational blueprint were quickly negotiated between students and teachers in their turns-at-talk. For example, when ‘blocking’ responses (Schegloff, 2007) were received from some Year 6 students in the form of unrelated declaratives, student assessments, directives from one student to another, unrelated requests and apologies (Chapter 5), both teachers and students responded with actions that renewed the context with which each of those respective turns-at-talk generated. This resulted in, not a deviation from, but an expansion of the organisational structure of the base sequence. In this way, the contingent interactions between teachers and students were held together by the strength of the pattern of practices.

In the Year 7 classrooms, modifications to the pattern of practices were also made by teachers and students as a result of contingent talk-in-interaction. The data showed that Year 7 teachers and students were required to get ready for extra activities such as marking the roll and moving to a new classroom space where they combined with another Year 7 class. When one activity came to an end and a new one started within the lesson opening, the social order of the classroom had to be re-constructed by the teacher in a complete recycling the same set of practices and actions. The Year 7 teacher engaged in more frequent sequences of cohorting work than her Year 6 counterpart. These repeated attempts at getting ready resulted in longer episodes of talk within Year 7 lesson openings when compared to Year 6 lesson openings.
Despite these local contingencies in the talk, students from both Year 6 and Year 7 sites oriented to expanded versions of the projectable sequence as still ‘on-the-way’ to accomplishing the enduring goal of readiness. The predictability of this class of practices and the durability of the teacher-student category (Freebody & Freiberg, 2006, 2011; Schegloff, 1991) ensured any contingencies were quickly adapted to, and the structure of the lesson remained in place. Year 7 students demonstrated an ability to accommodate and adapt to the developing ways of producing the same activity in different ways. They displayed their understanding and undertaking of the prior turn in the lesson opening sequence for what it meant, what it called for and what work it was doing (Lee, 2012). Students were able to manage the contingent properties of that interaction with efficiency. The robust nature of the class of practices for lesson openings across settings was able to scaffold students in their understanding of what was expected of them. That which was getting done remained dedicated to the ongoing course of action and, as such, confirmed the interactional competence of Year 7 students to navigate their participation in lessons across the transition from primary to secondary school. By invoking existing interactional resources around getting ready, they were able to systematically adapt them to manage the local contingencies within Year 7 lesson openings.

8.4.2.2 The contingent use of informings sequences

Chapters 6 and 7 considered how the next activity following the lesson opening, known here as informings, was interactionally and locally achieved between students and their teachers in one Year 6 classroom and one Year 7 classroom. Gardner and Mushin’s (2013) research into teacher informings in an early years classroom was used as a starting point for investigation into this type of talk sequence. Likewise, Lerner’s (1995) study of how instructional activities established opportunities for student participation in lessons was used to help frame these findings. In the section below, the local exigencies embedded in this part of the lesson are discussed to demonstrate the range of contingent methods of actions that are carried out by teachers and students in this evolving sequence of talk (Lee, 2007). A focus on local
contingencies can reveal how transition is accomplished in situ through the work of students who make sense-of and act-on each and every turn in the course of their interactions.

When discussing the local exigencies of interaction, Goodwin (2002) stated that ‘time’ was an intrinsic and pervasive element used to build situated human social actions and events. According to McHoul (1978), teachers as the primary speaker or ‘director’ of the talk, have the right to hold the main conversational floor for extended periods of time without fear of interruption. They can also orchestrate student entry onto the main floor with pre-allocated turns that restrict the amount of time students spend contributing to teacher-led talk. The research showed how, at the beginning of the school year, the Year 7 teacher used both procedural and factual informings to talk about topics that students were yet to know. This occasioned a turn-taking system which was supported by the teacher’s domination of the conversational floor as she delivered long, uninterrupted monologues that oriented to rules associated with more formal talk patterns. When students were given opportunities to participate in the production of the informings, their participation rights were controlled by the teacher’s sequence-closing evaluations (Lerner, 1995), with no interactive options afforded to students to carry the talk any further. In these instances, the teacher enjoyed maximised participation rights and her students contributed with minimised participation rights (McHoul, 1978). This resulted in students displaying their ongoing analysis of the local contingencies of the talk-in-interaction in the Year 7 classroom by orienting to the role of ‘recipient’ (Schegloff, 1996d; Lerner, 1992).

When the Year 7 students in the research acted as recipients, they provided their teacher with an ‘action space’ to deliver her informing by limiting their own participation in the lesson (Schegloff, 1982; Goodwin, 1986) so that the delivery of the topic was sustained and not derailed. This resulted in weaker, and often minimal (or non-existent), responses from students to the main floor and their side floor conversations. Side floor conversations between students were often shut down by the Year 7 teacher who reinforced the two-party exchange system in her reprimands. She preserved
the right to dominate the talk by maintaining and re-maintaining social order in a predictable and ongoing cycle of practices used to cohort students into a single unit.

Denying students access to conversational floors meant that opportunities were not provided for Year 7 students to demonstrate a shared knowledge of what to do next. The Year 7 teacher was not able to monitor and modify her turns-at-talk in response to such knowledge displayed in student prior turns. So when these students moved to the next activity in the lesson, that of independent work, they were uncertain of how to approach the doing of the task. This study presented a case of how the contingent use of extended turns-at-talk by the Year 7 teacher during informings limited time spent by students talking about the task. The minimisation of student participation rights to produce talk-in-interaction resulted in misapprehension around what to do next and how to do it. In this way, making sense of what to do next is a contingent product of the interactional setting in which it exists (Schegloff, 1996d).

On the other hand, the study showed how the Year 6 teacher, in her turns-at-talk about procedural informings, opened up the floor to student participation. At this time of the school year, students were engaged in existing work that needed finishing off, rather than new work requiring the transfer of factual information from the teacher to her students (like that at the beginning of Year 7). The Year 6 teacher provided procedural instructions that mobilised students’ use of interactional resources that bridged side and main floor conversations. Students participated in the main floor sequence by: self-selecting to issue response cries, making anticipatory completions of the teacher’s prior turn, demonstrating a change-of-state in understanding, joining in choral responses to teacher initiated questions, and most frequently, asking questions about how to complete the task. As a result, students acted as ‘consociates’ to the procedural informings (Lerner, 1992) by gaining entry to the on-going sequence of talk via a more collaborative main conversational floor.

The research established that when students acted as consociates, the teacher was provided with important information around what they already
knew and didn’t know, so she could decide how to proceed in the course of action. The way the talk was locally organised served as a resource for turn construction that allowed for turns on the main floor to be changed frequently, and thus prevented the teacher from dominating long, single turns-at-talk. Because next turns were seen as an opportunity for participants to display their understanding of the just-prior turn (Schegloff, 2007), students and their teacher were able to establish a shared understanding of what to do next and how to do it. Such an understanding was demonstrated in the enthusiasm displayed by students for the next phase of the lesson.

The chapters on informings showed how students’ employment of interactional resources was contingent on the local circumstances of the interaction, and the opportunities provided by teachers during the unfolding sequences of talk. The actions of students and teachers in their turns-at-talk were contingent on the situated nature of the classroom interaction in these two distinct settings. Each action revised, reframed and constrained the particular interactional trajectories of the informings. Students displayed an interactional competence to renew and reorganise their interactional resources to get their dealings done (Jordan & Henderson, 1995). In this way, the small and frequent shifts within interactional contingencies became the place where the participants’ everyday practices of doing lessons were situated and realised.

8.4.3 Respecifying transition as social action

This thesis has set out to provide an account of transition in action, in the doing of everyday classroom lessons. Issues around transition have been studied as a matter of practical enquiry, detailing the way participants repair, cope or deal with them in their local contexts. The research has established how teachers and students deploy interactional resources in the evolving contingency of talk-in-interaction across Year 6 and Year 7 lessons. As such, findings have led to a positive respecification of how educators might think about and approach the time of primary to secondary school transition for students and teachers. By respecifying how it is understood, the focus shifts from programs and individuals to a reconceptualised view of transition as
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day-to-day practices, socially constructed and interactionally achieved in classroom lessons.

The widely held image of transition as a problem to be solved invites thinking about issues that exist at boundaries of primary and secondary schools. It suggests that fine-tuning at the edges of these educational institutions in the forms of ‘add on’ programs and policies can minimise problems by addressing deficiencies through the development of ‘survival skills’ (Kemmis et al., 1983). An approach such as this, which works backwards from the perceived problems of Year 7 school experiences, imposes generic ‘solutions’ that fail to scrutinise the inherent situated, contingent and socially constructed nature of transition. The image of transition that this thesis proposes is one where educators orient to local circumstances, where issues are addressed by understanding and critiquing participants’ practices in real time as the doing of transition unfolds. In this way, the problem of transition is respecified as a practical one; one that is embedded in the social organisation of the classroom.

The term respecification is used in Garfinkel’s (1967) ethnomethodology to propose a way of understanding participants’ commonsense interpretations of their everyday actions. In this sense, it represents the deconstruction of traditional ways of looking at transition through the detailed examination of practical action and sense making. The respecification of transition in this study provides evidence for locally produced, naturally accountable phenomena of doing transition through the practices of talk-in-interaction, and sheds new light on how participants employ interactional resources to do transitioning as real time, contingent behaviour. In this way, the analysis of transitioning in terms of practical social action respecifies issues, such as academic discontinuity (Fouracre, 1993), the ‘attainment dip’ (Galton & Morrison, 2000) and decreased interest in academic activities (Evangelou et al., 2008), in a way which draws attention to how such procedures are locally produced and realised via practical mundane interactional classroom tasks. However, the respecification of transition here is not a mere rejection of other approaches to the relationship between
primary and secondary settings, but rather a ‘what more’ that can be considered when addressing it.

In the following section, transition is discussed firstly in terms of how it can be viewed from an EM perspective as local achievement; and secondly, the implications for using an EMCA approach to respecifying transition in this way.

**8.4.3.1 An ethnomethodological view of transition**

By using an EM perspective to study primary to secondary school transition, this research has been able to investigate how students and their teachers build accounts of their social action while doing that action. It has provided the methodological tools to closely examine the social practices and actions of students and teachers in the doing of classroom lessons across Year 6 and Year 7 settings. As such, it has approached transition through an innovative lens; one that is missing from the current literature; one where transition is understood as a mutually accomplished shift from the particular organisation of the social interactions that take place in primary school contexts, to those that take place in secondary school contexts. Such a view of transition presents a way of approaching the topic where the talk-in-interaction of teachers and students during classroom lessons across Year 6 and Year 7 contexts is seen to constitute the social organisation of transition itself.

An EM perspective also provides a way of understanding how transition is contingently relevant. It challenges taken-for-granted conceptions about primary to secondary school transition, including the decline in pupils’ academic performance and attitude when shifting from Year 6 to Year 7 (Eccles et al., 1993) which are made outside of particular situations and particular individuals. This study argues for the meaning of these conceptions to remain dependent on the context in which they are invoked. Examining how students and teachers conduct classroom activities in relation to the local circumstances allows the researcher to systematically take those circumstances into account and recognise the activities for what they are (Heritage, 1984). The implication for classroom teachers is that they
are held accountable for the design of their actions in relation to how they are seen and described by others. So while individual students are the ones who do the transitioning, its ongoing achievement is interactional in character and embedded in the “institutional arenas in which social relationships are brought to life” (West & Fenstermaker, 1993, p. 157). Therefore, an understanding of transition is built from an examination of the moment-to-moment, turn-by-turn opportunities made available in the course of activities in situ.

This implies that the work around transition must be located in the interaction of situations, rather than within individual students or some ill-defined programs or policy expectations. If the organisation of classroom interaction is central to transition, then transition as a topic of study should not be conceptualised as an add-on or something to problematise. Its achievement encompasses the accomplishment of everyday work, rather than an external entity that is isolated from other classroom activities. In this way, transition is not considered as a single generic event with a beginning and an end, rather it is discussed as practical social accomplishment that is locally situated within a particular context or environment (Goodwin & Heritage, 1990). By changing the nature of the concept ‘transition’ from a noun to a verb, educators can shift their emphasis from a fixed thing that assumes a state of completion or incompleteness, to ongoing actions that are simultaneously context-shaped (emerging from the organisational structure) and context-renewing (shaping subsequent actions) (Heritage, 1984). As a result, transition becomes something that happens in the moment, in the doing of it. It is both fluid and contingent on the local talk-in-interaction practices of its participants.

8.4.3.2 Implications for theory, policy and practice

This research has allowed for a reconceptualisation of transition as social action. It contributes to a new way of describing transition as situated, interactional accomplishment and provides a ‘what more’ to other studies which look at life through an EM alternative (Garfinkel, 2007). It enhances what is currently known about talk practices in classrooms, and shines a light,
not just on individual students or programs and policies, but also on the important role played by the interactional practices of teachers. It can inform teachers’ acknowledgement of, and planning for, student transitions across primary and secondary school settings, and advise future policy concerning this time in students’ lives.

Methodologically, the research makes a significant contribution to EM and CA work by respecifying sociological descriptions of the social structure of classroom lessons through unmotivated looking, and meticulous analytic attention, to locally produced social phenomena often only made visible in the fine details of transcripts. It has treated the order of everyday talk-in-interaction across Year 6 and Year 7 classroom lessons as significant. While talk-in-interaction is the prevailing form of interactional activity, it is an often overlooked phenomenon of classroom life. By uncovering what is done as displayed and oriented to by the participants themselves in their moment-by-moment interactions, practices of interaction not previously described can transform our understanding of practices that we thought were “well in hand” (Schegloff, 1999, p. 145). The treatment of talk-in-interaction as a noteworthy phenomenon to study practices also furthers its production in the accomplishment of situated activities in classroom lessons, such as determining how interactional resources are invoked and managed. Thus, by analysing talk-in-interaction as a significant phenomenon in its own right, this study contributes understandings of its local and collaborative production across classroom and institutional settings.

The thesis further contributes knowledge to the small body of CA research on the organisation of conversational floors in classrooms. Despite the use of the term ‘floor’ in the early CA work of Sacks and Schegloff (1973) and Sacks (1992), there are few studies that have examined classroom conversational floors using an EMCA lens (Edelsky, 1981, 1997; Macbeth, 1992; Jones & Thornborrow, 2004; Simpson, 2005). This study makes an innovative contribution to the current field of research method by capturing the side floor conversations of students with other students during teacher led episodes of talk. Previously, these conversations were often referred to in CA transcripts as ‘student chatter’ and were thus left unexplored. By
providing microphones for both students and their teachers, simultaneous conversations have been able to be recorded in this research. ‘Student chatter’, as a significant phenomenon in its own right, has been profiled in the analysis. By scrutinising side floor conversations in a more formal way, and how these impact students’ participation in lessons, teachers can be better informed when planning and facilitating learning experiences to support students in their transition from primary to secondary school.

This research can also be used to redirect current thought to consider students’ competency in coping with everyday classroom interactions, particularly at the beginning of Year 7. In classroom investigations that rely on observation alone, it would be easy to gloss over the familiar and taken-for-granted practices involved in these interactions. By studying the local contingencies that are embedded in familiar sequences of talk, a better understanding of how transition emerges turn-by-turn in classroom interaction can be formed. This makes the very nature of transition contingent to the unforeseen range of actions that teachers and students display in the moment-by-moment production of talk-in-interaction. It also highlights the continuing need to incorporate contingency more fully into work around transition so that it is considered from within; from within the local practices of students and their teachers. This locates transition in local schools in local communities in the daily interactions of teachers and students. In this regard, taking into account interactional contingencies offers a useful reminder of what might be missing in the pursuit of the forgotten specifics of transition.

Another implication of this reconceptualisation is that educational institutions must be held accountable to clearer conceptions of what transition really means for them in their local contexts. It implies that educators across primary and secondary settings must work together professionally, not only to discuss individual students and programs, but also to consider and evaluate their own pedagogical practices. In the imminent reworking of the Australian Professional Standards for Teachers, such talk practices need clearer demarcation in discussions around Standard 3.5 Use effective classroom communication. While Standard 4.2 Manage classroom
activities, acknowledges ‘provide clear directions’ as a graduate descriptor, there is no merit given to other important practices, that are arguably just as common to classroom management, such as using question/answer sequences, issuing a summons to get attention, moving from one part of the lesson to the next, co-producing silence and changing speakership to the main floor to make sense of what to do. When transition is viewed as socially constructed and interactionally achieved during everyday classroom lessons, the focus shifts from the characteristics of students to interactional and institutional doings (West & Fenstermaker, 1993).

Finally, this thesis reminds teachers and policy makers that students are interactionally competent before they arrive at secondary school (Markee & Kasper, 2004; Young & He, 1998; Young & Nguyen, 2002). Students demonstrate this competence by drawing upon already established interactional resources, built up over years of engagement in the category pair teacher-student (Freebody & Freiberg, 2011) to participate in classroom lessons. This implies that transition is not something new that is done to students; rather it is something students accomplish themselves in their daily social interactions with others. Such a view of transition challenges teachers to scrutinise their own classroom practices and reflect on how these both support and constrain the interactive options made available to their students. By maximising, rather than restricting access to such options, teachers can better support students through this time of transition.

8.5 Limitations and suggestions for further research

8.5.1 Limitations of the study

Like all research, this research was subject to some methodological limitations. The acknowledgement of these limitations enables the researcher to respond in an informed way to their impact on the study’s contribution to knowledge. Limitations included the specific, micro-analytical focus of EM and CA; restrictions associated with the detailed transcription of talk-in-interaction; and the limited focus in using a restricted database of interactions of a small group of students and their teachers. These limitations
are acknowledged, while arguing that they have also enabled the detailed analysis of interaction as presented in this research.

Since its inception in the 1960s, the discipline of EM has not been without its critics. Button (1991) suggests that one of the main limitations of adopting such an approach to research lies in EM’s focus on ‘enquiry’ and ‘process’ as opposed to ‘theory’ and ‘theorising’. McNall and Johnson (1975) argue that EM can only refute important theories, because it cannot champion any theories it has built. It becomes more a method for studying and describing one unique case in an exhaustive fashion than a theory in itself (McNall & Johnson, 1975). Another question raised by Armstrong (1979) involves the role of the researcher asking ‘who acts as the referee’ in determining whether or not an event is meaningful. Ethnomethodologists, along with conversation analysts, "place themselves in the position of deciding whether or not something did or did not occur, and whether or not it means something" (McNall & Johnson, 1975, p. 56). This position can induce “an inescapable circularity in which the prescribed comparison of observer's report and environment of objects is invariably displaced into the comparison of one observer's report with another's" (Hindess, 1973, p. 23). This raises another limitation to the study involving the issue of subjectivism in the methodology (Phillips, 1978) and whether or not a truly objective approach is ever possible under such a view.

There are also limitations to what the CA researcher can offer a study addressing classroom talk and the accomplishment of primary to secondary school transition. Mercer (2010) terms CA as a demanding methodology because “it uses a very detailed and laborious style of analysis and sets very strict criteria for the kinds of interpretations which an analyst can make from the data of recorded talk; and it also involves the use of a very specific and detailed method of transcription” (p. 8). This level of detail can only capture selective grabs of discourse as evidenced in this study by the use of specific extracts. Because of this, commentary can appear contrived or idealised, and does not consider how the particular discourse relates to the lesson in its entirety (Walsh, 2011). In this way, conversation analysts are often criticised as being too narrow and overly specific. Reliance on such a restricted
The social accomplishment of transition: Investigating classroom talk practices as students move from primary to secondary school

database can be seen as a limitation of the validity of CA findings (ten Have, 2007) by constraining its ability to generalise them to wider populations and resulting in failure to draw “conclusions about large-scale political, economic, demographic, and stratificational patterns” (Cicourel, 1981, p. 93). This study therefore is constrained is in its ability to generalise findings to other contexts.

Though not trouble-free, EM and CA are recognised as potentially powerful approaches to grasping the complexities and intricacies of talk-in-interaction. When arguing the value of EM and CA for this research, a micro perspective has been viewed positively. A common argument for the limited focus of the methodology maintains that one case (whether in corpus or single-case analysis) is sufficient to illustrate the order of social life (Schegloff, 1993). Cicourel (1981) further contends that the conversation analyst can take the recurrent aspects of social exchanges to reveal patterns that express a wide range of social phenomena often ignored in macro studies, and Westgate and Hughes (1997) claim that it may only be through ‘rich’ transcription that unexpected aspects can become evident. The minute detail resulting from an emic perspective can be seen as vital in establishing the validity of a study such as this. In fact, the very strength of applying EM and CA to a study of primary to secondary school transition lies in the fact that it is neutral and agnostic in relation to preconceived assumptions about ‘the problem of transition’ (Seedhouse, 2005). Concepts are only viewed as legitimate for further investigation if the interactants themselves orient to them. A CA perspective shows that the apparently tiny and insignificant details of talk are relevant to the participants in the conversation, and systematically affect what they do next, and how they do it (Kitzinger, 2000). As Potter (1996) explains, “[a]ny level of detail in talk - hesitations, repairs, pauses - can be crucial for a piece of interaction; indeed, much of the business of interaction may be happening in the details” (p. 137). To understand an approach where transition can be described and studied within the social accomplishment of doing lessons, what students are saying to one another and their teachers, and how they come to say it, and what it means to them, the talk practices themselves must be attended to at the same level of detail.
that they do. Unless this is done, the research runs a serious risk of doing injustice to the meaning of the data it is analysing (Kitzinger, 2000).

This research is also limited in its focus with regard to the selection and analysis of interactions in one primary school and one secondary school. Examination of talk practices of a select group of students and teachers across two settings reduces the breadth of the study. While the findings here are not generalisable, they do remain suggestive of the types of talk practices that may be invoked by students and teachers during the transition process. In addition, analysis of interactions in these instances provide consideration of how contingent interactional practices contribute to the accomplishment of social life (Goodwin & Kyratzis, 2007). This study contributes depth rather than breadth to understandings of how students transition from primary to secondary school. Therefore, despite limitations, the research provides a close EMCA description of a how doing transition is accomplished in the talk practices of students and their teachers.

8.5.2 Directions for further research

Empirical research investigating primary to secondary school transition as it occurs moment-by-moment in talk practices enacted in classroom lessons is new to the field. This research offers a different perspective of the topic of transition and thus suggests directions for further examination of transition-as-social-action to increase what is known about how students and teachers navigate and negotiate such a critical time.

This study has applied the sequential analysis of talk-in-interaction across particular classroom extracts that were considered representative of the corpus of Year 6 and 7 data. Going forward, the CA approach of corpus analysis could be applied to examine specific talk practices already identified. Practices for further examination across the data set could include shifting floors, holding the floor and the use of side floor through schisming. By drawing on the existing audio and video data from the current project, a wider collection could be developed for the detailed analysis of each practice. Identifying and producing additional accounts of these practices would
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...further uncover the means by which students and teachers use them as interactional resources in the everyday talk of the classroom.

Though this study contributes knowledge of how transition is interactionally accomplished across Year 6 and Year 7 settings, there is little research into how students and teachers manage transitions in other circumstances and across different disciplines. Further research could study how these, now Year 7 students, transition to Year 8 and develop their competencies and interactional resources over the next period of transition. There may also be scope to show a student’s longitudinal accomplishment of doing transition across additional adjoined settings, such as Year 11 to Year 12, and across different content areas such as mathematics and English. This would reveal how students adapt to the interactional contingencies of different year levels and different subjects, and could highlight the complexity of their practices and how they are employed in different settings and interactions.

A logical next step in the research reported here would be to compare and contrast these findings with classroom interactions in other primary and secondary settings by again analysing the talk practices to determine how their use varies across diverse situations. Such comparative research would only increase the validity of the findings of this study, and would also contribute to the findings of CA as a whole. If similar organisational structures and sequences can be found across various educational settings, then the conclusions reached in this research can be viewed as valid for classroom interaction more generally.

In this study, the focus was on viewing transition as accomplished in the social organisation of everyday classroom lessons and, as such, the research did not address learning behaviours or provide evidence of what was actually being learnt during this time. Further inquiry which traces the same students and teachers could demonstrate when learning behaviours occur, and how participants orient to them later in the lesson during independent work. Displays of knowing and understanding (Koole, 2010; Macbeth, 2011; Mondada, 2011) could also be further explored to uncover the sequential, situated and embodied dimensions of understanding across these two
settings. Finally, I propose posing other research questions to the data collected here, such as how students produce different displays of epistemic access as ‘doing transition’. This would further enhance knowledge of how students and teachers accomplish transitions in their everyday practices.

8.6 Conclusion

Transition to secondary school remains a major area of interest within the field of education. This thesis aimed to show how primary to secondary school transition is accomplished in the turn-by-turn talk practices of students and teachers during classroom lessons. In this way, talk-in-interaction does not just reveal transition; but rather, it is in the talk-in-interaction itself where transitioning resides.

The findings of this study emphasised the competency of students in orienting to, and invoking, interactional resources that are adapted to meet locally relevant and socially situated interactions. Individual students are not alone in the accomplishment of transition; teachers and other students work collaboratively with them to co-produce particular courses of action that provide a contingent account of transition as it unfolds moment-by-moment. A view of transition as social action means that students draw upon their interactional competencies to understand what the teacher and other students expect from them. In doing so, they transition from speaking and acting as Year 6 students to speaking and acting as Year 7 students.
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APPENDICES

Appendix A: Conversation Analytic Transcription Symbols

The transcription symbols used in the transcripts of this research project have been adapted from Jefferson’s notation system.


[[ ]] Indicates where participants begin speaking simultaneously
[ ] Indicates where participants’ speech overlaps
= Indicates where participants’ speech follows on from each other without a break
( ) Indicates a micro interval during participants’ speech
(0.1) Indicates the length of a participant’s pause (in approximate seconds)
:: Indicates a prolonged sound in a word (i.e.) scho::l
- Indicates where a word is cut off (i.e.) sch-
>< Indicates that speech inside the symbols is said by a participant at a faster rate than the surrounding speech
? Indicates where a participant asks a question
! Indicates excitement in a participant’s speech
“ ” Indicates where a participant has repeated a previous conversation
↑ Indicates where the intonation in a participant’s speech rises
↓ Indicates where the intonation in a participant’s speech falls
SCH Uppercase words indicate that a participant’s speech is loud
Sch Underlining indicates emphasis on a syllable or word
° ° Indicates that speech inside the symbols is spoken softly (i.e.) “school”
.hhh Indicates a participant’s audible inhalation
hhh Indicates a participant’s audible exhalation
(h) Indicates breathiness in a participant’s response, that could be laughter

(( )) Provides a description of the verbal and non-verbal actions of participants

( ) Indicates where participants’ speech could not be heard
Dear School Principal,

My name is Stephanie Garoni. I am a PhD student and sessional lecturer from the School of Education at Charles Sturt University. I am seeking permission for your school’s participation in my research project titled *Accomplishing transition: Investigating talk practices as students move between primary and secondary school*.

**What is the purpose of this study?**
The project aims to capture instances of teacher and student talk in everyday lessons in Year 6 and Year 7 classrooms to explore how classroom talk can reveal practice as students transition from primary school to secondary school. By studying how talk unfolds naturally in each of these settings, a better understanding of how some practices in the transition process are retained, others are discontinued and some are new altogether can be further explained. The findings of this project will widen the parameters of what is currently known about talk and transition.

The key overarching question for the study is: How is talk accomplished in Year 6 primary and Year 7 secondary school classrooms?

**Why has your school been invited to participate?**
This project requires the participation of two schools where a substantial proportion of Year 6 students from the chosen primary school make the transition to Year 7 in the chosen secondary school. Your school was selected as a potential participant because a high proportion of Year 6 students from St. Augustine’s Catholic Primary School, Wodonga make the transition to Catholic College, Wodonga.

**What school resources are required?**
Subject to your approval, interested teachers and students in your school will be invited to participate in the project. The teachers will be asked to participate in audio and video recorded lessons that depict the ‘everydayness’ of activities in their classrooms. In doing so, they will be required to wear hands-free, portable digital
audio recorders to capture instances of classroom talk during designated lessons. Lessons will be audio and video recorded for the purpose of creating a corpus of data. Detail analysis of extracts from this corpus of data will reveal an accurate rendition of what is said and done, and provide an insight into the transition from primary to secondary settings.

Students will be asked to volunteer to take part in the audio and video recorded lessons. This means that they will participate in regular classroom lessons where their conversations with the teacher and other students will be video and audio recorded. Year 6 students (about 10 to 12) will be given the opportunity to volunteer as focus children. This means that they will be asked to wear hands-free microphones and their conversations with others will be recorded. If students choose to participate in this way, they will be asked to wear the microphones both in Year 6 and Year 7 settings.

**What is the timeline for this research?**

The study is part of a PhD project. Data collection is scheduled to take place in the Year 6 classroom in December, 2015, and in Year 7 classrooms in February, 2016. Analysis and writing up will be ongoing through 2016-2017 and is scheduled to be completed in 2017.

**Project approval and participation**

The project has been endorsed as a part of CSU PhD research approval processes, and has been approved by both CSU and Sandhurst Diocese Human Research Ethics committees. Participation in this project is voluntary, and schools have the right to withdraw fully or in part at any time. If you could indicate at you earliest convenience whether or not you consent to your school’s involvement that would be greatly appreciated. If you have further questions about the project, I would be more than happy to provide additional information or discuss these with you.

Kind regards

Stephanie Garoni

School of Education
Research Institute for Professional Practice, Learning and Education
Charles Sturt University
Contact Phone: (02) 6051 9885
Contact Email: sgaroni@csu.edu.au
Accomplishing transition: Investigating talk practices as students move between primary and secondary school

Who is conducting the research?

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Dr Christina Davidson
School of Education
Research Institute for Professional Practice, Learning and Education
Charles Sturt University
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Contact Email: cdavidson@csu.edu.au

Why is the research being conducted?
The study is being conducted by Stephanie Garoni from the School of Education at Charles Sturt University. Stephanie is completing a Doctor of Philosophy (PhD). The project aims to video and audio-record examples of teacher and student talk in everyday lessons in Year 6 and Year 7 classrooms. You have been identified as a teacher who is interested in the topics of talk and transition. I want to capture these instances of talk so that I can explore how classroom talk can reveal practice as students transition from primary school to secondary school. By studying how talk unfolds naturally in each of these settings, a better understanding of how some practices in the transition process are retained, others are discontinued and some are new altogether can be further explained. The findings of this project will widen the parameters of what is currently known about talk and transition.
What you will be asked to do?
Participating Year 6/7 teachers from your school will be asked to participate in audio and video recorded lessons that depict the ‘everydayness’ of activities in your classroom. In doing so, they will be required to wear hands-free, portable digital audio recorders to capture instances of classroom talk during designated lessons. Lessons will be audio and video recorded for the purpose of creating a corpus of data. Detail analysis of extracts from this corpus of data will reveal an accurate rendition of what is said and done, and provide an insight into the transition from primary to secondary settings.

Students from designated classes will be asked to volunteer to take part in the audio and video recorded lessons. This means that they will participate in regular classroom lessons where their conversations with the teacher and other students will be video and audio recorded. Some Year 6 students (about 10 to 12) will be given the opportunity to volunteer as focus children. This means that they will be asked to wear the hands-free microphones and their conversations with others will be recorded. If students choose to participate in this way, they will be asked to wear the microphones both in Year 6 and Year 7 settings.

How will the participants be selected or screened?
As the school principal, you will identify Year 6/7 teachers who may like to participate in the project. They will be selected because they indicate an interest in the topics of talk and transition. At the end of the project, I will give you and them information about the study and a copy of the findings.

What are the expected benefits of the research?
Transition into secondary school from primary school is an important issue for students, educators and families. Similarly, talk matters a great deal to what goes on in classrooms and plays a key role in teaching and learning. By audio and video capturing instances of classroom talk, I can study what happens to this talk as students start secondary school and investigate what the talk reveals about practices as students transition from one context to another.

Are there any risks to you?
There is a minimum amount of risk for you, or your teachers and students, in taking part in this study. It is recognised that the use of audio and video recorders to capture talk could create some level of discomfort. However, you can be assured that all rights to privacy and confidentiality will be honoured.

How will confidentiality be protected?
Audio and video recordings will form part of the research data whereby transcripts will be made by the researcher for in-depth analysis. Such recordings will be viewed only by the researcher and her supervisors. Any additional information or personal details gathered in the course of this research collected about your teachers or students will be strictly confidential and neither their name nor any other identifying information will be used or published. When excerpts of transcripts are included in reports, publications or presentations, pseudonyms will be used to protect the identities of any students, teachers and schools participating in the research. All recordings and other information will be disposed of or deleted after a period of five years after the completion of the project.
Your school’s participation is voluntary
You are free to withdraw your school’s participation in the research at any time, and if you do there will be no need to provide a reason for withdrawal and there will be no consequences for withdrawing. You won’t be subjected to any penalty or discriminatory treatment. If you don’t want to take part in the study, this will in no way harm or negatively affect your relationship with the school or Charles Sturt University.

Questions/further information
If you have any questions or would like some more information about the project, you can contact:

Mrs Stephanie Garoni (PhD student)
Charles Sturt University
Contact Phone: (02) 6051 9885
Contact Email: sgaroni@csu.edu.au

The ethical conduct of this research
Charles Sturt University conducts research in accordance with the National Statement on Ethical Conduct in Human Research. Charles Sturt University’s Human Research Ethics Committee has approved this study. If you have any complaints or reservations about the ethical conduct of this project, you may contact the Committee through the Executive Officer:

Executive Officer
Ethics in Human Research Committee
Academic Secretariat
Charles Sturt University
Private Mail Bag 29
Bathurst NSW 2795
Phone: (02) 6338 4628

Any issues you raise will be treated in confidence and investigated fully and you will be informed of the outcome.

Feedback to you
At the conclusion of my study, I will provide a copy of a general report that presents the results of the overall research to you and other teachers involved in the project.

Please retain this information sheet for your information.

With thanks

Stephanie Garoni

Mrs Stephanie Garoni
In order to participate in this research project you will need to read the information sheet and complete the following consent form.

Research team contacts:

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Contact Email: sgaroni@csu.edu.au

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Dr Christina Davidson
School of Education
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Wagga Wagga
Phone: (02) 6933 2412

I (please print) ____________________________, (teacher)

__________________ (year level) from ________________________ (school) agree to participate in this project which aims to gather information about how classroom talk can reveal practices that tell us more about transition from Year 6 to Year 7 settings.

I understand that CSU PhD student Stephanie Garoni will be conducting the research project and that I will participate through engaging in everyday lessons that capture examples of classroom talk.

The purpose of the research has been explained to me and I have read and understood the information sheet given to me. I have also been given the opportunity to ask questions about the research and received satisfactory answers.
understand that audio and video recorded teaching sessions will be used for transcription and analysis for Stephanie’s PhD thesis.

I also understand that I may withdraw consent at any stage throughout the project and if so I will not be subjected to any penalty or discriminatory treatment.

By signing below, I confirm that I have read and understood the information sheet and in particular have noted that:

- I understand that my involvement in this research will include wearing a hands-free, portable digital audio recorder to capture instances of classroom talk during designated lessons.
- I have had any questions answered to my satisfaction.
- I understand the risks involved.
- I understand that I will receive a copy of the final report.
- I understand that my participation in this research is voluntary.
- I understand that if I have any additional questions I can contact the research team.
- I understand that any personal information or details gathered in the course of this research about me are confidential and that neither my name nor any other identifying information will be used or published.
- I understand that the audio and video recorded lessons will be used to form part of the research data whereby transcripts will be made by the researcher for in-depth analysis.
- I understand that I may be identifiable in the audio and video recording of lessons and that these recordings will be viewed only by the researcher and her supervisors.
- I understand that I can contact the Executive Officer, Charles Sturt University’s Ethics in Human Research Committee (02) 6338 4628, if I have any concerns about the ethical conduct of the project.

☐ I agree to participate in the project.

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Please return this sheet to Stephanie Garoni

CONSENT FORM FOR CSU RESEARCH PROJECT
Appendix E: Teacher Information Sheet

Accomplishing transition: Investigating talk practices as students move between primary and secondary school

Who is conducting the research?

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Why is the research being conducted?
The study is being conducted by Stephanie Garoni from the School of Education at Charles Sturt University. Stephanie is completing a Doctor of Philosophy (PhD). The project aims to video and audio-record examples of teacher and student talk in everyday lessons in Year 6 and Year 7 classrooms. You have been identified as a teacher who is interested in the topics of talk and transition. I want to capture these instances of talk so that I can explore how classroom talk can reveal practice as students transition from primary school to secondary school. By studying how talk unfolds naturally in each of these settings, a better understanding of how some practices in the transition process are retained, others are discontinued and some are new altogether can be further explained. The findings of this project will widen the parameters of what is currently known about talk and transition.
What you will be asked to do?
You will be asked to participate in audio and video recorded lessons that depict the ‘everydayness’ of activities in your classroom. In doing so, you will be required to wear a hands-free, portable digital audio recorder to capture instances of classroom talk during designated lessons. Lessons will be audio and video recorded for the purpose of creating a corpus of data. Detail analysis of extracts from this corpus of data will reveal an accurate rendition of what is said and done, and provide an insight into the transition from primary to secondary settings.

How will the participants be selected or screened?
You have been selected because you have indicated that you are interested in the topics of talk and transition. In addition, you are currently involved in the transition process as a Year 6 or Year 7 teacher. The school principal has identified you as a Year 6 or Year 7 teacher who may like to participate. At the end of the project, I will give you information about the study and a copy of the findings.

What are the expected benefits of the research?
Transition into secondary school from primary school is an important issue for students, educators and families. Similarly, talk matters a great deal to what goes on in classrooms and plays a key role in teaching and learning. By audio and video capturing instances of classroom talk, I can study what happens to this talk as students start secondary school and investigate what the talk reveals about practices as students transition from one context to another.

Are there any risks to you?
There is a minimum amount of risk for you in taking part in this study. It is recognised that the use of audio and video recorders to capture talk could create some level of discomfort. However, you can be assured that your rights to privacy and confidentiality will be honoured.

How will confidentiality be protected?
Audio and video recordings will form part of the research data whereby transcripts will be made by the researcher for in-depth analysis. Such recordings will be viewed only by the researcher and her supervisors. Any additional information or personal details gathered in the course of this research collected about you or your students will be strictly confidential and neither their name nor any other identifying information will be used or published. When excerpts of transcripts are included in reports, publications or presentations, pseudonyms (made-up names) will be used to protect the identities of any students, teachers and schools participating in the research. All recordings and other information will be disposed of or deleted after a period of five years after the completion of the project.

Your participation is voluntary
You are free to withdraw your participation in the research at any time, and if you do there will be no need to provide a reason for withdrawal and there will be no consequences for withdrawing. You won’t be subjected to any penalty or discriminatory treatment. If you don’t want to take part in the study, this will in no way harm or negatively affect your relationship with the school or Charles Sturt University. If you decide to withdraw from the project once classroom lessons have been recorded, your class will no longer participate in the research.

Questions/further information
If you have any questions or would like some more information about the project, you can contact:
The social accomplishment of transition: Investigating classroom talk practices as students move from primary to secondary school

Mrs Stephanie Garoni (PhD student)
Charles Sturt University
Contact Phone: (02) 6051 9885
Contact Email: sgaroni@csu.edu.au

The ethical conduct of this research
Charles Sturt University conducts research in accordance with the National Statement on Ethical Conduct in Human Research. Charles Sturt University’s Human Research Ethics Committee has approved this study. If you have any complaints or reservations about the ethical conduct of this project, you may contact the Committee through the Executive Officer:

Ethics in Human Research Committee
Academic Secretariat
Charles Sturt University
Private Mail Bag 29
Bathurst NSW 2795
Phone: (02) 6338 4628

Any issues you raise will be treated in confidence and investigated fully and you will be informed of the outcome.

Feedback to you
At the conclusion of my study, I will provide a copy of a general report that presents the results of the overall research to you and other teachers involved in the project.

- Do you agree to participate in the research? If yes, please read and sign the attached Consent Form.

Please retain this information sheet for your information.

With thanks

Mrs Stephanie Garoni
Appendix F: Parent Consent Form: Focus Child

Research project: Investigating talk practices as students move between primary and secondary school

In order to participate in this research project you will need to read the information sheet and complete the following consent form.

Research team contacts:

Principal Investigator
Mrs Stephanie Garoni (PhD student)
School of Education
Charles Sturt University
Contact Phone: (02) 6051 9885
Contact Email: sgaroni@csu.edu.au

Supervisors
Dr Christine Edwards-Groves
School of Education
Charles Sturt University Wagga Wagga
Wagga
Phone: (02) 6933 2444
Email: cgroves@csu.edu.au
cdavidson@csu.edu.au

Dr Christina Davidson
School of Education
Charles Sturt University
Wagga
Phone: (02) 6933 2412
Email: 

I (please print) ___________________________ from ___________________________ (school)
give consent for my child ________________________________ (name) in ___________________________________ (name teacher and class) to participate as a focus child in this project which will record her/his teacher’s Year 6 and Year 7 lessons.

I understand that CSU PhD student Stephanie Garoni will be conducting the research project about classroom talk and the transition from Year 6 to Year 7.

By signing below, I confirm that I have read and understood the information sheet and in particular have noted that:
• I understand that my child’s involvement in this research will include wearing a hands-free, portable digital audio recorder to capture instances of classroom talk during designated lessons in Year 6 and again in Year 7.

• The purpose of the research has been explained to me. I have read and understood the information sheet given to me about the project.

• I have been given the chance to ask questions about the research. I have received satisfactory answers to any questions.

• I understand that lessons that my child will be involved in will be audio and video recorded by the researcher from the University.

• I understand that the audio and video recordings will be used to form part of the research data whereby transcripts will be made for in-depth analysis.

• I understand that my child will not be penalised in any way if he/she decides not to participate in the audio and video recorded lessons.

• I understand that my child can tell the teacher if he/she becomes worried about being involved in the audio and video recorded lessons.

• I understand that I can contact the Executive Officer, Charles Sturt University’s Ethics in Human Research Committee (02) 6338 4628 if I have any concerns about the ethical conduct of the project.

☐ I agree to give consent for my child to participate in the project as a focus child.

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Please return this sheet to your classroom teacher who will pass it onto Stephanie Garoni

CONSENT FORM FOR CSU RESEARCH PROJECT
Appendix G: Year 6 Parent Consent Form

Research project: Investigating talk practices as students move between primary and secondary school

In order to participate in this research project you will need to read the information sheet and complete the following consent form.

Research team contacts:

Principal Investigator
Mrs Stephanie Garoni (PhD student)
School of Education
Charles Sturt University
Contact Phone: (02) 6051 9885
Contact Email: sgaroni@csu.edu.au

Supervisors
Dr Christine Edwards-Groves
School of Education
Charles Sturt University Wagga Wagga
Phone: (02) 6933 2444
Email: cgroves@csu.edu.au

Dr Christina Davidson
School of Education
Charles Sturt University
Phone: (02) 6933 2412
Email: cdavidson@csu.edu.au

I (please print) ___________________________ from ___________________________ (school) give consent for my child ___________________________ (name) in ___________________________ (name teacher and class) to participate in the general research aspect of this project which will record her/his teachers’ Year 6 and 7 lessons.

I understand that CSU PhD student Stephanie Garoni will be conducting the research project about classroom talk and the transition from Year 6 to Year 7.

By signing below, I confirm that I have read and understood the information sheet and in particular have noted that:
• The purpose of the research has been explained to me. I have read and understood the information sheet given to me about the project.

• I have been given the chance to ask questions about the research. I have received satisfactory answers to any questions.

• I understand that lessons that my child will be involved in will be audio and video recorded by the researcher from the University.

• I understand that the audio and video recordings will be used to form part of the research data whereby transcripts will be made for in-depth analysis.

• I understand that my child will not be penalised in any way if he/she decides not to participate in the audio and video recorded lessons.

• I understand that my child can tell the teacher if he/she becomes worried about being involved in the audio and video recorded lessons.

• I understand that I can contact the Executive Officer, Charles Sturt University’s Ethics in Human Research Committee (02) 6338 4628 if I have any concerns about the ethical conduct of the project.

☐ I agree to give consent for my child to participate in the project.

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Please return this sheet to your classroom teacher who will pass it onto Stephanie Garoni

CONSENT FORM FOR CSU RESEARCH PROJECT
Research project: Investigating talk practices as students move between primary and secondary school

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<tr>
<th>Who is conducting the research?</th>
<th>Principal Investigator</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mrs Stephanie Garoni (PhD student)</td>
<td>Mrs Stephanie Garoni (PhD student)</td>
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<tr>
<td>School of Education</td>
<td>School of Education</td>
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<tr>
<td>Research Institute for Professional Practice, Learning and Education</td>
<td>Research Institute for Professional Practice, Learning and Education</td>
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<tr>
<td>Charles Sturt University</td>
<td>Charles Sturt University</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Contact Phone: (02) 6051 9885</td>
<td>Contact Phone: (02) 6051 9885</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Contact Email: <a href="mailto:sgaroni@csu.edu.au">sgaroni@csu.edu.au</a></td>
<td>Contact Email: <a href="mailto:sgaroni@csu.edu.au">sgaroni@csu.edu.au</a></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Supervisors**

Dr Christine Edwards-Groves
School of Education
Research Institute for Professional Practice, Learning and Education
Charles Sturt University
Contact Phone: (02) 6933 2444
Contact Email: cgroves@csu.edu.au

Dr Christina Davidson
School of Education
Research Institute for Professional Practice, Learning and Education
Charles Sturt University
Contact Phone: (02) 6933 2412
Contact Email: cdavidson@csu.edu.au

**Why is the research being conducted?**

The study is being conducted by Stephanie Garoni from the School of Education at Charles Sturt University. Stephanie is completing a Doctor of Philosophy (PhD). The project aims to video and audio-record examples of teacher and student talk in everyday lessons in Year 6 and Year 7 classrooms. I want to capture these instances of talk so that I can explore how classroom talk can reveal practice as students transition from primary school to secondary school. By studying how talk unfolds naturally in each of these settings, a better understanding of how some practices in the transition process are retained, others are discontinued and some are new altogether can be further explained. The findings of this project will widen the parameters of what is currently known about talk and transition.

**What your child will be asked to do?**

1. Your child will be invited to volunteer to take part in the audio and video recorded lessons in their Year 6 classroom during December 2015, and again next year in their Year 7 classroom/s during February 2016. This means they...
will participate in regular classroom lessons, and the researcher will audio and video record ordinary classroom talk as it unfolds over a two to three week period in each setting.

2. Further interest will be sought from 10 to 12 focus children in the Year 6 class who express an eagerness to volunteer in this aspect of the project. Along with the teacher, these focus students will be asked to wear hands-free, portable digital audio recorders to capture specific classroom conversations. They will be asked to wear the portable audio recorders again in Year 7.

How will the participants be selected or screened?
1. Your child’s teacher/s have been selected because they are currently involved in the transition process as Year 6 or Year 7 teacher and have indicated an interest in the topics of talk and transition. At the end of the project, I will give the teachers information about the study and a copy of the findings.

2. As one of the 10 to 12 focus children, your child will be selected if he/she has expressed an interest in participating in this aspect of the project and is identified by the teacher as a responsible student who can wear the audio recorder without feeling uncomfortable.

What are the expected benefits of the research?
Transition into secondary school from primary school is an important issue for students, families and educators. Similarly, talk matters a great deal to what goes on in classrooms and plays a key role in teaching and learning. By audio and video capturing instances of classroom talk, I can study what happens to this talk as students start secondary school and investigate what the talk reveals about practices as students transition from one context to another.

Are there any risks to your child?
There is no anticipated risk for your child in taking part. It is recognised that the use of audio and video recorders to capture talk could create some level of discomfort. However, you can be assured that your child’s rights to privacy and confidentiality will be honoured. If he/she feels anxious about the recording, every effort will be made to address this and/or provide an appropriate alternative for the duration of the lesson.

How will your child’s confidentiality be protected?
I will be audio and video-recording classroom lessons. This will form part of the research data whereby transcripts will be made for in-depth analysis. Although the focus of the recordings will be on the talk, there will be occasions that your child might be in the video frame. Such recordings will be viewed only by the researcher and her supervisors. Any additional information or personal details gathered in the course of this research collected about your child will be strictly confidential and neither their name nor any other identifying information will be used or published. When excerpts of transcripts are included in reports, publications or presentations, pseudonyms (made-up names) will be used to protect the identities of all students, teachers and schools participating in the research. All recordings and other information will be disposed of or deleted after a period of five years after the completion of the project.

Your child’s participation is voluntary
Your child is free to identify that he/she does not want to participate in the recorded lessons and alternative arrangements will be made. There will be no consequences for this decision, and your child will not miss out on learning activities. If your child decides to withdraw from the project once classroom lessons have been recorded,
no future recordings will be made of him/her. Every effort will be made to remove recordings that directly involve him/her; however, in some cases, this may not be possible.

If your child does not want to participate in the study, he/she will probably not be able to withdraw from the lesson (since this will interfere with their educational program). Extreme care will be taken to delete any contributions that your child makes in the class (although this may be difficult in a whole class discussion). Your child will be notified of this possibility at the beginning of the study. Alternatively, the school may opt for your child to be situated elsewhere for the duration of the lesson or to attend another class at that particular time. This will be negotiated with the school/teacher prior to the recording of lessons.

Your child won’t be subjected to any penalty or discriminatory treatment. If you don’t want your child to take part in the study, this will in no way harm or negatively affect your child’s relationship with the school or Charles Sturt University.

According to the age of your child, it may be necessary for you to read the information sheet and consent form with your child, or explain it, before seeking his/her consent.

Questions/further information
If you have any questions or would like some more information about the project, you can contact:

Mrs Stephanie Garoni (PhD student)
Charles Sturt University
Contact Phone: (02) 6051 9885
Contact Email: sgaroni@csu.edu.au

The ethical conduct of this research
Charles Sturt University conducts research in accordance with the National Statement on Ethical Conduct in Human Research. Charles Sturt University’s Human Research Ethics Committee has approved this study. If you have any complaints or reservations about the ethical conduct of this project, you may contact the Committee through the Executive Officer:

Executive Officer
Ethics in Human Research Committee
Academic Secretariat
Charles Sturt University
Private Mail Bag 29
Bathurst NSW 2795
Phone: (02) 6338 4628

Any issues you raise will be treated in confidence and investigated fully and you will be informed of the outcome.

Feedback to you
At the conclusion of my study, I will provide a copy of a general report that presents the results of the overall research to the teachers involved in the project. If you would like a copy of the report, this could be arranged with the teacher.

- Do you agree for your child to participate in the general research? If yes, please read and sign the attached Parent Consent Form.
Do you agree for your child to participate as one of the 10 to 12 focus children in the research? If yes, please read and sign the attached Parent Consent Form: Focus Child.

Please retain this information sheet for your information.

With thanks

Mrs Stephanie Garoni
Appendix I: Year 6 Student Consent Form: Focus Child

Classroom Talk and Transition Research Project

In order to participate in this research project you will need to read the information sheet and complete the following consent form.

Research team contacts:

Principal Investigator
Mrs Stephanie Garoni (PhD student)
School of Education
Charles Sturt University
Contact Phone: (02) 6051 9885
Contact Email: sgaroni@csu.edu.au

Supervisors
Dr Christine Edwards-Groves
School of Education
Charles Sturt University Wagga Wagga
Phone: (02) 6933 2444
Email: cgroves@csu.edu.au

Dr Christina Davidson
School of Education
Charles Sturt University
Phone: (02) 6933 2412
Email: cdavidson@csu.edu.au

I __________________________ (name) from __________________________
(school) agree to participate as a focus child in this project which will record my teachers’ Year 6 and Year 7 lessons.

By signing, I confirm that I have read and understood the information and have noted that:

- I will wear a hands-free microphone in my Year 6 and Year 7 classrooms so that conversations with others can be recorded.
- The purpose of the research has been explained to me.
• I have read or heard about the project and understood the information sheet.

• I have been given the chance to ask questions about the research.

• I have received satisfactory answers to any questions.

• I understand that my lesson will be audio and video recorded by the researcher from the University.

• I have been invited to volunteer to be in the project by the researcher because of the contribution I can make to the research.

• I understand that I can tell my teacher if I am worried about being in the project.

☐ I agree to participate in the project as a focus child.
☐ I don’t want to be in the project as a focus child.

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Please return this sheet to your classroom teacher who will pass it onto Stephanie Garoni

CONSENT FORM FOR CSU RESEARCH PROJECT
Appendix J: Year 6 Student Consent Form

In order to participate in this research project you will need to read the information sheet and complete the following consent form.

Research team contacts:

Principal Investigator
Mrs Stephanie Garoni (PhD student)
School of Education
Charles Sturt University
Contact Phone: (02) 6051 9885
Contact Email: sgaroni@csu.edu.au

Supervisors
Dr Christine Edwards-Groves
School of Education
Charles Sturt University Wagga Wagga
Phone: (02) 6933 2444
Email: cgroves@csu.edu.au

davidson@csu.edu.au

I (name) __________________________ from __________________________
(school) agree to participate in this project which will record my teachers’ Year 6 and Year 7 lessons.

By signing, I confirm that I have read and understood the information and have noted that:

• The purpose of the research has been explained to me.

• I have read or heard about the project and understood the information sheet.

• I have been given the chance to ask questions about the research.
The social accomplishment of transition: Investigating classroom talk practices as students move from primary to secondary school

- I have received satisfactory answers to any questions.

- I understand that my lesson will be audio and video recorded by the researcher from the University.

- I have been invited to volunteer to be in the project by the researcher because of the contribution I can make to the research.

- I understand that I can tell my teacher if I am worried about being in the project.

☐ I agree to participate in the project.
☐ I don’t want to be in the project.

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Please return this sheet to your classroom teacher who will pass it onto Stephanie Garoni

CONSENT FORM FOR CSU RESEARCH PROJECT

..........................................................
Appendix K: Year 6 Student Information Sheet

Classroom Talk and Transition Research Project

Who is conducting the research?

Principal Investigator
Mrs Stephanie Garoni (PhD student)
School of Education
Research Institute for Professional Practice, Learning and Education
Charles Sturt University
Contact Phone: (02) 6051 9885
Contact Email: sgaroni@csu.edu.au

Supervisors
Dr Christine Edwards-Groves
School of Education
Research Institute for Professional Practice, Learning and Education
Charles Sturt University
Contact Phone: (02) 6933 2444
Contact Email: cgroves@csu.edu.au

Dr Christina Davidson
School of Education
Research Institute for Professional Practice, Learning and Education
Charles Sturt University
Contact Phone: (02) 6933 2412
Contact Email: cdavidson@csu.edu.au

Why is the research being conducted?
The project will involve audio and video recording lessons in your Year 6 and Year 7 classrooms. Teachers have been invited to have lessons recorded because they want to learn more about what happens to the talk when students move from Year 6 to Year 7.

I want to record these lessons so I can study the topics of talk and transition. Any information I find out will be used in a final report for my work at Charles Sturt University.

What you will be asked to do?
1. You are asked to volunteer to take part in the audio and video recorded lessons at the end of 2015 in your Year 6 classroom, and again at the beginning of 2016 in your Year 7 classrooms. This means that you will participate in your regular classroom lessons where your conversations with the teacher and other students will be video and audio recorded.
2. After talking with your classroom teacher, and if you are really interested in the research project, you may like to volunteer as a focus child. This means that you will be asked to wear a hands-free microphone around your neck, and your conversations with others will be recorded. Your teacher will also wear one of these. If you choose to participate in this way, you will be asked to wear the microphones again in Year 7.

**How was your teacher selected?**
Your teacher has been selected for this project because he/she identified an interest in the topics of talk and transition and was identified by the principal as a good Year 6 teacher.

**What are the expected benefits of the research?**
Moving from primary school to secondary school is a really important time for you, your family and your teachers. I want to record what a Year 6 classroom sounds like, and then what a Year 7 classroom sounds like, so I can help teachers and schools understand what happens during this time of transition in more detail. Then they can implement programs that can better support you and other students about to go through this process.

**Are there any risks to you?**
I do not think there are any risks if you take part. But, if you feel worried about the audio or video recording, please tell the teacher so that he/she can help advise you about what to do.

**How will your confidentiality be protected?**
Lessons in your Year 6 classroom, and your future Year 7 classroom/s, will be audio and video recorded. The focus will be on the conversations; not you. There will be occasions that you might be in the video frame, so your picture will be in the video recordings. These recordings will be viewed only by myself and my two supervisors from the university. Any personal details about you will be kept private. I won’t use your name or any other information about you when I write a report. When the research is written up, I will give you a made-up name to protect your identity. I will do this for everyone who participates in the project and I will even give your school another name. So, I will not use any information in any published writing that might identify you, other students, your teacher or your school.

**Your participation is voluntary**
You are free not to participate in the recorded lessons. If you don’t want to participate anymore, there will be no need to provide a reason and there will be no consequences for withdrawing. If you decide to withdraw from the project once classroom lessons have been recorded, no future recordings will be made of you. Every effort will be made to remove recordings that directly involve you; however, in some cases, this may not be possible.

If you do not participate in the study, your teacher will make other arrangements for that time so that you can do other learning activities. For example, you might work in a small group with other children who are not being recorded or complete other activities related to the lesson. This will be discussed and arranged with your teacher.

It is okay if you decide not to participate and you won’t be subjected to any penalty.
The social accomplishment of transition: Investigating classroom talk practices as students move from primary to secondary school

Questions/further information
If you have any questions or would like some more information about the project, you could first ask your teacher or someone in your family. If you still have questions, you could contact:

Mrs Stephanie Garoni (PhD student)
Charles Sturt University
Contact Phone: (02) 6051 9885
Contact Email: sgaroni@csu.edu.au

The ethical conduct of this research
At Charles Sturt University, we must be very careful to conduct research according to guidelines that protect everyone who takes part in our research. If you have any concerns or complaints about this project, then you or your parents could contact:

Executive Officer
Ethics in Human Research Committee
Academic Secretariat
Charles Sturt University
Private Mail Bag 29
Bathurst NSW 2795
Phone: (02) 6338 4628

Any issues you raise will be treated in confidence and investigated fully and you will be informed of the outcome.

Feedback to you
At the conclusion of my study, I will give a report that presents the results of my research to the teachers involved in the project. If you would like a copy of the report, this could be arranged with your teacher.

- Do you agree to participate in the general research? If yes, please read and sign the attached Student Consent Form.
- Do you agree to participate as one of the focus children in the research? If yes, please read and sign the attached Student Consent Form: Focus Child.

Please keep this information sheet for your information.

With thanks

Mrs Stephanie Garoni
Appendix L: Year 7 Parent Consent Form

Research project: Investigating talk practices as students move between primary and secondary school

In order to participate in this research project you will need to read the information sheet and complete the following consent form.

Research team contacts:

Principal Investigator
Mrs Stephanie Garoni (PhD student)
School of Education
Charles Sturt University
Contact Phone: (02) 6051 9885
Contact Email: sgaroni@csu.edu.au

Supervisors
Dr Christine Edwards-Groves
School of Education
Charles Sturt University Wagga Wagga
Phone: (02) 6933 2444
Email: cgroves@csu.edu.au
cdavidson@csu.edu.au

Dr Christina Davidson
School of Education
Charles Sturt University
Phone: (02) 6933 2412
Email:

I (please print) __________________________ from __________________________ (school) give consent for my child __________________________ (name) in __________________________ (name teacher and class) to participate in this project which will record her/his teachers’ Year 7 lessons.

I understand that CSU PhD student Stephanie Garoni will be conducting the research project about classroom talk and the transition from Year 6 to Year 7.
By signing below, I confirm that I have read and understood the information sheet and in particular have noted that:

- The purpose of the research has been explained to me. I have read and understood the information sheet given to me about the project.

- I have been given the chance to ask questions about the research. I have received satisfactory answers to any questions.

- I understand that lessons that my child will be involved in will be audio and video recorded by the researcher from the University.

- I understand that the audio and video recordings will be used to form part of the research data whereby transcripts will be made for in-depth analysis.

- I understand that my child will not be penalised in any way if he/she decides not to participate in the audio and video recorded lessons.

- I understand that my child can tell the teacher if he/she becomes worried about being involved in the audio and video recorded lessons.

- I understand that I can contact the Executive Officer, Charles Sturt University’s Ethics in Human Research Committee (02) 6338 4628 if I have any concerns about the ethical conduct of the project.

☐ I agree to give consent for my child to participate in the project.

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Please return this sheet to your classroom teacher who will pass it onto Stephanie Garoni

CONSENT FORM FOR CSU RESEARCH PROJECT
The social accomplishment of transition: Investigating classroom talk practices as students move from primary to secondary school

Appendix M: Year 7 Parent Information Sheet

Research project: Investigating talk practices as students move between primary and secondary school

Who is conducting the research?

Principal Investigator
Mrs Stephanie Garoni (PhD student)
School of Education
Research Institute for Professional Practice, Learning and Education
Charles Sturt University
Contact Phone: (02) 6051 9885
Contact Email: sgaroni@csu.edu.au

Supervisors
Dr Christine Edwards-Groves
School of Education
Research Institute for Professional Practice, Learning and Education
Charles Sturt University
Contact Phone: (02) 6933 2444
Contact Email: cgroves@csu.edu.au

Dr Christina Davidson
School of Education
Research Institute for Professional Practice, Learning and Education
Charles Sturt University
Contact Phone: (02) 6933 2412
Contact Email: cdavidson@csu.edu.au

Why is the research being conducted?
The study is being conducted by Stephanie Garoni from the School of Education at Charles Sturt University. Stephanie is completing a Doctor of Philosophy (PhD). The project aims to video and audio-record examples of teacher and student talk in everyday lessons in Year 6 and Year 7 classrooms. I want to capture these instances of talk so that I can explore how classroom talk can reveal practice as students transition from primary school to secondary school. By studying how talk unfolds naturally in each of these settings, a better understanding of how some practices in the transition process are retained, others are discontinued and some are new altogether can be further explained. The findings of this project will widen the parameters of what is currently known about talk and transition.

What your child will be asked to do?
Your child will be invited to volunteer to take part in the audio and video recorded lessons in their Year 7 classroom/s during selected periods in February, 2016. This means they will participate in regular classroom lessons, and the researcher will audio and video record ordinary classroom talk as it unfolds over a two to three week period.
How will the participants be selected or screened?
Your child’s teacher/s have been selected because they are currently involved in the transition process as Year 7 teachers and have indicated an interest in the topics of talk and transition. At the end of the project, I will give the teachers information about the study and a copy of the findings.

What are the expected benefits of the research?
Transition into secondary school from primary school is an important issue for students, families and educators. Similarly, talk matters a great deal to what goes on in classrooms and plays a key role in teaching and learning. By audio and video capturing instances of classroom talk, I can study what happens to this talk as students start secondary school and investigate what the talk reveals about practices as students transition from one context to another.

Are there any risks to your child?
There is no anticipated risk for your child in taking part. It is recognised that the use of audio and video recorders to capture talk could create some level of discomfort. However, you can be assured that your child’s rights to privacy and confidentiality will be honoured. If he/she feels anxious about the recording, every effort will be made to address this and/or provide an appropriate alternative for the duration of the lesson.

How will your child’s confidentiality be protected?
I will be audio and video-recording classroom lessons. This will form part of the research data whereby transcripts will be made for in-depth analysis. Although the focus of the recordings will be on the talk, there will be occasions that your child might be in the video frame. Such recordings will be viewed only by the researcher and her supervisors. Any additional information or personal details gathered in the course of this research collected about your child will be strictly confidential and neither their name nor any other identifying information will be used or published. When excerpts of transcripts are included in reports, publications or presentations, pseudonyms (made-up names) will be used to protect the identities of all students, teachers and schools participating in the research. All recordings and other information will be disposed of or deleted after a period of five years after the completion of the project.

Your child’s participation is voluntary
Your child is free to identify that he/she does not want to participate in the recorded lessons and alternative arrangements will be made. There will be no consequences for this decision, and your child will not miss out on learning activities. If your child decides to withdraw from the project once classroom lessons have been recorded, no future recordings will be made of him/her. Every effort will be made to remove recordings that directly involve him/her; however, in some cases, this may not be possible.

If your child does not want to participate in the study, he/she will probably not be able to withdraw from the lesson (since this will interfere with their educational program). Extreme care will be taken to delete any contributions that your child makes in the class (although this may be difficult in a whole class discussion). Your child will be notified of this possibility at the beginning of the study. Alternatively, the school may opt for your child to be situated elsewhere for the duration of the lesson or to attend another class at that particular time. This will be negotiated with the school/teacher prior to the recording of lessons.

Your child won’t be subjected to any penalty or discriminatory treatment. If you don’t want your child to take part in the study, this will in no way harm or negatively affect your child’s relationship with the school or Charles Sturt University.
According to the age of your child, it may be necessary for you to read the information sheet and consent form with your child, or explain it, before seeking his/her consent.

**Questions/further information**
If you have any questions or would like some more information about the project, you can contact:

Mrs Stephanie Garoni (PhD student)
Charles Sturt University
Contact Phone: (02) 6051 9885
Contact Email: sgaroni@csu.edu.au

**The ethical conduct of this research**
Charles Sturt University conducts research in accordance with the *National Statement on Ethical Conduct in Human Research*. Charles Sturt University’s Human Research Ethics Committee has approved this study. If you have any complaints or reservations about the ethical conduct of this project, you may contact the Committee through the Executive Officer:

Executive Officer
Ethics in Human Research Committee
Academic Secretariat
Charles Sturt University
Private Mail Bag 29
Bathurst NSW 2795
Phone: (02) 6338 4628

Any issues you raise will be treated in confidence and investigated fully and you will be informed of the outcome.

**Feedback to you**
At the conclusion of my study, I will provide a copy of a general report that presents the results of the overall research to the teachers involved in the project. If you would like a copy of the report, this could be arranged with the teacher.

- Do you agree for your child to participate in the general research? If yes, please read and sign the attached Consent Form.

Please retain this information sheet for your information.

With thanks

[Signature]

Mrs Stephanie Garoni
Appendix N: Year 7 Student Consent Form

Classroom Talk and Transition Research Project

In order to participate in this research project you will need to read the information sheet and complete the following consent form.

Research team contacts:

Principal Investigator
Mrs Stephanie Garoni (PhD student)
School of Education
Charles Sturt University
Contact Phone: (02) 6051 9885
Contact Email: sgaroni@csu.edu.au

Supervisors
Dr Christine Edwards-Groves
School of Education
Charles Sturt University
Wagga Wagga
Phone: (02) 6933 2444
Email: cgroves@csu.edu.au
cdavidson@csu.edu.au

I (name) ______________________ from __________________________ (school) agree to participate in this project which will record my teachers’ Year 7 lessons.

By signing, I confirm that I have read and understood the information and have noted that:
- The purpose of the research has been explained to me.

- I have read or heard about the project and understood the information sheet.

- I have been given the chance to ask questions about the research.

- I have received satisfactory answers to any questions.

- I understand that my lesson will be audio and video recorded by the researcher from the University.

- I have been invited to volunteer to be in the project by the researcher because of the contribution I can make to the research.

- I understand that I can tell my teacher if I am worried about being in the project.

☐ I agree to participate in the project. ☐ I don’t want to be in the project.

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
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<tr>
<td>Signature</td>
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<td>Date</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Please return this sheet to your classroom teacher who will pass it onto Stephanie Garoni

CONSENT FORM FOR CSU RESEARCH PROJECT
Classroom Talk and Transition Research Project

Who is conducting the research?
Principal Investigator
Mrs Stephanie Garoni (PhD student)
School of Education
Research Institute for Professional Practice, Learning and Education
Charles Sturt University
Contact Phone: (02) 6051 9885
Contact Email: sgaroni@csu.edu.au

Supervisors
Dr Christine Edwards-Groves
School of Education
Research Institute for Professional Practice, Learning and Education
Charles Sturt University
Contact Phone: (02) 6933 2444
Contact Email: cgroves@csu.edu.au

Dr Christina Davidson
School of Education
Research Institute for Professional Practice, Learning and Education
Charles Sturt University
Contact Phone: (02) 6933 2412
Contact Email: cdavidson@csu.edu.au

Why is the research being conducted?
The project will involve audio and video recording lessons in your Year 7 classrooms. Teachers have been invited to have lessons recorded because they want to learn more about what happens to the talk when students move from Year 6 to Year 7.

I want to record these lessons so I can study the topics of talk and transition. Any information I find out will be used in a final report for my work at Charles Sturt University.

What you will be asked to do?
3. You are asked to volunteer to take part in the audio and video recorded lessons at the beginning of 2016 in your Year 7 classrooms. This means that you will participate in your regular classroom lessons where your conversations with the teacher and other students will be video and audio recorded.
How were your teachers selected?
Your Year 7 teachers have been selected for this project because they identified an interest in the topics of talk and transition and were identified by the principal as effective Year 7 teachers.

What are the expected benefits of the research?
Moving from primary school to secondary school is a really important time for you, your family and your teachers. I want to record what a Year 6 classroom sounds like, and then what a Year 7 classroom sounds like, so I can help teachers and schools understand what happens during this time of transition in more detail. Then they can implement programs that can better support other students about to go through this process.

Are there any risks to you?
I do not think there are any risks if you take part. But, if you feel worried about the audio or video recording, please tell the teacher so that he/she can help advise you about what to do.

How will your confidentiality be protected?
Lessons in your Year 7 classrooms will be audio and video recorded. The focus will be on the conversations; not you. There will be occasions that you might be in the video frame, so your picture will be in the video recordings. These recordings will be viewed only by myself and my two supervisors from the university. Any personal details about you will be kept private. I won’t use your name or any other information about you when I write a report. When the research is written up, I will give you a made-up name to protect your identity. I will do this for everyone who participates in the project and I will even give your school another name. So, I will not use any information in any published writing that might identify you, other students, your teacher or your school.

Your participation is voluntary
You are free not to participate in the recorded lessons. If you don’t want to participate anymore, there will be no need to provide a reason and there will be no consequences for withdrawing. If you decide to withdraw from the project once classroom lessons have been recorded, no future recordings will be made of you. Every effort will be made to remove recordings that directly involve you; however, in some cases, this may not be possible.

If you do not participate in the study, your teacher will make other arrangements for that time so that you can do other learning activities. For example, you might work in a small group with other children who are not being recorded or complete other activities related to the lesson. This will be discussed and arranged with your teacher.

It is okay if you decide not to participate and you won’t be subjected to any penalty.

Questions/further information
If you have any questions or would like some more information about the project, you could first ask your teacher or someone in your family. If you still have questions, you could contact:

Mrs Stephanie Garoni (PhD student)
Charles Sturt University
Contact Phone: (02) 6051 9885
Contact Email: sgaroni@csu.edu.au
The ethical conduct of this research
At Charles Sturt University, we must be very careful to conduct research according to guidelines that protect everyone who takes part in our research. If you have any concerns or complaints about this project, then you or your parents could contact:
Executive Officer
Ethics in Human Research Committee
Academic Secretariat
Charles Sturt University
Private Mail Bag 29
Bathurst NSW 2795
Phone: (02) 6338 4628

Any issues you raise will be treated in confidence and investigated fully and you will be informed of the outcome.

Feedback to you
At the conclusion of my study, I will give a report that presents the results of my research to the teachers involved in the project. If you would like a copy of the report, this could be arranged with your teacher.

- Do you agree to participate in the general research? If yes, please read and sign the attached Student Consent Form.

Please keep this information sheet for your information.

With thanks

Mrs Stephanie Garoni