

**'The structure of discussion:
A discourse analytical approach to the identification of structure in
the text type 'discussion.'**

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Abstract.

This study is concerned with the structural analysis of a corpus of discussive data. The data, mainly taken from CANCODE, the Cambridge and Nottingham Corpus of Discourse in English, was taken from a range of situational contexts, along a cline of formality from informal ‘chat’ to public broadcast material. The data was analysed using a version of the Sinclair and Coulthard (1975) model of discourse, which was adapted to deal with spoken discussion, and the resultant analytical framework was described in detail.

Previous studies of discussion and argumentation have looked either at intra-turn structure, or at the local management of disagreement between turns. This study aims to provide an overall analysis of the structure of discussion, with a view to elucidating the argumentative and persuasive strategies used by interactants involved in spontaneous spoken discussion. It is argued that discourse acts can be identified through the study of certain lexico-grammatical items which typically realise them, and that both at act level and at move level elements of structure combine to form a type of patterning which is typical to discussive texts. It is further argued that this patterning reflects various aspects of the ‘nature’ of discussion, such as its combativeness, and the way that interpersonal objectives become less important in this type of interaction. Also the emergent nature of opinion in discussion is reflected in interactants’ use of focussing moves and summarising acts, and points of convergence between interactants can be identified through their use of responding moves.

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Chapter 1. Introduction: background to the present study.

The study of interactive argumentation or ‘discussion’ has been a lacuna in discourse analysis. Traditionally it has been studied as an aspect of logic or rhetoric as opposed to social action, and although recently there has been some work on discussion produced within the fields of Conversation Analysis, pragmatics and corpus linguistics, only specifically delineated ‘types’ of discussive discourse have been examined, such as, for example, business language (Bargiela-Chiappini and Harris 1997), courtroom cross-examination (Harris 1991), Talk Radio (Hutchby 1999 and 1996) or university tutorial discussions (Benwell 1996). Also these studies have had different goals from the present study, for example Hughes (1996) studied televised spoken debates in order to compare this type of discussive text with the written ‘Hansard’ version of parliamentary debate, with the aim of making broader generalisations about spoken and written differences in English as a whole. Perez de Ayala (2001) looks at Parliamentary Question Time and compares the rules imposed on members of the House of Commons governing their interaction during Question Time (Erskine May’s *Treatise on the law, privileges, proceedings and usage of Parliament*) with the ‘rules’ of Politeness delineated by Brown and Levinson (1987). Other analysts have looked at news interviews (see papers in Scannell (ed) 1991; Jucker 1986; Greatbatch 1988), from a media studies perspective, with the purpose of deconstructing media data and investigating such phenomena as turn-taking and topic-control in media encounters as compared with their occurrence in everyday, banal conversation.

However, thus far, no analyst has provided a detailed examination of non-specialised, everyday conversational argument in a large corpus.

This is a significant lacuna. It is the contention of this thesis that it is through spontaneous interactive discussion that interactants develop and refine their moral and political opinions, which of course are an essential part of an individual's social persona. In line with the Vygotskian notion of the mind existing in 'social space', this thesis attempts to show that opinions and attitudes are not formed in cognitive isolation but through social interaction. Opinions and positions are not pre-ordained and fixed, but are a process contingent on interaction and emerge from exchanges with others. Conversationalists may begin a discussion with little more than a 'feeling' about the rights and wrongs of an issue, and through interaction with others they can come to identify why they feel the way they do, what their reasons are, and furthermore, whether their reasoning is sound enough to stand up to opposition: in other words their 'argument' and opinion is emergent from the discourse. Although as Schiffrin (1985) points out, interactants are rarely persuaded in the course of a discussion actually to change their existing viewpoint: "many arguments end with participants reaffirming their commitment to the opposing positions with which they began or refocusing their disagreement onto a new pair of opposing positions rather than realigning themselves with a newly evolved position" (p35), nevertheless the discussive process is important both in the formation of a personal standpoint and in the understanding of an oppositional view. Discussion makes people examine and expose for public dissection their views and their reasons for these views, so that in a way it resembles an exercise in mutual self-analysis; this is an interactive social

activity which helps us to develop the sets of attitudes, feelings, and beliefs which are a vital part of who we are.

This thesis will also make a contribution to the continuing debate on the nature of spoken genres and genre theory in general. It attempts to draw a distinction between genre as defined by situational, text-external factors (the contextual configuration of a text (Halliday and Hasan 1985) or the 'discourse community which produces it (Swales 1990)) and 'text types' which reflect the use the language is being put to and the cognitive processes involved in it; and are identifiable through structural analysis in that a given text type will be embodied by a pattern of discourse moves typical to that text type. In order to reveal these patterns it is of course necessary to identify the discourse moves, and the Sinclair and Coulthard rank scale model of discourse seems suited to this task. That the initial work done by Sinclair and Coulthard (1975) on classroom data needs considerable refinement in order to apply it to everyday talk is not in doubt. This work has been partly done by Burton, Tsui and others (see section 2.5) but never fully elaborated for casual everyday discussion of the type exemplified in the present thesis. In this way the present study may be seen as an extension of the invaluable work that followed Sinclair and Coulthard's initial research, but also as a revision in the understanding of and a refinement of certain of their elements of structure (their definitions of the elements of exchange structure, for example). Further, in that this research is directed towards a particular type of interaction (discussion) it also presents a new way of looking at the generic significance of exchange structure patterning over large samples of data. As with any study of this nature, the description is never completely exhaustive nor does this thesis claim such exhaustiveness; it offers its analysis as a further step in the long process of capturing

the characteristics of the multitudinous forms of everyday talk, and focuses on just one commonly recurring type.

2.1 Introduction: approaches to the analysis of discourse.

Discourse analysis, at its simplest and most general definition, concerns the study of language in use. As such it is a relatively new discipline, since it is only comparatively recently that the study of discourse has developed from the examination of syntax, phonology and lexis, i.e. the structure of language at sentence level, into the study of everyday written and spoken interaction. As social beings, our lives consist of a continual flow of discourse, and we interact in a wide variety of contexts, using a wide variety of linguistic strategies, on a daily basis. One of the earliest influential works in the study of discourse was the work of J.L. Austin (1962), who argued that language *is* social action, and that it is through our use of language that we perform various social acts, such as warning, apologising, or promising. We can recognise what function a given utterance is performing in a particular instance because of shared knowledge and assumptions, gained through social experience. Therefore the understanding of language depends on its context of production. Discourse analysis studies the way language varies according to its context, and has come to be associated with spoken rather than written language, so that the texts or data which discourse analysts study usually consist of audio (and more recently video) tape recordings or transcripts of recordings. In studying a given text, the discourse analyst would seek to answer the following questions about it:

- What function is the language performing? What are the interpersonal and transactional goals it attempts to achieve?
- What is the identity of the interactants and their relationship with each other?
- Where (in what social and physical context) is the interaction taking place?

- What methods are available to language users for the interpretation of the meaning of a piece of discourse, i.e. what contextual clues lead us to an understanding of what a particular text or discursive move means, and what cognitive processes are involved?

The search for structure in spontaneous, naturally occurring speech at first seems an impossible task. Everyday conversation is both dynamic and flexible, constructed between interactants rather than from one, stable viewpoint, unlike like written discourse, which is typically a single-authored production, divorced in time and space from its reception by the reader. Furthermore, because of its spontaneity, none of the interactants can be certain at the outset of a conversation how it will progress, so that its substance evolves from the interactants' combined contributions. In other words, casual conversation has an inherently emergent nature, with any interactant theoretically able to take the discourse in a different direction at any time. However, there has been a great deal of work done in this area, and many attempts to analyse spoken discourse have shown that it does have a describable structure and varying degrees of predictability, depending on the conversation type or *genre*, which is both organised and consistent (see Halliday and Hasan, 1985, Ventola 1979, McCarthy 1998).

There are many approaches to the analysis of discourse, each having grown out of diverse traditions. Conversation Analysis (see section 2.4) has its roots in sociology, and is associated with sociolinguistics. It tends to look at localised structures, for example how the production of one type of utterance predicts the production of another (adjacency pairs such as question and answer), or how conversationalists

achieve various organisational features of conversation, such as conversational closing (Sacks and Schegloff 1973) or turn-taking (Sacks, Schegloff and Jefferson, 1974). Conversation Analysts also examine the functions of specific pieces of linguistic behaviour, such as laughter (Jefferson 1974), discourse markers (Schiffrin 1987) or repair (Schegloff, Sacks and Jefferson, 1977). Systemic-functional linguistics, on the other hand, grew out of the work of J.R. Firth (see, for example, Firth 1957) and Halliday's work on language as a social semiotic (Halliday 1978 and 1985). Again, this is an approach to language which attaches importance to the sociological aspects of language and its social functions and contexts of use. Attempts to identify structure in discourse which have grown out of this tradition take the form of the identification of sequential stages in discourse, and the labels for these stages reflect their social functions. (See section 2.6).

The Birmingham school of discourse analysis grew out of the work of Sinclair and Coulthard, whose attempt to analyse the structure of discourse made use of speech act theory, as well as linking its search for structural elements to lexical and grammatical aspects of language. As Levinson comments, "the DA approach... promises to integrate linguistic findings about intra-sentential organisation with discourse structure" (1983, p287). As such this approach can be seen to have grown out of structural linguistics, although speech act theory has its roots in the academic discipline of philosophy. (see Coulthard 1985 p13-32). Sinclair and Coulthard (1975) developed a hierarchical rank scale model of discourse which used Halliday's (1961) paper on categories of the theory of grammar as a template. At the heart of this model is the three-part *exchange structure*. They identified three core discursive *moves* which commonly recurred in their data: Initiation, Response and Follow-up,

which they developed as a result of their analysis of teacher-fronted classroom discourse. (see section 2.5)

Further important work on the analysis of the structure of discourse includes studies of the structure of narrative, by Labov (see section 2.7) and Eggins and Slade (see section 2.6.3) among others. In the rest of this chapter the various approaches will be examined in more detail, and their appropriateness for the aims of the present study will be assessed.

2.2. Winter, Hoey and Clause Relation theory: an examination of E. Winter's clause relation theory and its suitability for the analysis of spoken discourse.

At the heart of discourse analysis is an attempt to understand language independently of grammatical units such as clauses and sentences. In the context of the present study, frameworks of analysis which specifically base themselves on non-sentence-internal units will be considered potentially productive. However, it will be seen that not all approaches that leave the internal structure of sentences behind are equally adequate in explicating the emergent nature of discursive interaction and its structural characteristics.

Clause relation theory is one such method of identifying discourse units above the clause, inasmuch as a clause is considered the largest identifiable grammatical feature. The ability of native speakers to make sense out of a piece of text where the sentences have been jumbled around, and go on to identify 'natural' breaks in the text where they could expect to see a paragraph, leads us inevitably to the conclusion that there is a unit above the sentence which they are instinctively recognising, i.e., that some sort of textual cohesion exists above the level of grammar. Eugene Winter and others developed the idea of clause relations in an attempt to explain this textual cohesion.

Winter defines clause relations as "the shared cognitive process whereby we interpret the meaning of a clause or group of clauses in the light of their adjoining clause or group of clauses." (Winter 1978, p86) At its simplest, this means that the placing of

one clause next to another affects the way we interpret that clause, so that “their meaning together is more than the sum total of their separate parts” (Hoey, 1983, p18). In this way, clauses or groups of clauses are related to each other semantically, with the sequence of clauses, co-occurrence of grammar and lexis between clauses, and the overall arrangement or ‘pattern’ of clauses in a given text, affecting the way we interpret that text. These patterns and relations can be signalled to the reader/listener with conjuncts, subordinators, and/or a finite vocabulary of lexical items (Winter lists these three groups of signals in his three vocabularies; Winter 1978, p96-7). Hoey (1983) adds a further signalling mechanism, that of repetition.

Winter and Hoey identify two main ‘types’ of basic clause relation, Matching relations and Logical Sequence relations. The Matching relation is concerned with the compatibility or incompatibility of two clauses: that is the idea(s) expressed in one clause/semantic unit are compared with another in terms of similarity or contrast. For example, a headline in the Independent, 22 October 1996, uses a simple matching relation to show contrast clearly: “Mrs Lawrence doesn’t have the tools to achieve her vision. We do.” (p2) Or, from the same paper, a more complex (and therefore perhaps not carrying the same impact) example, this time of compatibility: “Dr Wyatt said it was the duty of scientists to emphasise what they did not know, and the duty of doctors to err on the side of caution.” (p7) Logical Sequence relations are concerned with causal, chronological and evaluative connections between clauses “representing selective changes in a time/space continuum from simple time/space change to deductive or causal sequence which is modelled on real world time/change.” (Winter 1982, p52-3) An example of this type of relation would be: “The power to order a ban was endorsed by the Commons last year, because the

Government feared bulletins could magnify the impact of hearings on the public.”
(The Independent, 22/10/96, p1)

Running alongside these ‘micro’ relations between clauses is the ‘macro’ idea of basic text structures; Winter “divide(s) clause relations into two main kinds of relation between a membership of clauses or sentences in which one (basic clause relation) can be found within the structure of membership of the other (basic text structure).” .(Winter 1982, p50). These ‘basic text structures’ apply to larger ‘chunks’ of the discourse, or ‘more complete’ semantic units. As Hoey says, these structures “bring together any cohesive features which serve the same organisational and relational functions.” (Hoey 1983, p109)

The idea of ‘more complete’ semantic units is an important one. Basic text structures are seen as complete discourses in that they fulfil a pattern, which has essential units; just as a clause cannot be ‘complete’ without at least a subject and verb, so discourses have certain essential elements. Hoey discusses the ‘Problem – Solution’ pattern at length, and identifies its elements as :

Situation -- Problem -- Response -- Result -- Evaluation -- Basis for evaluation

He uses a (concocted) example to illustrate the Problem - Solution pattern:

(2.1)

(1)I was on sentry duty

Situation (In what situation did the events occur?)

(2)I saw the enemy approaching

Problem (What aspect of the situation required a response?)

value to it as either true or false. Clauses (4) to (5) form the ‘real’ phase in which “we are offered what the author himself believes to be the truth” (ibid, p129).

2.2.1. The problem of overlapping semantic functions.

Looking for these patterns in actual data, we find that elements often coexist within the same clause, and do not come in any fixed order. Here is another extract from a newspaper, this time the Nottingham Evening Post, 30/10/96;

(2.3)

“ (1)(i)Health chiefs warned today (ii)that waiting times for non-urgent operations at Nottingham’s Queen’s Medical Centre could rise beyond Government limits - (2)unless more cash is injected into the service. (3)(i)And surgeons could be faced with tough choices (ii)over which patients should take priority. (4)(i)The QMC has cancelled 320 routine operations for November and December - (ii)after performing 4.5% more than its contract set out.”(p11)

Here, (1) is both Situation and a negative Evaluation (or Problem) signalled by the item, *warned*. (2) is both a possible Response (inject cash to save the situation) and an elaboration of the Problem (there is a lack of cash in the service). Similarly (3) seems to be a Problem (the idea that surgeons have to choose which patients to treat), a Response (since they cannot treat them all some patients will take priority), and a negative Evaluation signalled by the adjective *tough*. In fact identifying anything as a Problem or a Response is a kind of Evaluation, and in that the Situation element answers the question ‘What was/is the situation?’, all these clauses/sentences are Situation elements also; i.e., the elements overlap each other. Hoey (1983) points this out in an alternative analysis of his own text:

(2.4)

(1)I was on sentry duty	Situation	Evaluation of situation as non problem
(2)I saw the enemy approaching	Aspect of Situation requiring a response	Evaluation of Situation as Problem
(3)I opened fire	Response to Aspect of Situation requiring a response	Evaluation of Situation as response
(4)I beat off the attack	Evaluation of Response to Aspect of Situation requiring a response	Evaluation of new Situation as Result

This means that all discourse is Situational or Evaluative, or both; as Hoey says: “Situation and Evaluation are the fundamental units of discourse analysis, corresponding roughly to the questions ‘What are the facts?’ and ‘What do you think of the facts?’”(ibid, p55). As I shall show later, for less formally organised texts such as spoken linguistic data, this overlap of elements becomes a serious impediment in the attempt to identify basic text structures.

The problem of overlap also connects with a deeper problem of analysis for anyone concerned with large-scale corpus data, and that is the lack of replicability across large numbers of text samples militates against a quantitative approach, unlike the more readily isolatable and autonomous units of the exchange structure model, or the evidence drawn from individual items such as stance markers, the latter being amenable to at least semi-automatic retrieval from a corpus, as the present study hopes to demonstrate.

2.2.2 The ‘End result’

This above problem also affects the idea of the ‘completeness’ of the discourse. If Evaluation runs right through it, how is it possible linguistically to tell when a discourse is complete? Hoey fixes on the notion of ‘End Result’. His example “I was on sentry duty. I saw the enemy approaching. I opened fire. This brought other sentries to the spot.” (Hoey 1983, p50) illustrates that without an ‘End Result’ the discourse is incomplete and cannot be finally evaluated, in that the question ‘How successful was your response?’ has not been answered. In the above newspaper example, however, all the sentences/clauses look like End Results, apart from clause (2) which contains a projected response, so that its success or otherwise cannot be judged. The fact is that the Response forced on the QMC, as expressed in (1) to (4), is actually part of the problem, or a highly negatively evaluated End Result of the ongoing problem of lack of funding for the NHS. This is made clear in the final sentence of the piece: “Unfortunately, this is the sort of decision that is being forced onto us (the QMC) by Nottingham being underfunded.” In this way, we would have to conclude that the newspaper example is an incomplete text, in that a negatively evaluated Result/End Result is in fact the same thing as an Evaluation of Situation as Problem.

To a certain extent this can be explained by looking at newspapers as a different kind/genre of text. The function of news reports is to inform us about events as they happen, so that the final evaluation must wait until events have developed and a solution has been found. Often, of course, with news reports the Problem being presented (like problem of funding the NHS) has no easy or straightforward solution,

so that a completely positively evaluated End Result will never be arrived at. Therefore in this sense news reports can never be ‘complete’.

This can also be a problem with spoken discourse, in that interactants are frequently giving each other ‘news bulletins’ on what has been happening in their lives, complaining and gossiping without reaching a positive End Result. Indeed, one of the defining features of casual conversation is the lack of a requirement for any transactional outcome; many casual conversations are simply relational explorations. At other times, the whole point of the conversation may be to negatively evaluate something or someone: taking an example from the CANCODE Corpus:

(2.5)

<\$1> Oh yeah. Oh well he just keeps annoying too many people.	Situation and Evaluation (negative)
<\$2> Is he still living there all the time?	Situation
<\$1> Yeah.	Situation cont'd
<\$2> He's been home at all?	Situation cont'd (Plus the paraphrased repetition of the first question shows evaluation of the first answer as Problem to a certain extent)
<\$1> No. He hasn't paid any rent. He hasn't paid anything toward it.	Problem (The Problem(s) implicit in the last sentence made explicit)
Like <\$=> the <\\$=> the gas bill came through and Ben had to pay for Doug's share..	Problem cont'd
<\$2> That is disgusting hey.	Evaluation (negative)
<\$1> It's just not fair.	Evaluation (negative)

(CANCODE No. 90026001)

In extract (2.5), speakers 1 and 2 create an equilibrium of negative evaluation in the final two turns which satisfies the relational imperative (i.e. convergence of evaluation). The fact that negative evaluation may seem 'incomplete' in terms of the well-formed textual requirements as expounded by the clause-relationalists is unimportant to the interactants, whose goals are satisfied by the state of convergence. No attempt at moving to a 'solution' of the problem of Doug not paying his rent is made, nor is such an attempt a necessary condition for the well-formedness of this type of conversational encounter.

In this way, everyday speech is very different from writing (except those kinds of writing which are close to speech, like personal letters), mainly because of the condition of motivation, i.e. written texts of the type analysed by Hoey and other clause-relational analysts need to satisfy the condition of textual completeness, especially in contexts such as newspapers, magazines, textbooks, etc. Completeness in rhetorical patterning, therefore, may be said to be part of the generic requirements of the particular kinds of written text which are the favoured source for clause-relational analysis. Another key aspect of casual conversation which has been noted by analysts working with the notion of topic (e.g. Gardner 1987) is that topics are neither pre-ordained nor do they carry with them any requirement of completeness or conclusion: topics drift, fade away, are left suspended, or come to a different end from that which speakers may have intended upon their launch. This is not to say that casual conversation is at all deviant, ill-formed or unstructured: it is simply that the conditions are different.

2.2.3. Subjectivity.

This brings us to another potential source of confusion when trying to apply Basic Text Structures to spoken discourse, which is that the textual elements are subjective. In multi-party talk, there is no guarantee that all participants will perceive all elements of the talk to constitute the same rhetorical functions. What constitutes a Problem for one speaker may be perceived as a response for another, and when there are several participants in a conversation each expressing their own viewpoint this makes this kind of analysis very complex and unviable as a tool for structural description. For this reason, the present study takes the line that, if textual elements such as Problem-Solution have any viability as analytical constructs, they can only properly be viewed as emergent constructs, which may at times be clearly evidenced in the text, and at other times be undetectable by the analyst since they are in process. The analyst of written text enjoys the luxury of working with a finished product created by the hand of one viewpoint only (the author); the spoken analyst is often working with multiple perceptions which, at specific points in the discourse, may be only partially formed. As Hoey points out, even with his sentry example this difficulty presents itself, as we can see if we alter it slightly:

(1)I was on sentry duty.(Situation)

(2)I saw the enemy approaching(Problem)

As soon as we add the last sentence this changes:

(3)This was not serious.(Evaluation of Situation as non problem)

If (2) has been evaluated as a non problem, it must have been part of the Situation, and because it is written, static text from one viewpoint only, it is easy for the reader to re-evaluate sentence (2) in the light of sentence (3). However, if there are many, conflicting, viewpoints, being expressed by several participants, as often happens with spoken discourse, this could make analysis extremely complicated. (see Example (2.6))

2.2.4 Clause Relation theory and spoken discourse analysis

Despite the reservations expressed above, clause relation theory can be useful in the analysis of some spoken data. Example (2.5) below is taken from a semi-formal business conversation amongst a group of colleagues discussing publication plans for a forthcoming book (for further material from this conversation, see Carter and McCarthy 1997, p147-150). The extract follows the Problem - Solution pattern; the main difference between this and written texts lies in the fact that the discourse is produced by more than one person. Interruptions from other speakers may break up an element of the pattern, as with utterances (2) and (4) being broken up by another speaker's evaluation in (3), so that the pattern looks different with spoken discourse. At the core of the difference is the notion of joint production, which has been observed as a key phenomenon also by discourse analysts who work with conversational grammar (e.g. McCarthy 1998, Ch.4). Also, the fact that casual spoken discourse is a spontaneous dialogue affects the way we analyse it; for example how do we label questions, like (11) and (13)? Speakers 2 and 3, in these turns, seem to be perceiving a new problem. However, for speaker 1, this is not a

problem, as evidenced in utterance 15. Whose part does the analyst take? And yet there is nothing particularly unusual or deviant here: it is a natural condition of joint production. Here I have labelled utterances 11-14 as part of a Situation since they are ultimately evaluated as a non-problem, but for speakers 2 and 3 at the time of utterance they actually contain a potential problem (there may not be enough spare pages to allow for these “extra pages”). This means that with clause-relational analysis in its conventional garb of sequences of autonomous textual elements (usually single-authored written ones) some important communicative activity will often be ‘left out’ of the overall picture. Crombie (1985) says that “the discourse value of an utterance may be defined as its *significance* or *communicative function* within a discourse, as distinct from its sentence meaning or conceptual content.”(p2) and in this sense some part of the discourse value is lost unless we include the idea of *potential* or *emergence* when analysing multi-party spoken discourse.

(2.5)

<01> (1)Erm can we keep these intermediate cassette schedules as draft until	Situation/Response (consequence)
((4 secs)) erm ((3 secs)) (2)because I, I have to erm get a confirmed date for the tapescript from the author and stuff	Problem(cause)
<02> (3)Yeah that’s fine	Evaluation
<01> (4)Cos the authors have to finalise the tapescript and (5)until they do that erm	Problem(cont’d)
<03> (6)Yep it’s not a problem	Evaluation
<01> (7)I can’t really say that all this is going to work ((sounds of paper rustling))	Problem (plus explicit evaluation of Situation as

	Problem)
(8) and then Changes... which is finally getting moving ((4 secs))	Situation
(9) now erm can we change the film date for Teacher's Book One to the 30th of May	Response
(10) because we're we're putting in some extra pages	Problem
(11) <03> What's the extent?	Situation
(12) <01> ((Whispered)) the extent	Situation(cont'd)
(13) <02> Is it going to remain the same?	Situation(cont'd)
(14) <01> Yeah it should be one seven six..	Situation(cont'd)
(15) yeah I think we've got spare pages it's not a problem	Evaluation of Situation as non problem
(16) <02> Fine	Final Evaluation

(Data from Carter and McCarthy, 1997)

So there are problems even when we examine relatively formal, problem solving discourse. When we try to apply the Problem - Solution pattern to a less structured interaction there are many more elements which contribute to the organisation of the discourse and which do not have a clause-relational function in the strict semantic sense; rather they account for the typical processes of opening, topic management, framing and focusing, etc. which face-to-face interaction in real time regularly involves. For example the first few utterances (in bold) in example (2.6) below are concerned with negotiating a situational framework: situation as a textual element is not simply presented as a slab of text without recourse to the state of knowledge or interest of the listener, but has to be established as non-shared information, as relevant and of interest to the listener. This is in line with Brown and Yule's (1983, p85-94) notion of speaker's topics (i.e. topics launched or offered by individual speakers) and conversation topics (topics accepted as matter for ongoing talk by

interlocutors) . Additionally, speaker 2 marks the transition from the negotiation phase to the main topical phase where the Situation is presented by the use of the stance marker *basically*.

(2.6)

<p><\$2> No. <\$=> But em was I <\\$=> Did I tell you about all that stuff. This is what I forgot. Let me tell you about all that stuff with Eddie and nicking David Dent's aftershave and Walkman.</p>	<p>This is obviously a framing move, and does not really fulfil any of the characteristics of Problem - Solution elements.</p>
<p><\$1> No.</p>	<p>?</p>
<p><\$2> No. I didn't think I had.</p>	<p>?</p>
<p><\$1> What was it?</p>	<p>?</p>
<p><\$2> Well. I totally forgot but basically I mean no one knows and I promised Eddie I'd never tell anyone. <\$O49></p>	<p>?</p>
<p>But <\\$O49> basically what happened was that em right yeah <\$=> him er <\\$=> him and David was together one day</p>	<p>Situation</p>
<p><\$O50>.and <\\$O50> they were d= I don't <\$=> wh= <\\$=> what they were doing but em Eddie had left his bag at David's</p>	<p>Problem</p>
<p><\$1> <\$O49> No. <\\$O49> <\$O50> Mhm. <\\$O50> Mhm.</p>	<p>?</p>
<p><\$1> So David gave him a key to get in to the house</p>	<p>Response</p>
<p><\$=> and em <\\$=> and Eddie went back to the house and em they went back to David's house opened the you know got <\$=> in= <\\$=> into the house you know with a key.</p>	<p>Response cont'd</p>

<\$1> Mhm.	?
<\$2> And got his bag	Result
<\$=> and em <\\$=> and then David sort of said that that like his em Echos aftershave which is a copy of Eternity something like that and his Walkman or no and his calculator had gone missing.	New Situation, Problem for David
<\$1> Kidding.	Evaluation
<\$2> And he came round	Response (for David)
<\$=> He er <\\$=> David phoned me up and he said "Look I've got something to talk to you about and I really really don't want you to get involved".	Response cont'd (for David) and Problem for S2 as signalled by her being 'worried' in the next clause
Now I was really worried at the time	Problem/Response (for S2)
so I rang Eddie up and I said Look David's just saying this	Response (for S2)
<\$=> and <\\$=> Eddie came round like well with a knife yeah	*see below
he was absolutely he was a real psycho on this day	*see below
like I mean he wasn't going to ever do anything<\$=> And em <\\$=>	Evaluation cont'd
<\$1> Can I have the cheese?	Aside
<\$2> Yeah	Aside
<\$1> Ta	Aside
<\$2> <\$=> And em <\\$=> and em David like said "Is Eddie here?"	Response (for David) cont'd
And I said "Yeah he's in the house".	Result? (for David) or part of David and S2's joint Response
And so he went we went outside and he <\$=> said to m= <\\$=> said to me l=	

How come you can do it so good and I can't. That's not fair.	Aside
<\$1> Cos I'm good at grating cheese.	Aside
<\$2> Can you put some on mine?	Aside
<\$1> Yeah.	Aside
<\$2> <\$=> And em <\\$=> and he said "Look you know I really <\$=> don't want to <\$=> don't want to accuse Eddie of anything.	Response (for David) cont'd (in the sense that this is all part of David's response to having had his property stolen)
But all this stuff has gone missing and I just don't know where it is."	Response (for David) cont'd
Literally the very next day Eddie started wearing Eternity	Result? (of everyone's ineffective responses?) Also Problem for David (and S2).
saying that Andrew had bought it for him from Greece cos he'd just come back.	Result/Problem cont'd
<\$1> What?	Evaluation
<\$2> He had a brand new calculator	Result/Problem cont'd
and em he said "Look you know I don't know what to do".	Response (for David) reiterated
And I said "Well let me talk to Eddie"	Response (for S2, but on David's behalf)
And when I asked Eddie about it he went really red and he was like and all this stuff	Result
and basically I gave him the benefit of the doubt.	Result /evaluation as non-problem
<\$1> Mhm.	
<\$2> And I said "Okay".	As above
Then heard through the grapevine that Eddie had gone away with his Mum and Dad to some place	Re-interpretation of Result as ongoing problem

and had nicked the Walkman out of this guys room.	Cont'd
This Walkman yeah. Which he sold to somebody for about fifty quid.	cont'd
Em and this went on and on and on.	cont'd
Em I basically turned round to him one day and said "You did steal it didn't you and <\$=> you did <\\$=> you did take that stuff from David's room	New Response for S2
and he said "Yeah".	Result
<\$1> But why? David was his friend.	Evaluation
<\$2> I know.	Evaluation
And I said "Well I won't ever tell anyone".	Result cont'd
<\$1> Blimey.	Evaluation

(CANCODE No 90026001)

As we can see from this analysis, even where the text is largely produced by one speaker, as with narrative, the problem of intersubjectivity amongst conversational participants makes identification of the various elements extremely complicated and potentially leads to an impoverishment of description if one adheres to the necessity of isolating single, sequential clause-relational elements. When \$2 says "<\$=> and <\\$=> Eddie came round like well with a knife yeah he was absolutely he was a real psycho on this day" this can be analysed in a variety of ways. It is a Result for \$2 of her ringing Eddie up and saying "Look David's just saying this", and also a Problem in that he turns up with a knife behaving like a "psycho". However, this is also Eddie's response in the same way that the previous three units had been David's, then \$2's. Finally both clauses are also highly evaluative describing Eddie as a psycho with a knife. In this way, the same story can produce multiple analyses, making it difficult to identify a single coherent structure.

Also, with informal multi-party spoken data, the concept of a ‘complete’ text becomes more difficult to delimit. The storyteller signals the end of her story with a ‘coda’ which has “the property of bridging the gap between the moment of time at the end of the narrative proper and the present” (Labov 1972, p365) when she insists that, despite her friendship with David, she has never told her friends Eddie’s secret to this day:

(2.7)

<\$2> And I never tell them. But I mean and at that moment like David was one of my best friends.

(CANCODE No. 90026001)

This allows the conversation to move onward, with further discussion of Eddie’s bad points, but the narrative here has finished with S2’s problematic Response to events, rather than with any final and satisfactory ‘End Result’ of the actions of those involved.

Summary

Whilst the Clause-relational approach as an attempt to find structure above the sentence works well with written discourse, it of less benefit to the analyst of spontaneous spoken discourse. In a study which is aimed as a structural examination of an interactive spoken text type, the overlap between elements of structure in clause relation theory, and the concept of a ‘complete’ text, becomes highly problematic. The inherently emergent nature of spoken discourse and the differing

subjective relationships between the text and the interactants producing it cannot be adequately expressed using this approach.

2.3 Conversation Analysis.

Conversation Analysis examines language beyond the sentence, taking as its subject matter ordinary verbal interaction, (rather than written language or monologue) often concentrating on the dialogic or multi-party nature of talk. It seeks to identify types of utterances, and looks for patterns of utterances and sequences in the discourse. As such, Conversation Analysis and its aims have a great deal in common with the present study, and its analysis of the way different pieces of speech perform different functions under different circumstances, and contribute to the way the discourse is managed, provides important insights for any study of the structure of discourse.

Conversation Analysis (CA) grew out of a branch of sociology developed by Harold Garfinkel, which he called ethnomethodology. Its objective was to examine the ‘common sense’ ways in which social actors organise the activity they are engaged in: “rather than examining social order *per se*, it seeks to discover the methods by which members of a society produce a sense of social order.” (Schiffrin 1994, p232) Ethnomethodology has produced two important ideas about human interaction which have been fundamental to CA. Firstly, there is the idea that interactants are conscious of the ‘accountability’ of their actions; that is, that there are unwritten rules governing behaviour, which a social actor can either choose to follow or not to follow depending on what s/he wishes the interactional consequences of his/her behaviour to be. (Taylor and Cameron 1987, p102) Secondly, ethnomethodologists employed the notion of ‘intersubjectivity’ to explain how separate and different individuals can arrive at the same (or so similar that the difference is minimal) understanding of their social activity; what has taken place, and what tacit ‘rules’

have been influencing their behaviour. Interactants, they argue, begin by assuming that their perception of events is identical, and then they make sure it is by displaying their understanding of any utterance using the succeeding utterance: “By means of...a reliance on the reflexive accountability of actions situated in a sequentially ordered progression actors may ‘display’ their own understanding and correct/confirm those of their interactants, thereby coming to construct a shared understanding sufficient for the practical purposes of the interaction.” (ibid, p105)

CA, having its foundations in this discipline, therefore attempts to decipher these social rules which affect our linguistic behaviour, with an emphasis on the sequential (utterance succeeds utterance, speaker turn succeeds speaker turn) nature of verbal interaction.

Adjacency pairs.

Starting from the premise that utterances are ‘sequentially relevant’, CA has come up with the notion of ‘Adjacency pairs’ which are two part exchanges in which the first utterance predicts the next: “Their first components can be termed first pair parts; first pair parts set constraints on what should be done in a next turn (e.g. a ‘question’ making ‘answer’ sequentially relevant for next turn)”. (Sacks, Schegloff and Jefferson 1974, p717) Initially, emphasis was placed on positioning; Sacks (1971) talks about the importance of ‘Next Position’, and Sacks and Schegloff (1973) offer as a “basic rule of adjacency pair operation” the idea that “given the recognizable 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 recognizably a member.” (p239). Subsequent work has shown that this rule is far too rigid, and it is not remotely unusual for a first pair part not to be

followed by a second. However, CA would hold that the absence of the second pair part would be doing some interactive work in itself; for example, withholding the second part of a greetings pair, i.e. failing to return a greeting, could be a deliberate snub (See Heritage 1984); or failing to answer a question could be due to “ignorance, evasiveness, reticence, ‘covering up, etc’” (Schegloff 1972, p77). An interactant may also withhold the second part of a pair because s/he wishes for more information about the first part before attempting to respond, as with the following, (example 2.7) where a question-answer pair (lines 2 and 3) is embedded within a request-refusal pair (lines 1 and 4):

(2.7)

\$2 has been talking about cigarettes.

- 1 <\$2> Right. Can I have one in the garden?
 2 <\$1> What now?
 3 <\$2> Yeah.
 4 <\$1> I'm not sure what time my parents'll be back.

(CANCODE No 90026001)

Schegloff (1972) labels this embedded sequence an ‘insertion sequence’ which delays the production of a second pair part until “preliminaries are sorted out,” meaning that “insertion sequences are thus restricted in content to the sorting out of such preliminaries” (Levinson 1983, p305). In this way we are led to the idea of ‘conditional relevance’: “given the first part of a pair, a second part is immediately relevant and expectable” (Levinson 1983, p306, citing Schegloff 1972) so that if this

second fails to occur immediately, the next utterances do not cancel out its relevance; it remains relevant until it appears, or its absence is accounted for.

The ‘adjacency pair’ model of discourse as a series of two part exchanges is further complicated by the idea of ‘pre-sequences’, which ‘introduce’ an action of some kind. Schegloff (1980) used the term “pre-pre” to describe utterances such as *Can I ask you a question* (see section 6.4.1). Similarly Levinson (1983) discusses the idea that different types of pre-sequences act as preludes to different specific actions; so that there are pre-invitations, pre-arrangements, and pre-requests, to name a few. (2.8) below, taken from the CANCODE corpus, could be considered as a ‘pre-offer’, and (2.9) below is Levinson’s own example of a pre-invitation;

(2.8)

<\$1> Mm. Are you thirsty still?

<\$2> <\$G?> Yeah.

<\$1> Do you want to have mine? <\$E> laughs <\\$E> <\$G?>

(CANCODE No. 70535001)

(2.9)

A: Whatcha doin’?

B: Nothin’.

A: Wanna drink?

(Atkinson and Drew, 1979, p253)

In (2.9) the pre-sequence is operating both to introduce the invitation and as a device which structures the discourse so as to avoid a rejection of the invitation: “one major motivation for pre-s in general (is) that by prefiguring an upcoming action they invite collaboration in that action” (Levinson 1983, p346). Levinson argues that this last is evident from the way B treats A’s question as ‘transparent’, in the sense that B is not literally doing nothing, therefore *Nothin’* acts as a ‘go ahead with your invitation’ signal. The idea that some seconds to first pair parts are undesirable enough to merit this interactional work to avoid them, leads to another important notion in CA, namely Preferences.

Preference Organisation.

Many first pair parts of an adjacency pair have more than one possible second pair part, such as invitation - acceptance/refusal, or accusation - denial/admission. CA allows for this variation by employing the concept of ‘preference organisation’, which differentiates between possible responses, labelling them either ‘preferred’ or ‘dispreferred’. The structure of the two alternatives differs, it is argued, such that preferred seconds typically occur immediately following the previous utterance and have a simple structure, whereas there is usually some pause prior to dispreferred seconds, and they often have a more complex structural organisation, with additional talk both before and after the core transactional element of the utterance in which the invitation is refused, etc.

Particularly pertinent for the purposes of the present study is Pomerantz’ (1984) work on second assessments following a preceding assessment, and the ways in which these pairs of utterances co-ordinate together. She argues that assessments

come in pairs, with an initial assessment providing relevance for (or ‘prospecting’, to use Sinclair (1992) terminology) a second assessment. This applies to assessing elicits, where the speaker simultaneously gives their opinion and asks their interlocutor for theirs’, but the relevance of a second assessment “does not rely for its operation upon interrogative format; initial assessments that are asserted also provide for the relevance of, and engender, recipients’ second assessments.” (Pomerantz 1984, p61); see (2.10) and (2.11) below. These initial assessments will often specifically invite either agreement or disagreement; for the most part agreement is the invited or preferred next action, although in the case of a self-deprecating initial assessment it is disagreement which is preferred. (ibid, p63-4)

She further argues that the preference status of a second assessment determines its ‘turn shape’. Disagreements, as the dispreferred second, will often be delayed using a variety of techniques. Speakers may simply leave a pause between turns, or use ‘repair initiators’ such as requests for clarification, so that a small side sequence is produced before the disagreement. They may also use a ‘preface’ in which they show their reluctance to disagree, or even actually agree with the prior assessment despite the fact that they are about to disagree with it. These prior agreements can preface replies to assessing elicits, where the elicit may be formulated as a tag question, or with a negative formulation which structurally invites agreement (see Tsui 1992 p86-7) as with example (2.10), line 4, and (2.11) line 8 below. However they can also preface responses to declarative assessing moves, as with (2.11), lines 4 and 6:

(2.10)

1 <\$1> They won't understand you because we've been doing this for six years. Do you know
what I

2 mean?

3 <\$2> Well I think that's true though don't you think?

4 <\$1> **Yeah but only to a point.** It's like you were saying that you got on perfectly well with
those 5 people and they just came straight out of school and went into the work environment.

(CANCODE No.71172001)

(2.11)

1 <\$1> But that doesn't necessarily mean that they just rigidly focus on this part of the world
and this

2 place and this life. <\$=> You know they they could be outward thinking people who even
though they

3 haven't experienced anything like that are still <\\$=>

4 <\$2> <\$=> **Well they could be** but I mean it's not <\\$=>

5 <\$1> Well sometimes they are.

6 <\$2> **Yeah** but they're not all usually don't you think? <\$=> I don't know because <\\$=>

7 <\$1> But that doesn't make them difficult to get on with does it?

8 <\$2> **It doesn't make them difficult to get on with** but if y= they're like your partner.

(CANCODE No.71172001)

Pomerantz argues that this ‘prior agreement’ only prefaces a weakly disagreeing second assessment which qualifies but does not directly contradict the previous one (but see the analysis of *yeah, but* in this study, section 6.3.1 for an alternative view).

Levinson (1983) argues that this concept of preference is “not a psychological one... rather it is a structural notion that corresponds closely to the linguistic concept of markedness” (p307). However, as Taylor and Cameron (1987) point out, there is an “obvious, though usually unacknowledged, functional connection between some dispreferred second parts to adjacency pairs (e.g. the rejection of an invitation) and the formal features of delay, mitigation or apology, etc., with which they are characteristically produced” (p114).

(2.12)

- 1 <\$2> I was just er wondering er we haven’t actually had you two over for a meal for
 2 ages not since we gave you that special <\$01>welcome home meal<\\\$01>+
 3 <\$1><\$01>Yeah <\\\$01> Yeah
 4 <\$2> +You know, erm so I was wondering if p’raps er Saturday night or something
 5 like <\$02>that<\\\$02>
 6 <\$1> <\$02>Oh Saturday<\\\$02> night I’m sorry I can’t make it because erm
 7 <\$=>we’ve<\\\$=> there’s that thing of Malcolms, I’m sure I told you about it

(CANCODE; Tape only)

Here \$1’ utterance in lines 6-7 rejects \$2’s invitation and in doing so produces many of the features which often accompany the production of a dispreferred second, such

as prefacing her rejection with a small delay in which she repeats part of the previous utterance, and then apologises. She also follows her rejection with an explanation of why the invitation cannot be accepted, all of which illustrate that the speaker is aware that the hearer would have preferred the invitation to be accepted. In other words, she is knowingly producing a ‘dispreferred second’, and it is this reluctance to disappoint her co-conversationalist which accounts for the difference in structure.

This latter minor contradiction highlights one of the main reasons why CA methods would not seem to be entirely appropriate as a basis for the present study, which is that even where it claims not to be, CA is psychological and/or sociological in emphasis. It seeks not simply to describe discourse, but to look at why interactants interact in the way they do (e.g. dispreferred seconds are accompanied by ‘the formal features of delay’, etc., because they are literally dispreferred). Therefore CA is interested in examining and explaining the localised ‘mechanisms’ of discourse; as Levinson (1983) puts it, CA operates in terms of examining “problems” in discourse, and the “conversational organisations” interactants employ to resolve them. (p319). Discourse Analysis, on the other hand, is “motivated by a wish to make a description of spoken interaction”, (Sinclair 1992, p79) and is therefore an attempt to examine the “linguistic structure” of spoken interaction in order to develop a “descriptive model” for it. (Sinclair and Coulthard 1975, p20). As Schiffrin (1994) says: “CA approaches to discourse consider how participants in talk construct systematic solutions to recurrent organizational problems” (p239), and it is much less interested in creating an overall descriptive framework for discourse. In this way, it can be argued that to attempt to use CA to analyse differences in the overall structure between genres would be the wrong tool for the task.

Also, this 'local' approach has led to inconsistencies in identifying structures and structural elements. For example, Jefferson's (1972) notion of the 'misapprehension sequence', and Schegloff's (1972) notion of the 'insertion sequence', are two different approaches to what turns out to be a very similar thing: Jefferson (1972) characterises the first element of a misapprehension sequence as a demonstration/assertion that a hearer did not understand (p305), and she labels it a 'misapprehension of sorts' which requires a 'clarification' from the original speaker. This looks very like Schegloff's insertion sequence, where a second speaker demands (and receives) more information about a first speaker's utterance before (s)he can respond (See Coulthard and Brazil's (1992) analysis). As Coulthard and Brazil point out: "*insertion sequence* is a structural label, while *misapprehension sequence* is a semantic label which attempts to capture the relationship of the first item in the sequence to the preceding utterance" (p55), and they comment further that "Conversation Analysts working with no overall descriptive framework run the risk of creating data-specific categories for each new piece of text to the last syllable of recorded conversation." (p55)

A second (related) problem with this view of language for the purposes of the present study is that, quite simply, it cannot and does not 'cover' all utterances, and therefore as a model for the structure of any genre it is inadequate; that is, in any transcript of naturally occurring speech, there are always utterances for which CA does not provide an adequate label. Schegloff and Sacks (1973) refer to adjacency pairs as "a class of utterance sequences" which are "widely operative in conversation" (p295), and they do not attempt to suggest that it is possible to analyse all discourse in terms

of adjacency pairs; and when that attempt is made the analyst indeed finds that there are utterances which would have no characterisation if one were to adhere faithfully to CA methodology (for example line 3, example (2.13)):

(2.13)

- 1 <\$2> Right. <\$=> Em is it er is she going to em <\\$=> What's she doing this morning?
- 2 <\$1> Gone to Bristol she needs to get some em material for a ball dress.
- 3 <\$2> Oh yeah. Of course.

(CANCODE No 90026001)

Examining this piece of data in terms of adjacency pairs, here line 1 is a first pair part (a 'question'), and line 2 is a second pair part (an 'answer'). Line 3, however, follows a second pair part, and yet is nonetheless clearly bound to it. It is a kind of 'received and understood' message; as Tsui (1994) puts it: "The third move...indicates that the response has been received and that it is an appropriate one." (p27) As Heritage's (1984) study of the conversational particle *oh*, demonstrates, this third move is a by no means infrequent occurrence; nor is its function limited to this 'received and understood' idea, it can also be used to express gratitude, or to accept the outcome (positive or negative) of an interaction, as with the following;

(2.14)

P: So do you want me to pick you up, are you in your office now?

X: No, I'm going to the h-, I'm at the Great Hall, I have to go to the head's office.

P: Alright, maybe afterwards.

(Data from Tsui (1994) p204.)

Similarly, in a 'discussion' situation, there are some utterances which do not comfortably fit into the two part adjacency pair structure. These utterances appear to be both second pair parts to a preceding first pair part, and first pair parts in their own right.

(2.15)

1 <\$1> Yeah. But I'd say that that you know we had this primary <\$H> Assessment
 frecondary <\\$H> friend argument <\$=> that you <\\$=> <\$O106> that you
 <\\$O106> couldn't do that with your secondary friends.

2 <\$2> <\$O106> Yeah. <\\$O106> No. That's what I'm saying. You you
 Disagreement (?)
 can do this sort of bonding with friends though.

3 <\$1> Only your primary friends and how many of <\$O107> those
 <\\$O107> have we got?

4 <\$2> <\$O107> Yeah. <\\$O107> Yeah but how many children do you have?

5 <\$1> Yeah but <\$O108> it's just multiplying <\\$O108> it so you've got your
 primary friends and you've got your kids.

6 <\$2> <\$O108> What if you have one? <\\$O108>

5 <\$1> It's a sure fire way of multiplying intimate relationships.

7 <\$2> Yeah but I mean I= look how many children don't get on with their parents.

(CANCODE No.90503002)

Pomerantz has argued that the production of one assessment provides for the relevance of another, and in some circumstances (for instance, where the second assessment disagrees with the first) this second assessment clearly provides for the relevance of yet another assessing move. In the above example, while turn one is clearly an assessment, and turn 2 disagrees with it, \$2 is clearly presenting what he says in such a way as to invite further comment, i.e., turn 2 operates like an initial assessment in itself, \$2 assuming the opposite position to \$1. \$1 certainly sees it that way, and she responds by agreeing with part of \$2's assessment as a preface to re-asserting her original assessment in terms of this partial agreement. In fact one might argue that turns 2 - 5, and 7 all require some response (in the sense that they are all assessments which require agreements/disagreements) and also respond to the previous turn (in the sense that they either agree or disagree with it).

Turn 6 is an interruption which gets ignored because it is simply a continuation of turn 4 (Yeah but how many children do you have? What if you have one?), so this entire piece of data is a conversational unit, which is coherent and continuous. Each element "functions as a response with respect to the preceding element and as an initiation with respect to the following one" (Coulthard and Brazil 1992, p71). The

two-part adjacency pair structure, even with extensions like the insertion sequence or the presequence, is clearly inadequate in analysing large stretches of discourse at this level of complexity. It is best employed to explain structure of language at a local level, whereas Sinclair and Coulthard's (1975) rank scale model of discourse which deals with the notion of the exchange (see section 2.5) lends itself more readily to a wider examination of the structure of whole generic texts. As McCarthy (1998) writes: "discourse analysts working with the exchange are much more interested in the presence of the pattern as a trace in the text for the analyst's purposes, while conversation analysts who work with adjacency are trying to understand local, individual choices from the participants' viewpoint." (p55)

A third problem is that the labels which do exist for elements of structure are ill-defined.

Consider the following:

(2.16)

The interactants have been discussing 'Jim' but have been briefly sidetracked. Now \$2 brings the conversation back to its previous topic.

- | | | |
|---|---|----------------|
| 1 | <\$2> Right. But em no it was just em Jim's reaction the | Assessment (?) |
| 2 | other day you know <\$=> to <\\$=> to em Nicola's barn dance. | |
| 3 | <\$1> I know. "I'll go but I'm not dancing." | Agreement (?) |
| 4 | <\$2> And em John said to him "Yeah you will. Go on Mate. | |
| 5 | <\$=> We could have" <\\$=> If we em have a few drinks and | |
| 6 | stuff he'd get in there <\$G?> | |

- 7 <\$1> The thing is the whole point of having one of those Assessment
 8 things is everybody gets up and dances and has a good laugh.
- 9 <\$2> I mean everyone like does look stupid that's the point. Agreement (?)

(CANCODE No 90026001)

Because CA uses such ‘transparent’ labels it is the analyst’s subjective decision whether to label utterances like lines 1-2 as statements or assessments. Lines 1-2 could equally be an example of a pre-sequence, introducing the idea of Jim’s willingness (or unwillingness) to dance; or it could be argued that lines 1-2, lines 4-6, and line 9 are all part of the same assessment, because the speaker’s actual point is that Jim should dance because people go to barn dances in order to drink, dance and look stupid.

Sacks and Schegloff (1973) noted this difficulty when they point out that their adjacency pair structure depends on the identification of a first pair part, and begin to formulate a method whereby both participants in a conversation at the time of its production, and the analyst later, might succeed in achieving this identification: “the achievement of ... orderliness in adjacency pair sequences requires the recognizability of first pair part status for some utterances. That problem is handled in various ways; constructionally, as when the syntax of an utterance can be used to recognize that a question is being produced, or through the use of conventional components as when *hello* or *hi* is used to indicate partially that a greeting is being produced” (p296). This would seem to indicate that unless an utterance forms part of

some ritualised exchange such as a greeting, we are dependant on grammatical means to identify first pair parts such as the question.

The notion of 'question' is itself a further example of the amorphous nature of the CA labelling system. Schegloff tells us that questions can have structural differences, and includes under this umbrella term "questions that do not pass the conversational turn to another (some so-called 'rhetorical questions').... riddles, and questions 'answered' by another question." (Schegloff 1972, p78). This leaves the definition of question wide open, because on the one hand, a question is something which makes an answer conditionally relevant, and on the other it is something which does not even pass the conversational turn. Discourse Analysis, because it views discourse as a new linguistic level above grammar (just as grammar is a level above phonology), has to make the distinction between syntactic and discorsal labelling; therefore a question is in grammar terms 'something in the interrogative', and in discourse terms it is an elicitation, something which "expects an answer or some verbal performance from the addressee." (Tsui 1992, p89) This type of labelling means that the analyst is not solely dependant on his/her own subjective view of what constitutes the notion 'question'.

This is related to Levinson's (1983) criticism of Discourse Analysis' labelling system. He argues that labelling according to discourse function is problematic because utterances often perform more than one speech act at a time, and he gives the following example for illustration:

(2.17)

A: Would you like another drink?

B: Yes I would, thank you, but make it a small one.

(Levinson (1983) p290)

Levinson argues that A's utterance is both a question and an offer, and gives as his evidence B's response (presumably in the sense that *Yes I would* answers a question, whereas the rest of the utterance accepts an offer). However, as Tsui (1994) points out "there is no reason to assume that *Yes I would* is necessarily a response to a question and not an offer, as there is no necessary relation between grammatical form and communicative function." (p46)

Discourse Analysis is often accused of being too "Grammatical" in its approach, treating discourse in the same way as language below the sentence, producing a series of 'rules' which are said to govern discourse to the extent that if they are not properly followed, as with grammar rules, what is produced is 'ill-formed' or nonsense: "An instance of the effortless move from descriptive 'is' to prescriptive 'ought' can be found in Sinclair and Coulthard's discussion of why teaching exchanges normally seem to have three slots...they characterize the production of alternative sequences (such as E = IR) as *deviant behaviour*." (Taylor and Cameron 1987, p75). The fact that pupils become confused, and go on guessing at the right answer to an initiating elicit until feedback is given, indeed illustrates that, in the formulaic, ritualised situation of classroom discourse, to continually withhold feedback could be described as 'deviant'. In this way, this issue of 'well-

formedness' is completely dependant on context, and as such, is a valid descriptive tool.

Rather than constructing a set of prescriptive rules for discourse, Discourse Analysis is actually about describing what happens in the discourse; it provides a series of definitions which can be applied to a given utterance's structural function (its part in its exchange, does it initiate, respond, etc at the level of move), and to its interactive function (does it prospect some 'type' of linguistic/nonlinguistic activity, or does it challenge expectations set up in the previous utterance, and so on at the level of act). It could, in fact, be argued that CA and Discourse Analysis are complementary disciplines; CA attempts to find an "explanation of the regularity, stability, and normativity of the patterns observable in conversational behaviour" (ibid, p115), whereas Discourse Analysis is the most efficient way of analysing what those patterns are.

2.4 Discourse Analysis: The Birmingham school.

2.4.1. Sinclair and Coulthard (1975)

The Birmingham school of discourse analysis grew out of work done in the 1970s by, among others, Malcolm Coulthard and John Sinclair, whose seminal work, *Towards an analysis of Discourse* (1975) was an attempt to create an analytic framework for the examination of the structure of classroom discourse. Sinclair and Coulthard based their model on Halliday's (1961) model of the grammatical structure of language, which used a rank scale to hierarchically organise the units of grammar. Each rank was made up of elements from the rank below, so that morphemes, which are the smallest units, combine to make words, and so on up to the rank of sentence, which is the largest unit (see (i) below)

(i) Morpheme → word → group → clause → sentence

Sinclair and Coulthard's model of discourse also had five ranks from act through to lesson, (see (ii) below) though they concede that the largest element, *lesson*, may be a pedagogic label rather than a linguistic one, as no evidence has been found that transactions form lessons in any specific structural way.

(ii) Act → move → exchange → transaction → lesson

Similarly, just as grammar constitutes a different level of analysis to phonology, and the smallest grammatical element, the morpheme, can at the level of phonology be split into phonemes, so Sinclair and Coulthard argued, their analysis of interaction

was the level above grammar. Therefore the smallest interactional element, the act, has no structure at the level of discourse, but can be seen to be made up of the grammatical elements clause or sentence.

Acts

Sinclair and Coulthard (1975) identified 22 discourse acts characteristic of the teacher-fronted classrooms they studied; Coulthard (1985) reduces this to 17 because, he argues, some acts like 'clue' or 'prompt' were "subvarieties distinguished in terms of content, not discourse function" (p126). He also divides the acts into three categories, meta-interactive, and turn-taking, which are concerned with managing the discourse, and interactive which consists of the head acts of all the teaching moves (see (iii) below), and the acts 'starter' and 'comment'.

(iii) Interactive head acts.

Opening moves: informative, directive, elicitation

Answering moves: acknowledge, react, reply

Follow-up moves: accept, evaluate

Moves

Acts themselves combine to make moves in different ways, depending on the move, though any move can consist of only one act. Sinclair and Coulthard describe move structure as consisting of a pre-head, head and post-head (plus 'signal' and 'select' in opening moves), with the head move being the one essential element. For example; the following is an eliciting opening move, made of four acts:

(2.18)

A group of people used symbols to do their writing. They used pictures instead of as we write in words.	Pre-head: starter
Do you know who those people were?	Head: elicitation.
I'm sure you do.	Post head: prompt.
Joan.	Select: nomination.

(Sinclair and Coulthard (1975), p46.)

Exchanges

The way moves combine to make exchanges has been the subject of a great deal of debate since Sinclair, Coulthard et al invented the rank scale. Exchanges fall into two categories, the 'boundary' exchange, and the 'teaching' exchange. Boundary exchanges have a metadiscoursal quality, a "change of plane" where the teacher "stands for a moment outside the discourse" (Sinclair and Coulthard 1975 p45) and indicates that a stage in the lesson has begun or ended. They consist of framing moves, realised by a closed class of utterances like *now then, right or good* which Sinclair and Coulthard labelled 'markers' (p21-2 1975), and focussing moves, where the teacher tells the class what they are going to be talking about, or sums up what they have just been doing. Sinclair and Coulthard analysed these frames and focuses as Initiatory moves. Teaching exchanges had a three part structure which consisted of Initiation, Response and Follow-up (IRF); opening, answering and feedback moves. Sinclair and Coulthard used the IRF formulation to identify six different types of 'free' teaching exchanges and five of 'bound' whose "function ...is fixed because they either have no initiating move, or have an initiating move without a head, which simply serves to reiterate the head of the preceding free initiation" (p49) most of which were very specific to classroom discourse, such as the "teacher direct"

exchange, which had as its structure an obligatory initiating move involving the teacher ordering pupil(s) to perform some non-verbal action, followed by the pupil(s) compliance, and then optionally some feedback from the teacher: IR(F). This typology of exchanges has largely been abandoned by subsequent analysts, except in its most general form, where the initiatory head act classifies the exchange as directing, eliciting etc.

The underlying concept in the definition of Initiation, Response and Follow-up is the idea of prospection. Initiatory moves begin an exchange, and are not structurally linked to any preceding utterance. They predict a Response, and set up a series of presuppositions for the Response to fit into, so that they prospect a particular type of Response; Sinclair (1992) gives the example that the utterance *Its red* prospects “that any relevant response will concern the redness or otherwise of what *it* refers to” (p84). Coulthard and Brazil (1981) comment that prospection creates a powerful structural relationship between I and R, so that “a speaker will make every effort to hear what follows his Initiation as an appropriate response” so that the answer *I’ve got an essay to finish* given to a polar question like *Can you come round tonight* will be interpreted as a substitute for the required *yes* or (in this case) *no* by the initiating speaker (Coulthard and Brazil, 1981 p100). Responses fulfil the presuppositions of Initiations, and though they may be followed by the Follow-up move, they do not prospect further linguistic activity. Follow-up itself is an optional element in any exchange, neither predicted nor predicting, and it functions to ‘round off’ the exchange. Usually in classroom discourse it takes the form of the teacher evaluating a pupil’s answer, but in any discourse situation Follow-up “offers an opportunity for participants to check that they are agreed on the function of the previous pair, to

comment on the exchange as it stands, to react to the Response in the context of the Initiation.” (Sinclair 1992, p85). In this way interactants use prospection to manage the discourse according to their own purposes, and an exchange lasts for as long as a set of presuppositions prevails: “the creation and maintenance of prospectives should be the defining criterion of an exchange.” (ibid, p84)

Transactions

Transactions are made up of a series of exchanges, and a change of transaction typically means a change of topic or a change of direction within the lesson. Sinclair and Coulthard (1975) do not provide a structure for transactions beyond the idea that they begin with an obligatory boundary exchange (the preliminary element), must contain at least one teaching exchange (the medial element) and may finish with an optional concluding or summarising boundary exchange (the terminal element): so that the structure is PM (M².....Mⁿ) (T). They sketch out the structure for “ideal types of transaction” but they comment that their analysis of this is “speculative”. (p56)

2.4.2. Further developments.

Later work on the Sinclair and Coulthard rank scale developed and altered the model. Burton (1980) working with drama scripts, argued that outside the classroom, where the discourse is rigidly structured and controlled by one participant i.e. the teacher, the structure of interaction alters radically because of the collaborative, non-authoritarian nature of casual conversation. This means that there are a wide range of options open to the receiver of an Initiation, and she found that some Responses do not maintain the prospection and fulfil the presuppositions set up by the Initiation. She labelled these ‘Challenges’, and she relabelled those that do maintain

prospection as ‘Supporting moves’. Follow-up, she argues, becomes redundant, as it hardly ever occurs except in “minimal ritual encounters.. or in extended formal talk... (although) it may be used in informal talk as a device for conveying sarcasm.” (Burton 1980, p141). Sinclair (1992) is one of the few Birmingham analysts to absorb this idea of the challenging move, though he continues to argue for the validity of the Follow-up move. He argues that both types of move contain an ‘encapsulation’, ending or breaking the presuppositions of the preceding exchange. However he concedes that the Follow-up move may only occur in certain types of discourse, or situation. (p85-86). Indeed the evaluatory nature of the feedback identified by Sinclair and Coulthard (1975) makes it highly unlikely that this type of Follow-up will occur in a situation where the interactants are of equal status. However, non-evaluating Follow-up moves, those which represent affective reactions, etc., may be more widespread.

Berry (1981) looks at the difference between evaluatory Follow-up moves and those which simply signal that the speaker has received their Response. She argues that the main feature distinguishing one from the other is that evaluatory Follow-up is obligatory, and she gives the following example:

(2.19)

Quizmaster: In England, which cathedral has the tallest spire

Contestant: Salisbury

Quizmaster: Yes

(2.20)

Son: which English cathedral has the tallest spire

Father: Salisbury

Son: oh (good now I can finish my crossword)

(Berry 1981 p122)

According to Berry, in the first example, the third move is obligatory because the first speaker is the primary knower, or the person who (may) already know the information being elicited, whereas in the second example it is optional because this is a 'genuine' question, where the questioner is the secondary knower, or the person "to whom the information is imparted" (p126). However, as Heritage (1984) and Tsui (1994) point out, the third move in (2.20) is not optional; it would be marked behaviour on the part of the son not to indicate that he has received the information and been informed by his father's utterance. (Tsui 1994 p30). In this way, the difference between these examples cannot rest with the issue of whether or not the Follow-up is optional. Berry's gut feeling that "this is an instance in which one is forced to code in the same way things which one intuitively feels to be different" (Berry 1981, p121), would be explained by the idea that in the first example the second move seeks a further answer (hence its 'more obligatory' quality), and is therefore not a simple Response.

Coulthard and Brazil (1981) introduce a new type of move which addresses this problem, having discovered a need for an element of exchange structure which both predicted a Response and was itself predicted by the preceding utterance. They called this the Response/Initiation move, and they argued that the inclusion of this move accounted for the way some pupil Responses "appear actually to be looking for an evaluatory Follow-up from the teacher" (p97) i.e. prospecting the evaluation.

Because this move both responds and initiates it is “theoretically recursive” (p99) and this led them to examine what factors actually delimit the exchange. They noticed that informing Initiations and replies to elicits were followed by a similar set of items, (which is what had led to the strange formulation IF being posited as the structure of pupil informing moves; the evaluatory nature of the teacher’s response had led to its being characterised as ‘feedback’, though feedback should not follow an Initiation) and, they realised: “from a lexico-grammatical point of view the items realising informs and replies are very similar.” (ibid, p99) This led them to the conclusion that exchanges are about the communication of one piece of information which can fill either the initiating or the responding slot: “the exchange only carries one (potentially complex) piece of information and its polarity, and... the information and its polarity can only be asserted once.” (ibid, p101) Stubbs (1981) also looks at the limits of the exchange, by examining whether a move is plus or minus initial, saying that a minus initial move can only be understood in relation to a previous move, because “its lexis or surface syntax requires to be expanded from preceding utterances” (p116). In this way he comes to a similar conclusion as Coulthard and Brazil, that the exchange is about the transfer of one piece of information; he argues that this concept of initiality “suggests a way of defining the exchange as an information unit, in which major information is introduced and then supported by elliptical syntax in the rest of the exchange.” (ibid, p116) However, the idea that an exchange should be seen as a piece of discourse which is concerned with exchanging one piece of information, creates several problems. Firstly, it leads to confusion over directives, with Coulthard and Brazil (1981) commenting that “it is not clear whether it is better to regard directive moves as a separate primary class of moves, or whether to regard them as a sub-class of informing moves concerned with

what the speaker wants B (the hearer) to do” (p105). Secondly, a boundary exchange is largely organisational in content, and therefore must be seen as an exception to the ‘information transmission’ rule. On a more general note, the idea that each exchange must contain one piece of ‘major information’ (see above) seems to be an issue associated with content rather than structural cohesion. (see section 4.1 and 4.3)

Coulthard and Brazil (1981) also looked at the limits of a transaction. Previously, in the classroom context, Sinclair and Coulthard (1975) had defined the transaction as a piece of interaction which moved from a preliminary (boundary) exchange, through a series of medial (teaching) exchanges to a final (boundary) exchange, but they felt that they could not specify how the medial exchanges were ordered within a transaction. In this way, transactions are seen as simply the groups of exchanges that fall between two boundary exchanges, so that the identification of boundary exchanges was very important in the identification of transactions. Coulthard and Brazil discovered that speakers mark boundaries with intonation choices, using low termination to signal the end of a topic, which if followed by a high key pitch sequence “serves to mark the beginning of a completely new topic unit which is usually very similar in scope to that of the transaction.”(Coulthard and Brazil 1981 p105). This meant that they were able to pinpoint boundaries with greater accuracy, as they did not seem to be reliably signalled by framing moves: “the low termination/high key pitch sequence boundary appears to be the transaction boundary signal which may incidentally also be lexicalised.” (ibid, p106)

Brown and Yule (1983), identified similar intonational boundaries in conversation, which they refer to as ‘speech paragraphs’ or ‘paratones’. They argue that speakers

indicate topic shift at the beginning of each paratone, by using an introductory expression which is “made phonologically prominent” (p101) which in their data (Edinburgh Scottish English) meant using a raised pitch, though this can vary across dialects, idiolects and accent variation. At the end of a paratone, like Coulthard and Brazil, Brown and Yule found that speakers may use a low pitch and/or a summarizing phrase, but they argue that “the most consistent paratone-final marker is the long pause, normally exceeding one second” (ibid, p101). This conception of ‘speech paragraphs’ in spoken discourse bears a resemblance to Hoey’s (1993) view of transactions. He argues that just as the paragraph in written discourse is an organisational feature rather than a structural unit, which “reflects the judgements of the writer about the way chunks of text relate together” so the transaction should not be “defined in terms of its internal structure but in terms of the relations it forms with other chunks of interaction” (p136).

Burton (1982) also adopts this ‘topic’ orientated view of transactions, relabelling boundary and teaching exchanges as ‘pre-topic’ exchanges, when a speaker shows that “they are going to, or want to, broach a topic” and ‘topic’ exchanges which “carry the main business” of an interaction (Burton 1982, p102). Pre-topic exchanges are optional; Burton comments that “for the most part people do not necessarily bother with the pre-topic exchanges at all.” (ibid, p102)

Other analysts have used the notion of topic to posit the possibility of another structural rank between exchange and transaction. Benwell (1998) working with data from university tutorials, introduced the idea of the ‘episode’ which is “loosely defined by topic or *agenda*.” (p11). Episodes consist of an optional *Instructional*

inform produced by the tutor, which introduces a task or topic, often in a metadiscursive way. This is followed by an *Initiation* whose propositional content determines the agenda of the episode (p21), and is often signalled by a discourse marker. Following this, a *Response* is produced, and/or a *Discursive inform*, which is an “informational or attitudinal comment” which does not “necessarily anticipate or expect an evaluative response” i.e. a Follow-up move. These Discursive informs can trigger an enlarged type of episode, in that they receive in her data ‘elaborated’ responses which themselves may receive a response (see section 4.3 on Response/Initiatory informing moves for an alternate view of this type of move). Finally she provides for a *Follow-up* move, which following Sinclair and Coulthard (1975) is evaluative (though a negative evaluation triggers a new exchange which again makes for a longer episode) and a *Closure* move, which may be “lexically signalled by discourse markers or summative statements, but is often implicit and only recognised retrospectively by the occurrence of a new initiation and shift of topic.” (p24). This allows her to differentiate in terms of episode structure between a scientific (physics) tutorial which is tutor-centred and controlled, and follows the I→R→F (elicit→ reply→ feedback) traditional teaching method, and an arts (English) tutorial “whose discursive nature and student-centred nature is signalled by the high proportion of *discursive informs* offered by students.” (p32). Of course, as I have argued elsewhere, (section 5.1) the differences between these two tutorials could be explained by their differing in terms of text type; situationally they are both pedagogic, but interactionally one is instructive and one discussive.

Hoey (1993) uses Sinclair and Coulthard’s original grammar analogy to argue “the case for the exchange complex”. He argues that just as clauses combine to form

clause complexes, so exchanges combine to form exchange complexes, in which an Initiation can receive several responses, possibly each with their own Follow-up move, or several I→R sequences can receive one final Follow-up move, and so on. This model provides for the nature of multi-party discourse, in that a question may receive two different answers from two different people, etc. Similarly, an exchange might be extended by an additional, 'bound', exchange, which resembles the grammatical notion of subordinate clauses. Hoey argues that a move such as the one in line 3, below, because it "does not offer a new topic or significantly modify the current one" must be considered a bound 'Re-Initiation':

(2.21)

- 1 A: Can you tell me where the Savoy cinema is?
- 2 B: Ooh yeah it's only round the corner here
- 3 A: Is it?
- 4 B: It's not far like
- 5 A: Cheer thanks very much ta

(Data from Stubbs (1983))

Negative feedback also generates the need for further interaction, (Hoey 1991, 1993) consisting of a bound exchange where the original Follow-up is treated as an Initiation (again, see section 4.3 on Response/Initiatory informing moves for an alternate view) and receives its own Response and Follow-up move. This creates an exchange complex where "the pattern continues to recycle until a positive Feedback is achieved". (Hoey 1993 p127). Similarly, Hoey argues that where a Response is Challenged (in the sense of Burton's (1980) view of Challenge) the Challenging

move is treating the Response as an Initiation, so that two co-ordinated exchanges are produced, with the structure:

Initiation (speaker A)-----Response (speaker B)

Initiation-----Challenge (speaker A)

In this way exchanges can combine in one or more of these different ways to create exchange complexes, linguistic units larger than the simple exchange.

Francis and Hunston (1992) set out a new version of the rank scale in which they try to incorporate the various adaptations which have been made to the 1975 model by subsequent analysts. At exchange level, they added another type of boundary exchange: 'Structuring, Greet, Summon' which provides for greetings rituals and the like, and which can consist of a two part exchange involving an opening and answering move. At move level they include the structural element Response/Initiation, and increase the number of different types of move (see (v) below).

(v)

<u>Elements of structure</u>	<u>Moves</u>
Initiation:	eliciting, informing, directing
Response/Initiation:	eliciting, informing
Response:	informing, acknowledging, behaving
Follow-up:	acknowledging

Unsurprisingly, it is at act level that their model differs most from the original. Francis and Hunston found that Sinclair and Coulthard's list of 22 classroom discourse acts was inadequate to describe the complexity of language in everyday conversation, and also that many of the acts Sinclair and Coulthard did identify seemed inappropriate outside classroom discourse. They increased the number of acts to 32, often by splitting one of Sinclair and Coulthard's major existing acts into several; for example by making elicitation into inquire, which functions to elicit information, neutral proposal, which is a polar question, marked proposal, which functions to elicit agreement, and return, which functions to seek clarification of a preceding utterance (a Challenging move in Burton's model). In this way they hoped to arrive at a system of analysis for their data, but perhaps because of the very specific nature of the definitions of their acts they make no claim to a comprehensive system for all types of everyday conversation. In fact, they argue that "it is neither feasible nor desirable to present a complete inventory of all the acts necessary to analyse every conceivable conversation." (1992, p134).

2.4.3. Amy B. M. Tsui (1994)

Tsui (1994) is an attempt at a truly comprehensive system for the analysis of casual conversation based on the Sinclair and Coulthard (1975) model of discourse. Like Francis and Hunston, she abandons the opening, answering, feedback realisations of Initiation, Response and Follow-up, instead identifying four types of Initiation which are identified by their overall act function in a direct one to one relationship: unlike Francis and Hunston, Tsui posits that the various move types can only fill one

structural position, so that, for example, ‘informing’ moves cannot fill the Response slot.

(vi) Tsui’s taxonomy of Initiatory moves and their acts. Subclasses of acts are shown in brackets.

<u>Elicitations</u>	<u>Requestives</u>	<u>Directives</u>	<u>Informatives</u>
Elicit:confirm	Offer	Mandatives:	Report
Elicit:agree	Request for permission	(instruction, threat)	Assessment:
Elicit:inform	Invitation	Advisitives:	(assessing, compliment,
Elicit:commit	Request for action	(warning, advice)	criticism, self denigration,
Elicit:repeat	Proposal		self commendation)
Elicit:clarify			Expressives: (of empathy, debt incurred by speaker, or goodwill)

Tsui also includes Burton’s notion of the Challenging move, though her idea of what constitutes a challenge refers to the act level rather than the move level. This means that it very specifically relates to Burton’s ‘discourse framework’ view of the Challenge, where each Initiatory act has an “interdependent or reciprocal act” (Burton, 1980 p149) e.g Accuse-excuse, and a response which fails to produce this act is considered a Challenge. In this way, an elicit:confirm, which expresses the speaker’s assumption and invites the addressee to confirm it, must receive that confirmation in the response; anything else would be classified as a Challenge.

However, an offer which is declined does not constitute a Challenge because there is no assumption inherent in the offer that it will be accepted. In such cases, according

to Tsui, accepting the offer would be the ‘preferred’, or “fully fitting” response, and she therefore labels it as a “positive responding act” with declining the offer as a “negative responding act”. Neither accepting nor declining, but instead delaying making a decision by saying something like *I don’t know* would be a “temporization” (Tsui 1994 p165).

Tsui also identifies four types of Follow-up; Endorsement, Concession, Acknowledgement, and Turn passing. (see Tsui 1994 p200 – 211 and section 3.4)

All these moderations and critiques of the Sinclair and Coulthard model have expanded it and improved it as regards the analysis of interaction outside the classroom. However, it still remains to be seen how the model holds up with a wider range of data, and the present thesis has as one of its aims the testing of its robustness with everyday discussion. In chapter 4, I outline the ways in which I shall be using the model, and the adaptations which I have made to facilitate the analysis of spoken discussion.

2.5 Functional approaches: systemics and genre.

Halliday's (1985) definition of a text is "language that is doing some job in some context" or "any living language that is playing some part in a context of situation" (p10) He goes on to say that a text is both a product and a process: "a product in the sense that it is an output... having a certain construction that can be represented in systematic terms. It is a process in the sense of a continuous process of semantic choice... with each set of choices constituting the environment for a further set." (p10) This definition clearly has implications for the notion of *emergence* which will be central to the later argument (see section 6.3). These two parts of his definition also illustrate the two main thrusts of Hasan's (1985) examination of the idea of genre: that to examine the text we must examine the context, because both context and text are aspects of the meaning, in its widest sense, of any given interaction; and that all texts have structure, because one utterance locates the interaction in a given context, so that it places certain constraints on what the next utterance can be. For Halliday and Hasan, text and context are inextricable - not only does the one influence the other, but the context of situation (the immediate environment in which a given interaction takes place) "is encapsulated in the text....through a systematic relationship between the social environment on the one hand, and the functional organisation of language on the other." (ibid, p11). The relationship between text and context is, therefore, bi-directional: context has considerable predictive power in terms of what text can or is likely to occur; equally, the text is revelatory of its contextual features when submitted to analysis.

In this way, by describing the context of situation of a given text, we would also be describing that text; so to describe the context of situation, Halliday breaks it down into three parts. The field of discourse refers to ‘what is happening’ in the interaction, what the participants are trying to do with the language. The tenor of the discourse refers to who the participants are, and the relationship between them: and the mode of the discourse refers to how the participants are using the language - how the text is organised, whether it is spoken or written, whether it is being used to facilitate some activity or whether the language is of primary importance in the interaction. Halliday argues that “The three headings of field, tenor and mode enable us to give a characterisation of the nature of (any) kind of text”. (Ibid, p13). All three elements of context are omnipresent in the unfolding of the the text.

2.5.1 Mitchell, Hasan and Ventola: Genre through context.

Hasan extends the tripartite notion of field/tenor/mode to describing not just the ‘nature’ of a text, but its structure also. She talks of the “relationship between context and text structure” saying that from the contextual configuration of a text (its field, tenor and mode) we can make predictions about which elements of structure are likely to appear, and which will definitely appear; ie for this ‘type’ or ‘genre’ of text, which are the obligatory and which the optional elements. Therefore, Hasan argues that “it is possible to express the total range of optional and obligatory elements and their order in such a way that we exhaust the possibility of text structure for every text that can be appropriate (to a given contextual configuration)” (ibid, p64). She calls this the Generic Structure Potential. Taking her example from the genre of ‘service encounters’ (ibid, p54) she gives its Generic Structure Potential as:

[(Greeting) (Sale initiation)^] [(Sale enquiry) {Sale request ^ Sale compliance} ^Sale^] Purchase ^
Purchase closure (^Finis)

Elements in round brackets are optional, the caret sign indicates sequence; other devices serve to further define sequence, or whether elements can be reiterated, etc (see Halliday and Hasan, 1985, p64)

Hasan's sequential labelling can be traced back to Mitchell (1957), whose study of the buying and selling discourses at markets in Cyrenaica, based on data gathered in 1949, still stands as a seminal account of the staging and sequencing of extended spoken events. Mitchell is an early representative of the neo-Firthian tradition of which Halliday is the best known (see Mitchell (1975)). He identified those aspects of a speech event's context which are most fundamental to its comprehensibility, and to the development of its structure, for example the setting (where the discourse takes place) the time of its occurrence, what kind of activity is taking place (in his case, buying and selling). He argued that the identities of the participants are also important, their professions, gender, social identity, and the kinds of speech acts they are performing, such as boasting, or blaming. He found that various types of utterances were produced at certain points in the interaction, by one of the interactant roles, i.e. buyer or seller. There were differences, for example, between a transaction which took place in a shop and one which occurs in a market, in that greetings exchanges were much more frequent in shops. Also market transactions often involved bartering, with either participant naming a price for the goods, whereas this was never the case in shops. Nonetheless, Mitchell distilled from all the various possible activities in transactional discourse of this kind, a set of sequential stages,

which included elements such as *salutation* -> *enquiry as to the object of sale* -> *investigation of the object of sale* -> *bargaining* -> *conclusion*. In this way Mitchell constructed a model of the structure of transactional discourse which took into account the goals and purposes of each stage of the interaction as well as participant roles and relationships.

As with Mitchell, Hasan's idea of Generic Structure Potential is a way of grouping speech events into genres using text-external, or context led labelling systems. The labels, like "Sale enquiry" or "Sale Request" are based on what the utterance is doing in that context. She identifies the genre through the context; as she says, the contextual configuration can identify the text as a certain genre, and we can also make assumptions about the contextual configuration from the text, i.e. a reiteration of the bi-directionality referred to above. With the more ritualised genres, where participant roles are well-defined and the 'purpose' of the interaction is clear, as with service encounters, this circular method of classifying the text is unproblematic; as Hasan says of one of her service encounter texts; "Anyone who knows the English language and is generally acquainted with the Western type of culture will have no difficulty in 'placing' this text into the context that is appropriate to it." (ibid, p54). With casual conversation, however, where the 'purpose' of the interaction is less clear, and more generally 'social', classification into genre becomes more complex. This is because the structure of these genres is more complex, and participant roles are not only less well defined, but may develop or alter as the interaction progresses: they are, in terms of the present study, emergent.

Ventola also analyses service encounters, with considerable elaboration of the possibilities that can occur in terms of sequential stages. Ventola's model has the advantage that it builds in the co-presence of buyer and seller and the outcomes that different options may produce (see below). However, more pertinent to the present study is Ventola's (1979) attempt to develop Hasan's idea to encompass 'casual conversation'. Paradoxically, Ventola's solution to everyday conversational complexity is to make her labelling more diffuse. Whereas Hasan gives us labels like 'Sale', which give us a very specific idea of the function of that utterance (we know that 'sale', for example, is highly likely to consist of the vendor telling the purchaser the price of the goods), Ventola gives a reasonably detailed analysis of the opening and closing of a conversation, but labels everything that goes on in between as simply 'Centreing' (C):

Greeting → Address → Identification → Approach (indirect or direct) → Centreing →
Leavetaking → Goodbye.

Centreing is envisioned in the following way: "If we define a person's involvement in a casual conversation, we can describe it as a curve which rises and then falls at the end; C is the area at the top of this curve. (It) is realized by cognitive and informative topics." (Ventola 1979, p273). In this way, Ventola's model misses out a lot of detail: it cannot tell us anything about topic organisation or management.

This also means that Hasan's and Ventola's analyses seem immensely static, taking on the 'product' aspect of the text's meaning but not its 'process' aspect, and missing out the interactive qualities of the discourse; how the participants manage the

discourse and create structure between them. Ventola attempts to correct this by representing the idea of Generic Structure Potential as a flowchart, which “seemed to be a way of showing how, in the process of creating a text, interactants stop and negotiate which elements would appropriately follow, and how such elements are realized step by step.” (Ventola 1989, p136). An enormous difference between these flowchart representations and the method previously used is that Ventola gives *two* centre lines (which represent the social process), one for each interactant, to “show how interactants jointly negotiate the social process in question, i.e., show that a text is a shared construction.” (Ventola 1989, p139). However, this flowchart deals with the genre in general, showing possible (potential) structures and indicating choices the interactants could make at each stage of the interaction. This does not make representations of actual instances of the genre any the less static, in the sense that the interactive nature of the discourse cannot be fully represented in Ventola’s model without showing the choices interactants could have made, and how those choices influenced the next choice. For this you would need more of a ‘building block’ method of describing structure, which would illustrate how each utterance builds upon the previous one to make the text.

For the purposes of the present study, the other problem with Hasan’s idea of Generic Structure Potential, and also with Ventola’s model, is that the highly pragmatic labelling system alters with each new genre. This would make cross-genre comparison difficult, because we cannot examine how the same element of structure is used differently in a different genre. Also, since Hasan identifies a text as a given genre by looking at its contextual configuration, the idea that a structurally

consistent 'text type' could extend across situational boundaries would likely be anathema to her; structure for Hasan is linked to pragmatics and to context.

Ventola mentions that certain situational factors can alter without a total switch of genre, and without necessitating a new labelling system. Hasan's (1978) idea of social distance, that is, how well interactants know each other on a scale from total strangers to intimacy, is one of these factors. When social distance varies, the likelihood of one element of structure (e.g. Approach - indirect) appearing rather than another (e.g. Approach - direct) varies likewise. (See Ventola 1979, p273). Furthermore, she argues that "In general terms we can say that social distance influences not only the choice of the initial structure element but also the organization of the informational content in casual conversations." (Ibid, p275). Similarly, Ventola draws a distinction between 'minimal' and 'non-minimal' conversations. Minimal conversations serve to establish and maintain social relationships, whereas with non-minimal conversations there is greater involvement, and information exchange; and this minimal/non-minimal distinction also affects the structure. In this way, Ventola's categories generate four potential 'types' of casual conversation, which are the four different combinations of social distance and informational content; and because the labels have not changed we can start to see (albeit with little detail) how these situational and functional factors have influenced the structure. However, if we could use the same structural labels across widely differing genres, by using labels that did not depend on context but instead on purely linguistic function, one can argue that this would give a far greater insight into how situational factors affect discourse structure. What is needed, therefore is a system of analysis which derives from genre-independent linguistic features but which, when

compared across different texts, yield differing correlations of those features, differing patterns and clusters and, ultimately the potential for the distinct characterisation of spoken genres.

2.5.2. Eggins and Slade

Another approach to the structure of genre influenced by Halliday and the systemic-functional view of interactive discourse, is Eggins and Slade's (1997) look at casual conversation. Halliday's (1984) model of dialogue operates on the assumption that dialogue is an exchange of information, goods or services, with two reciprocal roles associated with the exchange, that of giver and receiver. Each time a speaker assumes a given role s/he assigns to the hearer a reciprocal one. This dialogic structure is linked in Halliday's model to grammar, (in that the questioning role would be typically associated with the grammatical mood interrogative) and also (importantly from the point of view generic structure analysis) to context, because the register of an interaction constrains the type of utterance produced in it. Types of utterance are determined according to their speech function e.g. 'offer', 'command' etc, although "speech function classes can be defined not only functionally...but also grammatically in terms of predictable selections of mood and modality, and semantically, in terms of predictable appraisal and involvement choices" (Eggins and Slade 1997, p192).

Eggins and Slade use this approach in their analysis of casual conversation, where they use different functional labels to identify different 'stages' in the interaction. They argue that casual conversation often has a 'chunk' and 'chat' structure, where 'chunks' consist of extended turns, with one speaker holding the floor, and 'chat'

consists of the discourse between chunks in which different speakers negotiate control of the floor and interactively ‘decide’ which speaker will produce the next ‘chunk’. (ibid, p230). Each chunk has its own internal structure as well as fitting into the overall structure of the casual conversation, and it is through determining the ‘social purpose’ of a chunk that a functional label for the genre can be provided. In this way, in their examination of storytelling in discourse, they identify four kinds of stories: narratives, anecdotes, exemplums and accounts. Each of these has a different interpersonal function, for example if we compare narratives and anecdotes, narratives enable the teller (and the listener) to “deal with unusual or problematic events and their outcome” whereas anecdotes “enable interactants to share a reaction to a remarkable event” (p243). Following Labov and Waletzky (1967) they identify six stages in narrative, and five in anecdotes, which following Halliday and Hasan (1985) they use to construct a formula for these genres in which sequential placement (indicated by the caret sign) and optionality (indicated by brackets) are illustrated:

Narratives:

(Abstract) ^ Orientation ^ Complication ^ Evaluation ^ Resolution ^ (Coda)

Anecdotes:

(Abstract) ^ Orientation ^ Remarkable event ^ Reaction ^ (Coda)

(Eggins and Slade, 1997)

They provide similar structural analyses for their other storytelling genres, and they further differentiate this from ‘gossiping’ although arguably gossiping consists of

interactants telling stories about another person who is not present. They argue that gossip is a “highly interactive genre” (p273) where narratives are used to justify the speaker’s evaluation of a given referent (usually an individual). This means that events recounted in gossip narratives are not “experientially unusual but interpersonally unacceptable” and therefore “this different functional motivation of gossip is why it cannot be classified as a storytelling genre” (p276). They produce an entirely different set of functional labels for gossip texts, which again very specifically reflect the context:

Third person focus ^ Substantiating behaviour ^ (Probe)/Pejorative Evaluation ^ (Defence) ^ (Response to defence) ^ (Concession) ^ (Wrap-up)

This interpretation of narrative texts differs in several ways from that adopted by the present study. Undeniably, these storytelling texts do indeed alter, but as argued elsewhere (section 5.3.2) this alteration in narrative ‘type’ and structure can be an indication of the genre in which this highly adaptable and virtually omnipresent conversational tool (or linguistic behaviour) is employed (or embedded). The frequency with which narrative ‘crops up’ in a particular text type, the way it is used and the purposes it is used for, may be a useful indicator for the analyst of the identity of that text type. In other words, narrative alters as the genre in which it is embedded alters; therefore the narratives found in ‘gossip’ *are* narratives, they simply differ in functional motivation and structure because of the genre they are embedded in.

Eggs and Slades' view of a genre or speech event is essentially context oriented, as they argue: "analysing the language of a text together with analysing its *social function* is a dialectical task: it needs to be seen as a two way relationship between text and the broader social and cultural context" (p271, my italics). This differs from the analytic approach taken by the present study, where each utterance is labelled according to its discourse function (e.g. an elicit, whose function is to elicit a linguistic response) and a prototypical generic structure is postulated by looking at how these acts combine to form larger structural units such as the exchange. In this way their view of genre and the kind of analysis they use can be seen as approaching a language event from the opposite direction to that of speech act-based models for the analysis of genre, in that they look at social behaviour and see how it is expressed linguistically, whereas discourse analysis looks at how language creates social activity, 'how to do things with words' as Austin (1962) puts it.

Eggs and Slade do provide a list of 'speech function classes' which they use to elucidate the turn by turn development of a text, (p184-215). Some of these bear a resemblance to Sinclair and Coulthard's (1975) elements of structure, with Opening, Reacting, Developing, Prolonging, Appending moves. Significantly, they apply this sort of analysis to the more interactive segments of talk in their data, the 'chat' sections: "while 'chat' could be thoroughly described by looking at micro-structural patterns (mood and speech function)" chunk texts "invite a more macro-structure analysis." (Eggs and Slade 1997, p229). Discourse analysis has been criticised for being unable to cope with extended turns and monologue (although see Coulthard and Montgomery 1981, p31-39) and it may well be that it is more suited to the more interactive speech genres, such as discussion.

2.6 Narrative syntax: Labov, Waletzky and subsequent work.

Another important examination of generic structure is the work of Labov (1972) and Labov and Waletzky (1967). Working with elicited data gathered from young people in Harlem, New York, Labov and Waletzky developed a framework for the analysis of narrative which has been extremely influential (see 2.6.2). They define narrative as “one method of recapitulating past experience by matching a verbal sequence of clauses to the sequence of events which (it is inferred) actually occurred.” (Labov 1972, p360). Narratives can be minimal, in which case they could consist of two ‘temporally ordered’ clauses; but a fully formed narrative will have an overall structure consisting of six different elements:

1. Abstract.

This element may begin a narrative, and it consists of a summary of the story, in which the ‘point’ of the story is encapsulated.

2. Orientation.

This ‘sets the scene’ for the narrative, and serves to “orient the listener in respect to place, time and behavioural situation” (Labov and Waletzky 1967, p32). Although this element frequently comes at the beginning of a story, it also appears at “strategic points later on” (Labov 1972, p365).

3. The Complicating action.

This element is identifiable as the main segment of the narrative. It usually consists of a series of temporally ordered actions or events which contain some dramatic or problematic element.

4. Evaluation.

This is the “means used by the narrator to indicate the point of the narrative, its *raison d’être*: why it was told, and what the narrator is getting at” (Labov 1972, p366). Evaluative devices are often distributed throughout the narrative, although the main focus of the evaluation appears between the complicating action and the resolution: “the evaluation of the narrative forms a secondary structure which is concentrated in the evaluation section but may be found in various forms throughout the narrative” (ibid, p369).

5. Resolution/result.

This element provides a resolution to the problem introduced in the complicating action, a resolution which is often arrived at through the actions of the protagonist, who is usually the storyteller.

6. Coda.

The coda comes at the end of a narrative and is one way of signalling that the narrative has finished. It ‘closes off’ the sequence of complicating events, and shows that nothing that happened after that is of any importance to the story (ibid, p365). Often codas provide a ‘bridge’ between the temporal setting of the narrative and the present time at which the narrator is telling the story. For example:

(2.22)

And you know that man who picked me out of the water? He's a detective in Union City and I see him every now and again.

(Labov 1972 p365)

However, when dealing with naturally occurring spontaneous speech there are problems with Labov and Waletzky's framework which arise because it was developed to deal with elicited data, where an interviewer asks questions designed to elicit a narrative text, e.g. "what was the most important fight that you remember, one that sticks in your mind?" (Labov 1972, p358). As Eggins and Slade (1997) argue; "Participants in casual conversations produce a range of texts which have many features of a narrative, but which do not display the structural changes of a Complication followed by a Resolution" (p40). As argued elsewhere in the present study, narrative texts alter according to the genre in which they are embedded.

Consider the following:

(2.23)

<p><\$=> There are just <\$=> It's like there was this family that we knew in New Zealand where they had this child and she was perfectly all right until she was about I think she was six.</p>	<p>Orientation</p>
<p>And then after that she just started like wasting and she was like mentally okay and everything and <\$=> they didn't <\$=>+ [BCH <\$2> Mm.] <\$1> +they weren't ever sure how mentally okay she was after she started this</p>	<p>Complication /problematic event</p>

<p>illness. And erm luckily they waited until she was six before they thought about having another child cos they're both really sort of nurturing nice excellent people. And er <math>g</math> this lass Kirsten <math>g</math> was like she start= <math>g</math> when she started wasting that was when they were thinking about having another child. So <math>g</math> then they w= <math>g</math> they both went in for these tests and found it was some kind of thing that was <math>g</math> there <math>g</math> any child between the two of them was bound to be deformed in this way. And and <math>g</math> she just started wasting away <math>g</math>. [BCH <math>g</math> <math>g</math> Oh God. <math>g</math>] <math>g</math> She lived until she was twenty odd. <math>g</math></p> <p>And er by the end er by <math>g</math> For the last like ten years they had to do absolutely everything for her and it completely ruined their lives for ten years like. <math>g</math> You know. <math>g</math></p> <p><math>g</math> <math>g</math> Yeah. But then <math>g</math> it's <math>g</math> like you you can you're al= <math>g</math> almost like always waiting on a knife edge that they're gonna die.</p>	<p>Evaluation</p> <p>Evaluation</p>
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(CANCODE No. 90503002)

The above extract shares features with narratives in that it refers to past experiences, and contains a series of temporally ordered clauses. However, the text is heavily evaluated throughout (in bold), and by *both* interactants; and the ‘result’ of the narrative (the parents’ lives were ruined) is part of the evaluation rather than the way in which the protagonist’s actions brought about a resolution. Eggins and Slade (1997) would argue that the above text constitutes an ‘exemplum’ which they define as a text whose “focus is on the interpretation or the moral point being made about the Incident rather than on the crisis which is resolved” where “the culmination is in the judgement or the moral point being made” (p263). They posit the alternative structure:

(Abstract) → (Orientation) → Incident → Interpretation → (Coda).

(ibid, p268)

This type of narrative bears more resemblance to those which occur as part of discussion texts, but in a study which is concerned with identifying argumentative techniques it is less important to identify the internal stages of a move than to look at the overall function of the move, which in the case of discussive narratives is to draw an example from real life to prove an argumentative point. As such it has more in common with the extract below than Labov's narrative data, and both can be similarly classified as an Exemplification act (see section 6.4.5).

(2.24)

\$2 is trying to prove that twins can have very different personalities.

<\$2> <\$O90> <\$H> Yeah. <\/\$H> <\/\$O90> I mean An= Andy that I was at erm university with he's now like a doctor and <\$=> his erm sister who<\/\$=> his twin sister works in a shop in London.

(CANCODE No. 90505001)

Furthermore, like Eggins and Slade's (1997) examination of storytelling and gossip texts, this approach to the analysis of generic structure only deals with extended turns at talk, and while it can be useful for an analyst looking at intra-turn structure, it does not attempt to capture the interactive nature of conversation.

Baynam (1995) argues that although narrative and argument have been seen as "two distinct modes of discourse which should not be conflated... narrative can count as argument and argument can be seen to have narrativity or narrative features" (p36).

As argued elsewhere (section 5.3.2) narrative in discussion can be used as an argumentative tool, and Baynham points out the powerful rhetorical force of this use of narrative, in that the use of narrative “shifts the exchange into another mode, that of narrative, in which factuality and authorisation (this is my experience not yours) constitute the epistemological space” (p37). In this way narratives involve a claim for truth, and can be offered as ‘proof’ of an opinion or line of argument. Narrative, Baynham argues, can embody ‘virtual argument’ in which a speaker, without explicitly stating his/her opinions, can use a narrative to encode them “to be reconstructed pragmatically by the interlocutor.” (p39). This enhances the power of narrative in argument, because it is “more difficult, though of course not impossible, to struggle out of a narrative, with all its density of epistemological claims into a position of dissent, than it is to disagree with an explicitly stated proposition.” (ibid, p45)

Baynham further argues that Labov’s narrative coda can be used to conclude an argument (or argumentative move). In an example from his data in which the speaker criticises teaching methods which categorise children according to their ages, regardless of their ability, she blames the second school she attended which used these teaching methods, for her literacy problems. She recounts the narrative of her schooling experiences, and uses narrative coda as an “opportunity for a slightly more explicit reformulation of the argumentative contrast between the first and second school” (ibid, p40). In this way the structure of narrative can lend itself to argumentation strategies, and its evaluative element, or “what makes it significant, worth telling in a given discourse context” (ibid, p44) can reinforce the speaker’s argumentative position.

Chapter summary.

In this chapter approaches to the identification of structure in discourse have been examined, and the appropriateness of each to the aims of the present study, i.e. the attempt to find structural patterning in spontaneous spoken discussion has been assessed. The Sinclair and Coulthard rank scale model of discourse (incorporating various adaptations from subsequent work on the model) was found to be the most useful framework of analysis for this purpose.

In the next chapter I will discuss the CANCODE corpus, which is the source of much of the data used in the present study; and concurrently I will introduce the mini-corpus of discussive data, which is the group of texts on which the findings of this study are based.

3.1 Data

Much of the data used in the present study has been taken from CANCODE: the Cambridge and Nottingham Corpus of Discourse in English. The CANCODE project was a joint venture between the Department of English studies at the University of Nottingham, where the corpus was set up, and Cambridge University Press, who provided the funding and have subsequently published several works which utilise CANCODE data (including Carter and McCarthy (1997), McCarthy and Carter (1997), and McCarthy (1998)). CANCODE data consists entirely of naturally-occurring spoken discourse, and it excludes material which has been elicited by an analyst, or talk which has in any way been rehearsed or scripted. Data collection for the corpus consisted of audio tape recordings, which were made between 1994 and 1998. Each audio tape was subsequently transcribed and categorised into both 'relationship types' and 'interaction types' (see below). Although as McCarthy (1998) notes, "genre is an ill-defined notion in the study of spoken language" (p9) some kind of broad generic categorisation such as the approach adopted in the creation of CANCODE is invaluable in the retrieval of relevant data for research such as the present study.

3.1.1 Transcription.

One of the differences between CANCODE and other spoken corpora is that CANCODE was compiled with a view to making it useful for grammar research and discourse analysis as well as lexicographic purposes. Therefore it was important to preserve in the data as much of the real speech event as possible. As Cook (1990) argues, there is a virtually endless amount of contextual information which could (or

should) be included in order for the analyst to get a truly accurate impression of the speech event. However, choices have to be made about what to include without the data becoming too unwieldy to lend itself usefully to research. In developing the transcription conventions for CANCODE, it was considered important to include overlaps and interruptions; false starts where the speaker changes ‘direction’ during an utterance leaving truncated words; laughter, coughing, repetitions and pauses; plus any simple contextual information which could be helpful to a proper understanding of the interaction under way, for example “<E> cat purrs <E>” (CANCODE No. 90503002). This can make the text difficult to read in a fluent way:

(3.1)

<2> They're a clone physically.

<1> And mentally. They're exact copy <3> **and replica** <3> of me.

<2> <=> <3> **In men=** <3> maybe in <=> I don't know about mentally.

<1> Yeah. <=> But that <=> Maybe that's where we disagree. Because I think that if you took someone and actually cloned them exactly they end up being physically and mentally exactly the same. And <4> **that maybe** <=> **your** <=> <4> their expectations differ.

<2> <4> **But it can't be that.** <4> I don't <5> think it can be that <G2> <5>.

(CANCODE No 90505001)

In example (3.1) above, we can see that the first of the overlaps (shown in bold) is marked using <3> and <3>, which show the start and end of the overlapping

speech, and indicates that this is the third overlap in this interaction. The symbols <\$=> and <\\$=> mark the beginning and end of a ‘false start’, or uncompleted clause, and the equals sign shows a truncated word. “<\$G2>” shows that two sub-audible syllables have been produced, and ordinary punctuation is also used, such as full stops which indicate low pitch termination of a unit of speech either within a turn or at its conclusion. This kind of transcription makes the study of, for example, turn taking conventions or backchannelling possible, and also intertextual comparisons of linguistic behaviour. Hutchby (1996) argues that interruptions are not only violative on the level of turntaking conventions, but also on the level of interpersonal relations. A text consisting of discussion, which, as argued elsewhere in the present study (section 6.1), allows participants to pay less attention to the interpersonal dimension of interaction than other ‘types’ of discourse, might be expected to include more of this ‘violative’ behaviour, and CANCODE transcription conventions allow the analyst to explore this possibility. Indeed, CANCODE No. 90026001 which is a non-discussive text involving two speakers who know each other very well, contains roughly a third less (67%) interruptions than a discussive text (CANCODE No.90505001) which is comparable in terms of speaker relationship, number of speakers participating, and setting (which for both is in the home of one of the speakers).

3.1.2 Relationship types.

Each audio tape collected for the CANCODE project had a corresponding information sheet, on which participants supplied certain facts about themselves. In this way information about the age, gender, occupation, and regional identity of each speaker is available to the analyst, along with details about the speakers’

relationships with each other (e.g. family, friends, neighbours, colleagues). This allowed for a categorisation of CANCODE along the lines of the relationship types, which broadly corresponds to Halliday and Hasan's (1985) concept of the 'tenor' of the discourse. These categories were first postulated on an *a priori* basis, and then revised as CANCODE grew, so that it was possible to avoid both the pitfall of collecting too much of one 'type' of discourse simply because it is easy to obtain, and the danger that adhering too faithfully to a system of *a priori* classification whilst collecting data could result in a corpus which does not reflect the realities of everyday language use.

Jean Hudson, the CANCODE compilation manager, along with Professors Michael McCarthy and Ron Carter (see Hudson, Carter and McCarthy 1996) identified five broad categories of speaker relationship, expressed below in ascending order of formality:

Intimate→ Socio-cultural→ Pedagogic→ Professional→ Transactional.

An *intimate* text is one in which the relationship between the speakers is very close, i.e. all the speakers are family members or trusted close friends. If even one participant is not on intimate terms with the others the text cannot be considered as intimate, as speakers are likely to alter their linguistic behaviour to make it more accessible to the outsider, as well avoiding certain topics in order to preserve their own 'privacy'. The *Socio-cultural* category includes all interactions where the speakers have come together voluntarily (not as part of their work) to pursue social or cultural activities for their own entertainment/ pleasure. This includes private

parties, sports clubs, religious or other interest group meetings, and so on. *Pedagogic* relationships are between teachers and their students, or between students who are interacting in a learning context, rather than as friends (e.g. pair work in a university tutorial). Similarly, *Professional* relationships are between individuals whose interaction is limited to a professional/employment context. However, the interactants do not have to be communicating as part of their work; this category also includes gossip about workmates, or complaining about workloads. The important factor is that the only relationship between the interactants is that of colleagues. Finally, *Transactional* texts involve strictly goal-orientated interactions where speakers “display needs or imperatives and move towards satisfying those needs” (McCarthy 1998 p9). This is the relationship type in which the social distance is potentially at its maximal, and it includes all kinds of service encounters like buying items in a shop, as well as less obvious transactional interactions such as asking someone for directions, or job interviews.

3.1.3 Interaction types.

CANCODE was further categorised in terms of its interaction type. *Collaborative task* concerns interaction which takes place between speakers while they are in the process of working on some task together. This will involve their dealing with some item which is physically present in their local environment; for example, when working together to tile a wall, speech which occurs as a result of the interactants’ being engaged in this activity would be collaborative task. *Information Provision* occurs when one speaker dominates the discourse event, transmitting information to the other participants. It therefore shares many features with monologue; however the interactive support of other speakers (through backchannelling behaviour etc) is

also important. Although the dominant speaker can alter, the “motivation for the talk is information-giving” (McCarthy 1998, p10). *Collaborative idea* relates to the sharing of thoughts; opinions, theories, feelings and attitudes. This large category contains much of the daily interactions which most of us call our social lives.

Conversationalists switch freely between these interaction types in the course of spoken texts, and therefore the problem of embedding within texts was dealt with by including an ‘extra category’, and assigning the membership of a given text to the dominant interaction type within that text.

This interaction typology is closer to the attempt to interpret and identify ‘text types’ to which the present study hopes to contribute. In many ways the category *Collaborative idea* is such a wide category that breaking it down into sub-categories would make the corpus still more accessible to the analyst, and would even out the distribution of data so that the relative size of each category would be more equal. McCarthy (1988) notes that one “goal sub type” which currently remains categorised as collaborative idea might be decision making, and argues that one profitable area of study might be the cross comparison of decision making in the home with the same generic activity in the workplace (p11). Section 6.5 in the present study is a comparable attempt to compare discussive discourse across CANCODE’s relationship types. Hudson (unpublished) creates a matrix of the CANCODE categories across the two axes of relationship and interaction type, and suggests examples of texts which might be expected to fall into these categories. The following is a recreation of her table, with some suppositional examples for all

categories (including discussion). Some examples are taken from Hudson (ibid) and some from McCarthy (1998).

	Information provision	Collaborative task	Collaborative idea	Discussion
Transactional	Commentary by a museum guide. (Hudson unpub)	A customer working on a design for his/her kitchen with a salesperson.	A customer in a travel agents talking about holiday plans.	A homeowner complaining about the level of service received from a builder (with the builder defending his/her actions)
Professional	Presentations at a work-related seminar, or a company sales conference.	Mechanics working on a car together.	A staff meeting.	A difference of opinion between colleagues about ethical matters in the workplace, or a radio discussion programme such as the Moral maze.
Pedagogic	Presentations in a tutorial group.	An IT instructor helping a student complete a set task.	Role-play in the language classroom	Tutorial discussion (see Benwell 1998).
Socio-cultural	Telling stories to a group of friends.	Friends preparing food for a party. (McCarthy 1998)	Friends gossiping	Discussion between friends about whether religion is a good thing for society.
Intimate	Relating the events of the day to a partner.	Family members assembling a piece of flat-pack furniture together.	Mother and daughter chatting.	Partners disagreeing about whether children are most affected by their genes or their upbringing in the development of their personalities.

This kind of typology might be possible for other posited text-types, such as those identified by McCarthy (1998) and McCarthy and Carter (1994). (see section 6.5)

Using a computerised corpus such as CANCODE allows the analyst to gain insights into language use and discourse structure which might otherwise not be possible. Studying empirical data of the kind found in CANCODE helps the analyst to begin to answer important questions about language use, such as those Carter (1998) poses: “which forms of language do we choose for which purposes, and which interpersonal

choices do we make according to whom we are interacting with?” (p44) CANCODE’s focus is on “interpersonal communication in a range of social contexts and, wherever possible, differences and distinctions are drawn between the kinds of language used in those contexts” (ibid, p44) which makes this corpus particularly useful for work related to both text-internal and text-external studies of language variation.

The identification of which texts within CANCODE would be useful for the purposes of the present study was not easy, but was achieved in various ways. Completely automatic retrieval of discussive data was not possible, as the realisations of the text type are many and varied in terms of items that can be retrieved computationally. Firstly, since discussion is a sub-class of the interaction category *collaborative idea* this segment of the corpus was isolated, which considerably reduced the search parameters. A concordancing programme was then used to search for potential lexical signals (Hoey 1983) and fixed phrases which were intuitively felt to have a high probability of occurrence in discussive discourse.

Words and phrases searched for included:

Yeah but/No but

I (dis)agree

I think, believe, suspect

Don't you feel that ...

In my view/opinion and other rephrasings of opinion-signalling frames, for example

As far as I'm concerned.

Texts in which more than one of these words and phrases occurred were looked at first, though finally each text in CANCODE in which they each occurred was examined in detail. Any text which did not conform to the specifications for a discussive text outlined in section 6.1 (for example, there must be an element of disagreement and polarisation of views) was discarded.

The present study also examines broadcast data taken from the BBC Radio 4 programme 'The Moral maze'. These data have been transcribed by the researcher following CANCODE guidelines, and were gathered with the aim of having comparative data within the same overall generic domain of discussion but in a different medium and setting, and with participants who have a different type of role and relationship. (See Chapter 7 for more detailed information about each individual text used).

The resultant mini-corpus of discussive data contains 41,424 words in 7 texts, which if classified according to the CANCODE 'relationship' category would include 2 intimate texts, 3 sociocultural and 2 professional (the moral maze texts). It was felt appropriate that sociocultural should contain a larger proportion of texts as this reflects the largest category of CANCODE data for most types of discourse and covers the widest range of social contexts. The data thus clusters naturally towards the 'core' of the CANCODE matrix., and the three data types simultaneously offer a range from most intimate to most distant in terms of participant relationships.

Chapter summary.

In this chapter I have introduced CANCODE and the mini-corpus of discussive data used by the present study. In the next I shall outline the framework used to analyse this data, which is based on the Sinclair and Coulthard rank scale model of discourse (see 2.5).

4.1. Structure and Discourse.

In Sinclair and Coulthard's original (1975) model, the exchange was described as having a basic Initiation → Response → Follow-up structure, expressed as IR(F), where Follow-up is an optional element. The inclusion of bound exchanges could alter this structure; for example in 'listing' exchanges the exchange could elongate to IRF (I^b) RF (I^b) RF. As Hoey (1993 p122) argues, this leaves the definition of what actually constitutes the exchange unclear; does each bound exchange have the status of a separate exchange, or does the entire sequence constitute a single exchange? Hoey addresses this issue by adapting the model to include the notion of the 'exchange complex'. Under Hoey's system of analysis bound or subordinate exchanges can combine with free exchanges to form exchange complexes. These exchange complexes can have varying structures, where one Initiation may receive several responses, so that in multi-party discourse an Initiation which receives several responses from different speakers would be unproblematic, though a complex exchange structure often results. Hoey also argues that exchange complexes are produced when an initial Initiation or exchange generates further exchanges, in which a re-initiatory move which is dependant on the original Initiation is produced and responded to. In this way Hoey's (1991) concept of Follow-up treated as Initiation, or Stubbs' (1983) view of non-initial Initiation, is accounted for by seeing these extended exchanges as a level above the exchange but below transaction. Similarly, in a model which allows for the analysis of the latter type of move as a Response/Initiation (see section 4.3) sequences of moves which contain a series of Response/Initiations may also be seen as part of an extended exchange, or 'exchange

complex' the defining feature of which would be that *only one (free) Initiation can be produced per sequence.*

In the following extract from the mini-corpus of discussive data used in the present study, \$1's Assessment (lines 1-4) receives a Response/Initiatory Evaluate act from \$3 (lines 5-7). This is then accepted by \$1 (line 8), but it also receives a Response/Initiatory agreement from \$2. \$3 then continues with his/her evaluation, this time in the light of having received support from \$2, making this another Response/Initiatory agreeing move, which is finally Responded to and accepted by both \$2 and \$1.

(4.1)

<p>1 \$1> No but it might be better mightn't it. I mean the problem is that when you 2 go abroad you do have difficulty communicating <\$=> and <\\$=> and 3. understanding people and you do get isolated so if we had a common 4. language that would solve the problem wouldn't it.</p>	R/I
<p>5 <\$3> I can see what you're getting at but then <\$=> just because more people 6 speak English <\\$=> just because more people speak English doesn't mean to 7 say that English should be the language <\$=> that em <\\$=>+</p>	R/I
<p>8 <\$1> No no.</p>	R (Acc)
<p>9 <\$3> +that <\$=> is <\\$=> is spoken universally. Er but it's a very idealistic+</p>	R/I (1) cont'd
<p>10<\$2> Mhm.</p>	R/I

11 <\$3> +concept. But totally ridiculous concept.	R/I (1) cont'd
12 <\$2> Dangerous more than idealistic.	R/I cont'd
13 <\$3> It's like imperialist	R/I
14 <\$2> Mhm.	R
15 <\$1> Mm.	R

This kind of lengthy and intricate exchange complex is typical of spoken discussive texts. Even where only two speakers are involved, sequences of Response/Initiatory moves frequently occur, such that this kind of exchange pattern might be argued to be a generic feature of discussion. (see section 6.3)

Another argument which concerns the limits of the exchange sees exchanges as being basically concerned with the transmission of information. Coulthard and Brazil (1981) argue that each exchange carries only one piece of information, and that “the information and ... (its) polarity can only be asserted once” (p101). In transactional or pedagogic discourse where the generic discourse function is concerned with the transmission and display of information, this may well be true: but in a text type where discourse function can vary from interlocutors trying to persuade each other, trying to express and develop their own viewpoint, or participating in a verbal ‘game’, the ‘informing’ function of informatives or responses to elicits may be less important to the identification of a unit of interaction. Structurally there is no reason why an exchange should be limited to one piece of information, so long as it retains structural cohesion. In discussion

Response/Initiatory moves can be recursive, each move dependant on the prior for its semantic and/or pragmatic comprehensibility.

Therefore, in order to make it applicable for the analysis of spoken interactive discussion, the Sinclair and Coulthard (1975) model of discourse needs some adaptation.

4.2 Initiation.

Sinclair and Coulthard (1975) split the Initiation element into two forms, an intitation which occurs as part of a ‘boundary’ exchange, which consists of a framing and/or focussing move (see example (4.2) below), and one which occurs as part of a ‘teaching’ exchange, and consists of an “opening move” (see (4.3) below) whose function is “to cause others to participate in an exchange” (p45).

(4.2)

Exchange type	Move type	Initiation	Act
Boundary	FRAME	Right^	Marker
	FOCUS	Here’s the next quiz then if you’re ready.	Metastatement

Sinclair and Coulthard (1975, p66)

(4.3)

Exchange Type	Move type	Initiation	Act
Teaching (Teacher Elicit)	Opening	What’s the next one mean?	Elicit
		You don’t often see that one around here.	Clue
		Miri.	Nomination

Sinclair and Coulthard (1975, p67)

In casual conversation, the idea of a boundary exchange seems inappropriate. Conversations are not planned, as school lessons are, with one of the participants announcing the next topic of conversation when s/he feels the previous topic has finished. Conversation is managed between participants interactively, with new

topics often being introduced in ways which link them to old topics, such as ‘shading’ (anaphoric reference to the previous topic), ‘fading’ (anaphoric and cataphoric reference), ‘recycling’ (reintroduction of a previous topic) so that conversation has a cohesive quality which is at odds with the idea of breaking the discourse into segments which are delimited at each end by a boundary exchange. (see Gardner, 1987). In other words topic is an achievement, in the conversation-analytical sense. Furthermore, participants have to cooperate over topic change, in that when a new topic is introduced, they are able to avoid it if they wish to, by, for example, quickly ‘changing the subject’, or ignoring the new topic introduction and continuing with the previous one. Brown and Yule (1983) differentiate between the ‘speaker’s topic’ which could be characterised as the topic of each individual contribution made to the conversation by one speaker, and the ‘conversational topic’, which is the topic of the interaction as a whole. They provide an example where, within an interaction where the conversational topic as established by the preceding discourse is about ‘restoring old buildings’, one speaker’s topic consists of telling the other interactant(s) about a recent holiday to a city where there were many beautiful old buildings. The next speaker could then either proceed with their own contribution to the conversational topic, producing some further utterance about ‘old buildings’ or could build on the previous speaker’s topic (by talking about their own trip to that city, for example) so that a part of the previous speaker’s personal topic “could become, in the developing conversation, a shared topic area for both speakers” (p89). In this way the mutual conversational topic emerges and develops through negotiation between interactants.

Organisational behaviour such as focussing does, however, occur outside the classroom, with interlocutors introducing topics in a metalinguistic way, using phrases such as *I just wanted to ask you about y* or *Let's talk about z*, but these moves are negotiated between interactants, and therefore often have an interactive, two-part structure. Schegloff (1980, 1981) labels this kind of introductory utterance as a 'pre-pre' which serves to constrain the ensuing talk for the next turn or pair of turns, using constructions such as *Can I ask you a question?* (These pre-sequences are characterised in the present study as 'starters'; see 6.4.1). McCarthy (1998) identifies a similar phenomena in his examination of 'expectations': "speakers may signal expectations regarding the kind of generic activity that is to be negotiated prior to or in the course of realising social compacts" (p33). Expectations include bids to tell a story such as *there was this guy...* where speakers signals that they are about to begin a narrative by using the narrative-specific use of *this* instead of *a*, and so on, or speakers may use discourse markers such as *Right* to signal that "a new phase of action is about to commence". (ibid, p34). He similarly emphasises the negotiated, emergent nature of these focussing stages: "we can sense generic activity emerging in the form of convergence on the level of actions and social relations, particular alignments of the participants and an emerging compact (they are deciding as they go along how things will proceed; they are not pre-determined) that anticipates the activity that will follow." (ibid, p34).

In this way focussing moves in casual conversation can be produced by any speaker, at any point in the discourse. They can have a two part structure where one interactant asks for 'permission' to move the discourse into a new phase, and is granted that permission, or they can form the prehead to a single speaker's move.

They can even be produced by one speaker to encourage another to move the discourse to a new phase, as with the following example from CANCODE:

(4.4)

<\$1> Okay. **So tell me about your reading to your mum then.** What was that all about? Front room?

<\$2> Yeah.

<\$1> <\$G?> glass of sherry?

<\$2> **Okay yeah. What I did was** basically I stood up and I did it like I would if I was at the conference.

(CANCODE No.70523001)

However, focussing like this in casual conversation does not need to constitute a different type of exchange, i.e. a boundary exchange rather than a conversational one, because it remains an integrated element of the conversation. There is normally no sense in casual conversation that the speaker “stands for a moment outside the discourse and says ‘We are going to/have been communicating; this is what our communication will be/was about’ ” (Sinclair and Coulter 1975 p45) as if structuring the conversation from some external viewpoint rather than as a participant. This can be illustrated by the fact that focussing moves such as the one above are responded to by the hearer, who goes on to tell the story about ‘reading to your mum’. The cleft structure *What I did was* shows that this utterance is responding to a preceding move from \$1, so that here the focussing move looks like a kind of directive, in that it is a *request* from \$1 for \$2 to tell the story, and \$2

complies; however a directive is defined as an act which requires a non-verbal response, and here the response is verbal. By analysing this as having the interactive function of a focussing move we can avoid this confusion in that the sense of 'request' is removed, and we can then see that this is an act which requires an obligatory verbal response and is therefore a type of elicit. Crucially, for the framework of the present study, unlike the teacher-fronted interaction of Sinclair and Coulthard's data, casual conversation among equals often reveals a pattern of joint production for framing and focussing. In example (4.4) above the reporter of the events accepts the interlocutor's focus, thus the focussing move is realized interactively.

Another difference between Sinclair and Coulthard's view of focussing in the classroom, and the view taken by the present study of these 'organisational moves', is that the complexity of these moves in casual conversation, coupled with the fact that they do not form part of a separate 'boundary' exchange, means that focussing moves have the same potential as other moves to be realised by any of the initiating act classes (though they show a strong tendency to be realised by the Summarising act (39%) and by Elicit: opinion (21%)).

(4.5)

<p><\$1> But <\$=> you can't you can't erm <\$=> you can't turn us <\$=> into you know <\$=> into sort of er er clones so that we're all sort of <\$E> sighs <\$E> you know always repeating. We all repeat the same thing. Someone says to you Well what's your understanding about er regeneration or conversion. And out comes the same words like Donald Duck. Doy de doy de doy de doy de doy. <\$=> Erm you you know there <\$=> There has to be</p>	R/I	Inf 1
--	-----	-------

<p>room <=\$=> within erm er <\\$=> within Christian theology Biblical theology for for different expressions. Now you might disagree with them but you're supposed to be able to disagree with them in a reasonable way. <=\$=> Now I <\\$=> Who here has the same view of the Bishop of Durham+</p> <p><\$?> Well</p> <p><\$1> +<=\$=> about about <\\$=> about the Resurrection?</p> <p><\$?> <\$O311> I don't. <\\$O311></p>	<p>I (focus)</p> <p>(int)</p> <p>Org cont'd</p> <p>R</p>	<p>Frame</p> <p>EI 1</p> <p>Cont'd</p> <p>Rep</p>
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(CANCODE No. 90640001)

Bound Initiation

According to Sinclair and Coulthard: “The function of bound exchanges is fixed because they either have no initiating move, or have an initiating move without a head, which simply serves to reiterate the head of the preceding free initiation” (1975, p49) e.g. listing exchanges, or when a teacher gets no reply and uses nomination, prompt or clue to get the pupils to respond (see example (4.3) above). Similarly, a repetition of an initiation which occurs because the addressee has not heard is also a Bound opening move; so that for Sinclair and Coulthard, a bound exchange, whether it has an opening move or not, is a ‘loop’ in the discourse, repeating, reiterating, but not moving the discourse on any further than fulfilling the presuppositions which have already been set up by the first Initiation. However, using an analytic framework which includes the notions of Response/Initiation and Challenge, some of these ‘bound opening moves’ become redundant. For example:

(4.6)

I T: this I think is a super one. Isobel. Can you think what it means?

R P: Does it mean there's been an accident further down the road?

F T: No

R P: Does it mean a double bend ahead?

F T: No.

Ib Look at the car.

R P: Er slippery roads?

F T: Yes

(Data from Sinclair and Coulthard, 1975 p67-8)

Sinclair and Coulthard's clues can be seen as responding to the Response/Initiatory suggestion from the pupil (see section 4.3.1), and therefore do not form a bound exchange, but instead are part of an extended exchange complex (Hoey, 1993: see section 2.5 and 4.1). Including this notion of R/I:suggestion would see example (4.6) above more satisfactorily analysed as:

(4.7)

I T: this I think is a super one. Isobel. Can you think what it means?

R/I P: Does it mean there's been an accident further down the road?

R T: No

R/I P: Does it mean a double bend ahead?

R T: No. Look at the car.

R/I P: Er slippery roads?

R T: Yes

Similarly, if an Initiation is repeated, even rephrased, because the addressee has not heard or understood, would be a re-initiation because it would follow a Challenging move. (see below).

Burton (1980) altered Sinclair and Coulthard's conception of Bound exchanges: "Bound opening moves occur after a preceding Opening, Bound Opening or Re-opening move has been Supported. They specifically enlarge the discourse framework by extending the ideational-textual aspect of the original Opening move, employing ... various types of Informative and Comment acts" (Burton 1980, p152-3). This of course would 'move the discourse on' and it is difficult to see in what way a new initiation, containing new information, albeit information related to a previous initiation, should be considered as bound to it. In her data, however, she gives the following example:

(4.8)

A: He crawled under a lorry. A stationary lorry.

B: No.

A: **The lorry started and ran over him.**

(Burton 1980 p160)

Here she classes the utterance in bold as a bound opening move, and we may note that the present descriptive framework would classify the preceding utterance (*No*) as a continuer, which is a form of backchannel, and therefore less than a turn in its own right (Schegloff, 1981). *No* functions here to show interest in the unfolding narrative by expressing the prospected/expected disbelief, and the speaker interprets it as such and continues his narrative as if uninterrupted. So here the utterance in bold is

indeed bound to the preceding Initiation, but not in the sense Sinclair and Coulthard intended by their definition of boundness. One of the problems with the Sinclair and Coulthard analysis is that the classroom discourse which generated their model adhered to a largely sequential turn-taking pattern, such that the back-channels described by conversation analysts simply did not occur (pupils remain silent while the teacher speaks). Thus any utterance, in the Sinclair and Coulthard model needs must acquire a label in the Initiation→ Response→ Follow-up (IRF) exchange structure, whereas backchannels can justifiably be said to be outside of the exchange in its strictest sense (see section 4.6).

Tsui argues that: “Bound exchanges usually occur when the response given in the preceding utterance is incomplete...the production of a bound responding move supports the presuppositions and interactional expectations set up by the initiating move in the preceding exchange.” (1994, p227):

(4.9)

I A: Just give me the number so I remember.

R B: Five one.

F A: Five one

R B: Two nine.

F A: Two nine

Data from Tsui 1994 (p 232-3)

B’s utterance in bold and A’s final utterance are both examples of Tsui’s category.

In this way bound exchanges do not have an initiating move.

Re-Initiation

Burton (1980) also introduces the idea of a Re-opening move, which resembles one of Sinclair and Coulthard's original views of a bound opening move: "Re-opening moves occur after a preceding Opening, Bound-Opening or Re-Opening has been Challenged. They Reinstatate the topic that the challenge either diverted or delayed." (p153) Analysing this type of move as a Re-Initiation rather than a Bound one supports Tsui's view that a Bound Initiation is 'incomplete'. It also fits in better with Sinclair and Coulthard's idea that there is no real initiating move in a Bound exchange; a Re-Initiation does contain a complete initiatory move which repeats the previous initiation but may also rephrase it, or add to it to make it more comprehensible, in ways which might change the nature of the utterance.

However, it must also be noted that Challenging moves are not necessarily followed by a Re-Initiation. The addressee may also treat the Challenge as an Initiation, and respond to it. In the following example \$1 challenges \$2's elicitation with a 'Labov 12' type challenge: 'It is the case that B might know M' (where B is the answering speaker and M is the projected answer to the question). Instead of re-initiating after this challenge however, \$2 accepts the validity of the challenge:

(4.10)

<\$2> But does it do the same thing? <\$=> Does it wander round the field <\$O11> thinking <\$O11>
<\$=>

<\$1> <\$O11> Oh we <\$O11> we aren't gonna know the answer to that question <\$O12> until we've cloned a human <\$O12>.

<\$2> <\$O12> I know. That's what I'm saying. We don't <\\$O12> know. No. <\$O13> What I'm saying is <=\$=> looking at even looking at <\\$=> <\\$O13>+

(CANCODE No. 90505001)

Initiating acts

In Sinclair and Coulthard's original (1975) model they found three major subclasses of initiating opening moves which mirror but cannot be mapped onto the three main grammatical forms: imperative, declarative and interrogative. Directives, informatives and elicitations are all acts which realise the Initiating move. It seems expedient to use these three categories and to subsume all other discourse acts under these headings. Tsui (1992) similarly uses this method to bring hierarchy to the organisation of her taxonomy, and not only does this allow for a further level of analytical delicacy, but also this means that the rules pertaining to what constitutes a challenge for each type of discourse act remain applicable, without having to redefine the rules for each new act (see 4.4).

Directives, Elicitations and Informatives.

Acts in linguistics are defined by their functional properties. It was Austin (1962) who first argued that words 'do things', that utterances are actions, and carry 'illocutionary force, i.e. speakers intend by their utterances to perform some kind of illocutionary act, such as 'promising', 'inviting' 'admitting' etc. Searle (1965) developed Austin's ideas, and his 'speech acts' were divided into five main classes, and were assigned to these classes according to their affect on the hearer (as opposed to the speaker's intention as Austin argued). Sinclair and Coulthard argue that their

discourse acts are not the same as Austin's illocutionary acts or Searle's speech acts, because in defining them, an attempt was made to place the main emphasis on their interactive functions. Therefore, they define their three main acts as follows: "a directive is an act whose function is to request a non linguistic response... an elicitation is an act whose function is to request a linguistic response (or its non verbal surrogate)" and an informative is "an act which functions to pass on ideas, facts, opinions, information and to which the appropriate response is simply an acknowledgement that one is listening." (Sinclair and Coulthard 1992, p9). In this way, these acts are identified and defined by the kind of activity they prospect, but in fact, the definition is more complex than that. Sinclair and Coulthard further argue that these acts are always realised by a command, question or statement respectively, and these look like types of speech acts, i.e. utterances which carry the illocutionary force of 'commanding', 'questioning' and 'stating'. They classify the notions 'question', 'statement' and 'command' as "situational categories" which are identified using "all relevant factors in the environment, social conventions, and the shared experience of the participants" (1975, p28) However, the fact that these notions are identified through the analyst's or the interactant's knowledge of the situation, does not mean that they are concepts which rely entirely on situational factors; a command may be identified, but not defined, by situation. In the traditional teacher-fronted classroom, it is perhaps easier to conceive of these notions as situation-bound owing to the very strictly circumscribed limits of action and language imposed by the nature of classroom teaching. Once again though, casual conversation needs a different approach because of its lack of situational constraint. The present study takes the view, therefore, that question, command, and statement are broad types of speech act, which Sinclair and Coulthard's "very general"

(Coulthard 1985, p126) superordinate discourse acts (elicit, direct, and inform) embody. For example, we may classify an assessment as an informative, but this act differs from an Inform because of the type of activity it prospects; i.e. it asks for agreement or disagreement rather than simply an acknowledgement. Therefore it in some ways resembles an elicit, because it requests linguistic activity. However, if an elicit embodies the speech act 'question', a question is in some sense unfulfilled without an answer, it requires a response to supply some piece of information which is 'missing' or 'in doubt' in the speakers utterance. In this way as Tsui (1994) points out, questions "have been characterized by some as requests which have the purpose of eliciting information" (p79) and there is the sense with a question that the verbal response it prospects is somehow more obligatory than that which is prospected by a statement. Therefore an assessment is a type of inform because it lacks the 'unfulfilled' quality of a question, the illocutionary act it performs is assessing or *stating an opinion*, so that it prospects its verbal response with only the same force as that with which an inform prospects an acknowledgement.

Coulthard (1985) allows that the distinction between discourse acts and speech acts may narrow with greater degrees of delicacy in the model: "the definitions of the acts are very general....if it is possible to show that moves containing an act 'request' are followed by a different class of items from those containing an act 'entreat' this distinction can be built in at secondary delicacy." (p126) However, here he also seems to be claiming that a discourse act is identified solely by the type of response it receives, but even in classroom discourse it is possible that the requisite Responding acts do not always follow their Initiating partners. There will be directives that are disobeyed/ignored, informatives that are not acknowledged; in fact

as Sinclair and Coulthard point out, teacher informs often do not receive a verbal response of any kind, so that if we rely entirely on responses for identifying Initiations we soon find ourselves in difficulty. There has to be some quality that is intrinsic to a directive that makes it a directive, and this is arguably because it embodies the speech act command, which has the function of ‘trying to get the addressee to perform a particular action’. Consider the following (which again is an example of discourse which could easily occur in the classroom):

(4.11)

A. Mary, apologise to Judith.

B. I'm sorry Judith.

Here, speaker A employs what Austin would call a ‘performative verb’ where the action is not simply achieved through words but is the word in a metadiscoursal sense. Is this a directive, or an elicit? It appears to be a command which prospects verbal activity, though the crucial thing is that it requests a verbal *action* rather than simple response, and is therefore a directive. At one and the same time, Mary’s response closes the exchange with speaker A and opens an exchange with Judith. In this way, it is through a combination of identifying the speech act embodied in the discourse act, and looking at the type of response it prospects (and the speech act embodied in the response) that we identify the discourse act.

Summary

Initiation, in the present study, is conceived of in the following way:

- As a 'free' move, not bound pragmatically to a preceding utterance.
- As not holding up the discourse
- As embodied by a head act consisting of elicitation, directive or informative, and their sub-classes.
- As a move which is distinguished from a focussing move, rather than a focussing move being seen as a type of Initiation.

4.3 Response/Initiation

This element of structure was first introduced in 1975 by Coulthard and Brazil in their article, *Exchange Structure* (which was revised first in 1981 and again in 1992). They devised a matrix of definitional criteria for move types, and discover a “gap” (p 71, Coulthard and Brazil 1992):

<i>Predicting</i>	<i>Predicted</i>	<i>Move type</i>
yes	no	Initiation
no	yes	Response
no	no	Follow-up
yes	yes	?

Investigating this missing element which is both predicting and predicted, (i.e. both Initiating and Responding), Coulthard and Brazil discovered that “it is not in fact difficult to find pupil responses which appear to be actually looking for an evaluatory follow-up from the teacher”, and they give the following example:

(4.12)

T: Can anyone tell me what this means?

P: Does it mean ‘danger men at work’

T: Yes.

(Coulthard and Brazil 1992 p71)

They suggest that the Response/Initiation (R/I) move can be “distinguished from the R (Response) by high termination and/or interrogative syntax” (1981, p98) i.e. it is through intonation or grammatical mood identifying the utterance as ‘*questioning*’ (or *eliciting*) that we can make the distinction between the two structural elements. Whilst they do not state this so clearly in their later revision of this paper, the assumption that the R/I element is essentially an eliciting one still underlies their view of this element: “not all items following *wh*- elicits are informing moves. There will be occasions when the second speaker chooses to produce an eliciting move, i.e. an R/I instead of an R”.(1992, p74)

Similarly Hoey (1991) presents the R/I element in terms of a response to an elicit which is itself an elicit: “an open question....answered by a yes-no question, usually to show tentativity about the answer”, although he does go on to allow that it might also be an “instruction or request” (p78). However, since this element consists of a simultaneously responding and initiating move, the acts which realise it may be delineated in the same manner as those which realise responding and initiating moves.

Subclasses of Response/Initiation.

The following classification of the subclasses of Response/Initiation is modelled on Tsui’s (1994) taxonomy of discourse acts.

4.3.1 Elicitation.

Firstly there is the eliciting R/I mentioned above, which was identified by Coulthard and Brazil, and later Hoey. Willis (1992) has re-examined this issue, and his analysis differs from the present study in that he would analyse exchanges like (1) above, as having an IRF structure, where the R element consists of an ‘offer’. He characterises this act as a “tentative response which requests confirmation” (p119), i.e. it both responds to the previous Initiation and requests further linguistic activity, which, one might argue, means that it both Responds and Initiates. The Follow up element, if it occurs, would be ‘rounding off’ the exchange rather than responding to a request for confirmation, as with the following:

(4.13)

I	Quizmaster:	In England, which cathedral has the tallest spire?
R/I	Contestant:	Is it Salisbury?
R	Quizmaster:	Yes
F	Contestant:	Oh

(From Berry (1981) p 127)

Here I label Willis’ responding ‘offer’ as a responding/initiating suggestion, in order to avoid confusion with Tsui’s subclass of requestives (Tsui 1994, p98).

There is a second type of eliciting R/I which is often produced in response to an elicit which asked for the addressee’s opinion, and mainly takes the form of a tag question.

Consider the following:

(4.14)

<\$1> +to me <\$=> one minus ma= <\\$=> minus one arm <\$O10> means you can still have a really <\\$O10> good <\$=> up= <\\$=> good life.

<\$2> <\$O10> What about no arms though? <\\$O10>

<\$1> No arms at all is you're getting towards being severely disabled aren't you.

<\$2> It's a fucking nightmare.

(CANCODE No. 90503002)

The utterance in bold looks very like Tsui's (1994) subclass of elicitations, 'elicit:agree' which she defines as: "those elicitations which invite the speaker to agree with the speaker's assumption that the expressed proposition is self-evidently true." (p86). However, this utterance also functions as a response to \$2's previous elicitation in the sense that it provides the information requested; \$2 is asking \$1 for her opinion of the quality of life for someone with no arms, and \$1 answers that having no arms is, in her opinion, a 'severe' disability. Therefore, to use Coulthard and Brazil's terms, this utterance is both predicted and predicting, i.e. it Responds and initiates simultaneously.

A third type of eliciting R/I queries part, or all of a preceding informative, and usually contains the interrogative *why?*:

(4.15)

<\$2> It was like that em Terri when she wanted to come <\$O61> over <\\$O61>.

<\$3> <\$O61> They wouldn't let her in the country. <\\$O61>

<\$2> Yeah.

<\$4> <\$O62> <\$=> The visa you <\\$=> <\\$O62>

<\$3> <\$O62> <\$G5+> <\\$O62> and get married and she wouldn't go back and they wouldn't let her in.

<\$1> **Why?**

<\$3> Cos she came over to see her boyfriend

(CANCODE No. 90051001)

Here, \$1's utterance (in bold) in no way challenges the status of \$3's utterance as an inform. In fact it functions to demonstrate that \$1 accepts the truth of what \$3 has said, and now wants to know the reasons behind the facts. *Why* differs from all the other *wh*-interrogatives, because the others ask for "clarification of information about the identification of objects, persons, ideas in the discourse topic" (Burton 1980, p151) and queries language and terms already used in the discourse, (text-internal reference). As Sinclair points out, challenges have an 'encapsulating' function, a retrospective reference, despite the fact that they are initial in an exchange; therefore they 'hold up' the discourse. However, *why* asks for an explanation of the information produced, and demands reference to new ideas, persons etc (text-external reference). For example,

with (4.15) above, the new information about Terri's reason for coming over - to see her boyfriend - as well as the new referent 'Terri's boyfriend' are necessary to answer \$1's *why*.

Similarly, this kind of R/I can follow an informative with an assessing, or hypothesising act as head. The utterance in bold, below, seizes on part of the previous utterance and asks for an explanation of that part:

(4.16)

<\$2> <\$O41> Mm. <\\$O41> <\$E> laughs <\\$E> I'm sure a lot of people don't think about the risk involved. They just fancy having children.

<\$1> <\$=> Oh like yeah but <\\$=>

<\$2> Some= someone they can share things with as they're getting older. See them grow up.

<\$1> Why? Yeah but why is it good to see them grow up?

<\$2> Well the same reason I enjoy going round to Helen's and playing with Libby and Daniel.

(CANCODE No. 90503002)

Here \$1's utterance engages with and queries part of the previous speaker's assessment, challenging the content of the previous utterance in a similar way to Tsui's category,

Elicit:clarify¹ with the crucial difference that this elicitation moves the discourse on another stage, rather than demanding a restatement or verification of this previous utterance. By not openly disagreeing with \$2's assessment that 'people have kids in order to watch them grow up', \$1 tacitly admits that this may be one reason. However, this assessment is not enough for her; although this may be one reason, it is a reason she doesn't accept as a fully satisfactory answer to the question under discussion, which is 'why do people have kids?'. She therefore asks \$2 to explain and expand his utterance; if people have kids in order to watch them grow up, there must be something good about this which \$2 must elucidate before \$1 can agree with his assessment. This 'clarifying' move often occurs within the 'discussion' genre, where one interactant uses it, sometimes repeatedly, either to force their 'opponent' to distil his or her argument down to something easier to grapple with, something more basic which agreement might be built upon, or to try to lead the answerer round to the questioners point of view.

Compare (4.16) with in the following:

(4.17)

¹ I cannot imagine an occurrence of Tsui's category Elicit:clarify that would not in my view constitute a challenge. She gives as possible examples the *wh*-interrogatives: 'What do you mean?', 'Which room?', or 'Where?'. This would seem to me to be an example of Burton's 'Keenan and Schiefelin 3': the speaker may "ask for clarification of information about the identification of objects, persons, ideas in the discourse" (Burton 1980, p151).

I <\$1> <\$O74> It's satisfying <\\$O74> and it's like smoking.

R/I <\$2> Yeah satisfying an urge but what is the urge?

R <\$1> Sex.

**R/I <\$2> Yeah but what is the urge of sex? For what? For pleasure or for <\$=> re= er
reprodu=<\\$=> reproduction?**

R <\$1> Well it depends how you look at it. If you're looking at it from the cat's point of
view I think it's just from sex.

(CANCODE No. 90503002)

Here \$2 takes \$1's utterance and pushes it further, accepting her assessment by repeating it, yet in doing so building his next question out of it.

4.3.2 Informatives

The Response/Initiation element can also be realised by informing acts. Hoey (1991) raises the idea that a “response which provides the function of informing in more detail than is strictly required by the initial questioning initiation” (p78) may need categorisation as something other than an ordinary Response, although he suggests ‘Response treated as Initiation’ as the most likely candidate. In (4.18) and (4.19) the utterances in bold do more than just respond positively to A's elicitation; they contain

information which the preceding elicitations did not strictly request, and which themselves need to be acknowledged or otherwise responded to;

(4.18)

A: So are you into all this recycling, environment stuff too?

B: That's kind of what I do, I'm doing a masters in waste management up at the university.

A: Oh really? How far into it are you?

(Fieldnotes)

(4.19)

<\$?> What are you <\$G3> wearing? Do you use your leggings or wear these <\$G?> little <\$G2> ones.

<\$?> <\$G?> **I feel such a poser if I wear my <\$G?> skirt.<\$E> laughs <\$E>**

<\$?> It looks all right <\$G?>.

(CANCODE No. 90067001)

This relates to Grice's (1975) 'co-operative principle', the idea that conversationalists make their "conversational contribution such as is required, at the stage at which it occurs, by the accepted purpose or direction of the talk exchange" (Coulthard 1985, p31). Sometimes an interactant's response may not directly fulfil the illocutionary expectations of the preceding Initiation, as with example (4.18) where the initiating elicitation is formulated as a polar yes/no question. B chooses instead to provide a piece of information about herself which shows that she is fully committed to conversation

issues and therefore is “into all this recycling, environment stuff” and A uses the maxim of relevance to interpret her answer in this way. Meanwhile the piece of information B has provided has to be acknowledged, before a new exchange can begin with the elicitation “How far into it are you?” Benwell (1998) talks about ‘minimal’ or ‘developed’ informs, and a developed inform in her model is labelled as a ‘discursive inform’, which is a move which is “elaborated beyond a maxim of quantity” (p23). Interestingly she argues that this element represents the discussion stage in a tutorial, which perhaps reflects the way R/I moves are so common in discussive discourse. Since in these cases the R/I element consists of the speaker giving an account, I would label this type of R/I as inform:report. (see Tsui 1994 p138).

Another subclass of informatives, similar to Tsui’s second subclass of informatives, inform:assessment, can also realise the R/I element. When, in a discussion situation, an interactant presents a hypothesis which disagrees with a previous speaker’s hypotheses or opinions, this disagreement demands further disagreement or capitulation from the first speaker. As Sinclair and Coulthard (1992) point out: “structures involving R/I are theoretically recursive” (p71) and it is in this situation that the R/I element is most likely to be; if a further disagreement is produced, the R/I element recurs, and this can continue for some time.

For example, here two interactants, in a discussion of the reasons why people have children, first present hypotheses about these reasons (genetic reasons), and then present their conflicting assessments of the nature of children (are they monkeys or not?).

(4.20)

R <\$1> <\$O215> Well it's not what <\\$O215> they look like.

I It's their genes. It's them being like you in a way. <=>\$ You <\\$=> <\$O216> But you've got much <\\$O216> more to teach a child that is similar to you.

R/I <\$2> <\$O216> <=>\$ Yeah but you shouldn't <\\$=> <\\$O216> <\$E> laughs <\\$E> You can train them to do <\$O217> that <\\$O217>.

R/I <\$1> <\$O217> Oh <\\$O217> you can't train them. They're not monkeys.

R/I <\$2> They fucking are monkeys.

R/I <\$1> They're not monkeys. They're humans.

R/I <\$2> They're complete monkeys.

Aside <\$1> Oh God.

R/I (cont'd) <\$2> They're absolute monkeys. You can train anyone to do anything.

R/I <\$1> Oh. It's not. You can't. Feelings are really important.

R/I <\$2> It's <\$O218> your <\\$O218> upbringing at the end of the day.

R/I <\$1> <\$O218> <=>\$ Those <\\$=> <\\$O218> It's not your <\$O219> upbringing <\\$O219>.

(CANCODE No. 90503002)

Here the interactants repeatedly express their opinions in terms of a complete reversal and rejection of what the other interactant has just said. Hoey (1991) introduces the idea of ‘negative follow-up’. He argues that “a negative evaluation of a response indicates that the original initiation has not been properly responded to..(which) places pressure on the listeners to produce a better response.” (p77). Similarly, an assessment which disagrees with a previous assessment places pressure on the first speaker to defend him/herself.

4.3.3 Directives.

Consider the following;

(4.21)

A: What can I do to help?

B: Well, you could tidy round a bit maybe.

A: Right (starts tidying)

(Fieldnotes.)

Here, B’s utterance clearly fulfils the illocutionary intent of A’s elicitation. However, it can also be argued that B’s utterance carries the illocutionary intent of requesting A to help with the tidying, therefore, in that a directive has been defined as an act whose “function is to request a non-linguistic response” (Sinclair and Coulthard 1975, p41), B’s utterance operates as a directive. Similarly using Tsui’s (1994) criteria: “an order assumes that the addressee will co-operate” (p93). Since A has asked to be given

something to do, B can assume that A will comply, and we can classify her utterance as a directive on the strength of this, and on the fact that A responds by acknowledging and reacting.

In casual conversation, most utterances are linked in some way with both the previous utterance and the subsequent utterance from the beginning to the end of the conversation, whether through lexical or grammatical cohesion, through rhythm, or through topic development. Utterances which realise the R/I element, however, are linked to the preceding and following utterance in terms of discourse structure. To use Sinclair's terms, on the interactive plane of discourse, R/I moves fit the presuppositions of the previous utterance, whilst simultaneously setting up presuppositions of their own.

Initiation	Sets up presuppositions
R/I	Sets up and fulfils presuppositions
Challenge	Challenges, and thereby encapsulates, presuppositions
Response	Fulfils presuppositions
Follow-up	Encapsulates

In this way, the R/I element, both fulfilling illocutionary intent and creating it, can be recursive, and for as long as it continues to recur, the sequence continues.

4.4 Challenge.

This element was first introduced by Burton (1980), who uses a combination of three different ideas to identify what constitutes a ‘challenge’. Firstly, she adapts Keenan and Schiefflin’s (1976) model of the four ‘discourse steps’ necessary for speakers to communicate their topic, such that if the addressee does any of the following, this constitutes a challenge:

1. He may refuse to give his attention.
2. He may ask for repetition of an utterance.
3. He may ask for clarification of information about the identification of objects, persons, ideas in the discourse topic.
4. He may ask for more information concerning the semantic relations between referents in the discourse topic.

(see Burton 1980 p151).

Secondly, she uses Labov and Fanshel’s (1977) ‘rules of interpretation’, which were developed to identify a “request for action” or a directive: “If A requests B to perform an action X at a time T, A’s utterance will be heard as a valid command only if (certain) preconditions hold” (ibid, p152) and she goes on to list those preconditions for elicitations and informatives as well as directives. (see Burton, p152 or appendix 1.). A Challenge, she argues, occurs either when the addressee does not follow the required

discourse steps by, for example, refusing to give his/her attention; or when the addressee produces a reply which questions whether the relevant preconditions hold, i.e. challenges the validity of the speaker's utterance as an elicit, inform or direct. For example:

(4.22)

<\$1> <\$O128> I won't have <|\\$O128> any such s= trash. My <\$H> chequebook <|\\$H> brothers are both childless and both gonna be childless.

<\$2> You don't know that.

(CANCODE No 90503002)

Here \$2 challenges the idea that \$1 is "in a position to inform" \$1 about the childlessness or otherwise of her brothers, which according to Burton would be an L5 challenge. (see Burton, 1980 p152 or appendix 1).

Thirdly, Burton develops the idea of a 'discourse framework', in which "certain initiating acts set up the expectations for certain responding acts"(Burton 1980, p149) in a similar way to the Conversation Analysts' notion of adjacency pairs, where the first pair part sets up the expectation of the second. Burton argues that where the appropriate responding act is withheld, this constitutes a 'challenge' to the preceding utterance. To continue the comparison with the work of the Conversation Analysts made above, this view of discourse also has all the attendant problems of adjacency pair theory, (see section 4:1) being unable to deal with discourse which is more complex than the two-

part exchange, and reducing the search for structure to an analysis of the discourse at act level, each act having “an expected or appropriate reciprocal act” (Burton 1980, p150), both of which must be identified in order to determine whether they realise an Initiating, Supporting or Challenging move. This concept of ‘discourse framework’ would therefore seem less useful for identifying challenges in a model which allows for exchanges which have three parts or more, and which may include the elements of structure ‘Follow up’ and ‘Response/Initiation’.

Furthermore, and most importantly, this concept differs from the other two concepts Burton uses to help identify challenges, in the sense that those concepts identify moves which engage directly with the previous utterance, challenging its validity or its completeness or comprehensibility. In the sense that a Challenge “breaks the presuppositions (of the preceding utterance) and precipitates a new exchange” (Sinclair 1992, p87), to employ the notion of ‘discourse framework’ in the identification of challenges, we would have to conclude that, for example, an informative presupposes an acknowledging response, i.e. in order for an informative to *qualify* as an informative it would have to be followed by an acknowledgement.

Consider the following:

(4.23)

<\$2> <\$O316> It's like Matt's hair's ever such a <\\$OS316> mess cos he hasn't had it cut for six months cos he always got it cut free by his ex-girlfriend who's now got a boyfriend and a baby. But I couldn't <\$O317> bear him doing it <\$O317>.

<\$1> <\$O317> Well he could go to <\\$OS317> another <\$E> laughs <\\$E> hairdresser.

(CANCODE No 90425001)

Here \$2's informative is followed by advice from \$1 which is more than a simple acknowledgement, yet it does not challenge the status of \$2's utterance as an informative. Therefore, since informatives do occur without 'acknowledgement' per se, this is clearly a different *kind* of conceptualisation of a challenge, so that it is easy to detach it from the foundations of the concept of challenge without making that concept any less solid.

Another way of recognising a challenge which is similar to the first two mentioned above in that it engages with and attacks the validity of the previous utterance is to use Grice's (1975) maxims. When a reply to an initiation takes the form of accusing the previous speaker of violating a maxim, this would also seem to constitute a challenge.

For example:

(4.24)

<\$1> Yeah. About seven quid or something weren't they.

<\$2> No they were ten. <\$G?>

<\$1> **Are you sure?**

<\$2> Mm.

<\$1> Thought they were cheaper than that. I thought they were only seven.

(CANCODE No. 80529001)

Here \$1's utterance arguably functions as a challenge, because it questions the validity of \$2's utterance as a response by asking if she is sure of her information¹. This relates to Grice's maxim of quality, 'do not say that for which you lack adequate evidence', therefore it seems an obvious next step to include Grice's maxims in the models used to help identify challenges; so that, for example, accusing someone of irrelevance, or of lying, would also constitute types of Challenge.

Tsui (1994) also includes the notion of challenge in her model of discourse. To a certain extent she follows Burton in including the notion of 'discourse framework', and although she does not mention Grice's maxims when she discusses the characterization of Challenges and Responses, they are built into her view of Challenging moves. For example, she states that her informing act 'report' presupposes that "the speaker believes that the expressed proposition is true" (p181) which echoes Grice's (1975) maxim of quality 'do not say something which you believe to be false.' However Tsui differs from Burton and from the analytical framework adopted by the present study, in that she

¹ Note that challenges can occur after responding moves as well as initiatory moves. Since a challenge functions to attack the validity of a previous utterance it could theoretically occur after any move, even a follow-up, though I have not yet found an example in my data, intuitively interchanges such as the one below are possible, and would have the structure IRFC;

A. Can I have a chocolate?

B. Here you go.

A. Thanks.

constructs a separate set of rules for each subclass of elicitions, requestives, directives and informatives. She distinguishes, for example, between Challenges to an elicit:inform, (which follow the rules laid out in appendix 1 for elicitions) and Challenges to an elicit:confirm, which, she argues, can be any utterance which disconfirms the speaker's assumption, because, according to Tsui, it is one of the presuppositions of an elicit:confirm that "the addressee is able to and will confirm that the speaker's assumption is true".(p168) This, like Burton's 'discourse framework' idea of challenges, bears more resemblance to the Conversation Analyst's idea of preferred and dispreferred responses, which as I have shown is a largely socio-psychological notion rather than a purely structural one. Elicit:confirms give the listener an idea of the speakers prevailing viewpoint and/or preferred response, but they are most useful as a category if they are classed as a subcategory of elicits, following the same rules as elicits when it comes to challenges. Not confirming the speakers expressed assumption is not a challenge, because it in no way challenges the validity of the utterance as an elicit:confirm, nor does it question the utterance's completeness or comprehensibility.

Another problem with Tsui's use of Burton's 'discourse framework' is that it calls for subjective decisions about a speaker's expectations and presuppositions. For example, Tsui labels a disagreement to an assessment as a challenge, because an assessing act "presupposes that the speaker believes his/her judgement or evaluation is a true representation of the evaluated referent"(p183) i.e. whenever a speaker makes an assessment s/he is convinced that s/he is right and therefore, presumably, expects the

B. Don't thank me, they're not mine!

addressee to agree. I would argue that the definition of an assessment should be more like ‘the speaker is expressing their genuine personal opinion’, as is shown by the direct references to personal taste which often accompany assessments. For example, in Tsui’s own data:

(4.25)

H: Hey it was very I I well I don’t know I have my the faculty talk drives me bananas. It’s **to me** it’s the theatre of the absurd.

M: Some of them are, yeah, some of them **I find** interesting.

(Tsui 1994 p185)

Sinclair (1992) comments that a Challenge, like a Follow up, contains an ‘encapsulation’; a retrospective mechanism which in Follow up comments on both the preceding Initiation and Response, and “indicates that, for the speaker, the discourse is proceeding coherently.... (it) encapsulates complete IR pairs” (p86). In other words, it both brings the interactive value of the exchange to a close and indicates to other speakers that it does so. Similarly, a Challenge “cancels the interactive value of the previous move” (ibid, p87) ‘holding up’ the discourse by turning it back on itself: “In exchanges whose initiation is a Challenge, the subject matter becomes the discourse itself.” (ibid, p87). This would appear to be an essential component of a challenge, that it is retrospective and that it ‘holds up’ the discourse.

4.5 Listenership: responding moves: Response and Follow up

4.5.1 Response

There is a sense in which, just as the role of the listener has, in the past, tended to be overlooked by analysts, (see section 4.6) so the Response move has tended to be undervalued or under-researched. As Tsui (1994) argues: “responses have been given very little attention in the speech act literature... because the characterisation of illocutionary acts is often done by making a semantic analysis of performative verbs rather than by examining the function of utterances in discourse; and as many responding acts do not have a corresponding performative verb this kind of analysis inevitably neglects responses.” (p160). Sinclair and Coulthard’s (1975) system of analysis includes the ‘answering move’ which realised the element of structure Response. The Responding move fulfils the presuppositions of the Initiation (Sinclair 1992) and is therefore shown to be a vital part of the interactive creation of meaning within an exchange.

Although a Response does not set up presuppositions of its own, some Responses also prospect a further utterance on the part of the addressee, in the sense that Responses can prospect a Follow-up move. (see section 4.5.2) The important difference is that the Response move does not itself create an illocutionary intent which must be fulfilled in the next utterance. In this way the emphasis is again placed on the Initiation, in that “the type of answering move is predetermined because its function is to be an appropriate response in the terms laid down by the opening move” (p45). Therefore most taxonomies of discourse acts based on the Sinclair/Coulthard model

enumerate Responding (head) acts which correspond to complimentary Initiatory (head) acts, the main examples of which are shown in their relationships below:

Elicit → reply

Direct → react

Inform → acknowledge

It is important to note that these types of Response differ substantially in form. Sinclair and Coulthard found that in their study of teacher-fronted classroom discourse, the react move is often non-verbal:

(4.26)

Exchange type	Initiation	Act	Response	Act
Teaching: Teacher direct	Put your pencils down.	Direct	NV (non-verbal activity)	React

(Sinclair and Coulthard 1975 p90)

However, React acts are also likely to be accompanied by an Acknowledgement, (especially outside the classroom in situations where the status of interactants is equal) which is the same act as that which follows an Informative, and which simply functions “to show that the initiation has been understood, and, if the head was a directive, that the pupil intends to react” (Sinclair and Coulthard 1975 p42). Further, an Acknowledgement can also realise a Follow up move, though as Tsui (1994) points out, Acknowledgement as a Response indicates that the Informative has been received and understood, whereas as Follow up it also acknowledges the Response as

“an appropriate contribution to the preceding elicitation” (p206) Nonetheless, in form, acknowledgements tend to consist of the same items wherever they appear: they are simple, consisting often of a minimal response token such as ‘yeah’ or ‘Okay’:

(4.27)

I →<\$3> These are the three that will have a simple mode and will have erm an advanced mode.

R →<\$1> Yeah.

(CANCODE No.70547004)

(4.28)

I →<\$1> Are there any tennis racquets you'd recommend? Erm I need the medium price range.

R →<\$2> Medium price.

F →<\$1> Yeah.

(CANCODE 70547002)

However, a reply to an elicit is fairly lexico-grammatically complex. It provides “a linguistic response which is appropriate to the elicitation” (Sinclair and Coulthard 1975, p42), as with (4.29) below:

(4.29)

Exchange type	Initiation	Act	Response	Act
Teaching:	What makes a road	Elicit	You might have	Reply

Teacher Elicit	slippery?.		rain or snow on it.	
----------------	------------	--	---------------------	--

(Sinclair and Coulthard 1975 p68): although the present study would classify this Response as a Response/Initiatory ‘suggesting’ act.

In this way Replies provide information: Coulthard and Brazil (1992) argue that: “the majority of exchanges are basically concerned with the transmission of information” (p72) and this informing move can occur in the Responding slot as a Reply. In argumentative discourse where the majority of exchanges are about the transmission of *opinion* rather than information *per se* these replies can consist of ‘opinion carrying’ moves. One type of argumentative ‘technique’ takes the form of repeated Elicits, where one speaker asks the other a series of questions which force them to define their argument, and which may also be designed to lead the answerer to conclusions which prove the questioner’s point, or at least undermine the answerer’s, as in the following extract where \$2 is trying to lead \$1 to the conclusion that his belief in the atom is an act of faith:

(4.30)

<\$2> Do you believe that in the atom do you believe that the atom exists? <pause>	R/I (El 1)
<\$1> Evidence exists to say that the atom exists yes.	R (Rep)
<\$2> So you believe in the atom [BCH <\$1> Mmm] because you’ve heard say <02>that the atom exists? <\02>	I (El 2)
<\$1> <02>And there er <\02>are there are repeatable experiments that I can do in order	R (Rep)

to verify	
<\$2> But have you done them?	I (El 4)
<\$1> No, but I can do them.	R (Rep)

(Extract from 'Religion' text)

Here we can see that \$1's Replies combine with \$2's Elicits to illustrate \$1's opinion; he uses vocabulary which signals his view that his belief in the existence of the atom is not an act of faith (evidence, repeatable experiments, verify). In this way Replies differ from other responding moves because, in tandem with their preceding Elicit, they can carry the main 'business' of the exchange.

4.5.2 Follow up.

This element of structure has been greatly discussed, modified or dismissed since Sinclair and Coulthard introduced it in 1975. According to their original definition with regard to its use in teacher-fronted classrooms: "Its function is to let the pupil know how well he/she has performed.....follow up occurs not only after a pupil answering move, but also after a pupil opening move when the head is realised by an informative. In other words the teacher often indicates the value of an unelicited contribution from a pupil... The act evaluate is seen by all participants as a compulsory element." (Sinclair and Coulthard 1975, p48-9). In this sense, as a strictly evaluative move, Follow up can have little place in social discourse, where the status of participants is equal, and evaluating the correctness or otherwise of

someone else's Response would be extremely marked behaviour. Indeed, Burton (1980) dismisses the Follow up move claiming that it hardly ever occurs outside the classroom except perhaps as sarcasm. (p141). Her model is, therefore, one which consists of an essentially two part structure, with Opening moves followed by either Supporting or Challenging moves. Supporting moves provide the Response which fulfils the illocutionary expectations set up in the preceding Initiation, whereas Challenging moves challenge the presuppositions in the Initiation, and function as a further Initiation, restarting the sequence. Burton also includes a modified version of Sinclair and Coulthard's Bound Opening and introduces Re-Opening moves, which have the effect of extending exchanges beyond the basic bi-partite structure; but these further moves are seen as a *extensions* of the Opening move, all of them structurally realising an Initiation, with the basic opening-answering structure being repeated or reinforced (See Burton, 1980 p153).

However, in naturally occurring everyday interaction there *are* many examples of moves/utterances which do not fit comfortably into these Supporting/Challenging or Opening/Answering dichotomies. For example:

(4.31)

<\$1>What smells are they?

<\$5> Er there's vanilla bay berry holly berry and pine.

<\$1> **Right.** Which one-

<\$5> The bay berry's the pink <\$O4> the <\\$O4> holly berry's the red.

<\$1> <\$O4> **Right.** <\\$O4> **Yeah.**

(CANCODE: No.90119005.)

Here, the utterances in bold refer back to the previous utterance, yet the previous utterance is itself a Response; therefore they are neither initiating or responding, but instead ‘rounding off’ the interaction. They are showing that the speaker has understood the Response, and is satisfied that it provided the information/action requested: following up the Response. In many cases a Responding move actually prospects the Follow up move: “just as a question ‘demands’ a response, a response also ‘demands’ a further response from the questioner. This further response.....is a ‘sign’ on the part of the questioner that his question has received a response, adequate or inadequate, appropriate or inappropriate” (Mishler, 1975, in Tsui, 1994, p27).

Tsui (1994) argues that Follow up is an important part of all conversation because it is necessary “to let the addressee know that the speaker has understood the addressee’s response, that he or she has provided an acceptable response, and that the interaction has been felicitous.” (p32). Follow up moves provide for this necessity in a variety of ways. As Sinclair and Coulthard discovered, in certain contexts, especially in formal, ritualised settings such as the classroom, Follow up moves can ‘comment’ evaluatively on the Response; in casual conversation this takes the form of expressing a positive or negative reaction to the Response, showing pleasure etc, as for example in (4.32), or the expression of the speaker’s gratitude and appreciation of the Response as in (4.33).

(4.32)

H: How how how long will you be here till

X: Un - until the next weekend.

H: Oh great, great.

(Data from Tsui (1994) p200)

(4.33)

C: Can I use your lighter? I've ran [run] out of matches.

B: Oh aye ahhh (+NV)

C: Ta.

(Data from Tsui (1994) p25)

Tsui (1994) labels positive reactions to Responses as 'Endorsement'. 'Endorsement' is produced after the interaction has had a "positive outcome"(ibid, p200), or a 'preferred' response, to use a term from Conversation Analysis, such as agreeing with an expression of opinion, or acceptance of an invitation. She also includes thanking people, (4.33) and positive evaluations such as (4.32) under this heading. 'Concession' is Follow up produced after a 'dispreferred' response, a response which "does not fulfil the illocutionary intent of the preceding initiation"(ibid, p203) and is therefore, according to Tsui, face threatening. Concessions serve to minimise the threat to the face of either the speaker or the addressee. For example:

(4.34)

P: So do you want me to pick you up, are you are you in your office now?

X: No, I'm going to the h-, I'm I'm at the Great Hall, I have to go to the head's office.

P: Alright, maybe afterwards.

(Data from Tsui (1994) p204.)

Follow up can also express change in the state of knowledge of the speaker, as with (4.31) or (4.35). (or see Heritage's (1984) analysis of *oh* as a change-of-state token).

(4.35)

<\$1> How long do they take do you know to get there?

<\$2> <\$=> Two three four five and five is <\\$=> Well it'll take about three days butwe can't tell once it gets there.

<\$1> Okay. Right.

(CANCODE No.90032003).

Tsui also introduces the idea that further Follow up moves can occur after the first Follow up move, and these function as turn passing signals (Tsui 1994, p210). These moves indicate that the speaker has nothing more to contribute.(see 4.36)

(4.36)

S: I'd like to read the story.

M: Yeah, I'll try and get you a copy of the um of the story after this week is over.

S: Okay

M: Okay.

(Data from Tsui (1994) p211)

This looks very like Sacks and Schegloff's (1973) idea of 'possible pre-closings,' where "a speaker takes a turn whose business seems to be to 'pass,' i.e. to indicate that he has not now anything new to say" (p304). They argue that this type of utterance is used to provide an opportunity to either finish the conversation, or to change the topic: "AFTER such a possible pre-closing is specifically a place for new topic beginnings."(ibid p304) In this way, this type of utterance can be seen to be performing a very different function from the other types of Follow up Tsui has identified. It does not have "a general function of acknowledging the outcome of the interaction"(Tsui 1994 p41) and therefore it is doubtful whether it should be labelled as such; turn passing moves, like backchannelling, can be said to be discourse 'devices', which perform very specific interactive functions and cannot be subsumed under the three main structural labels (Initiation, Response, and Follow up).

This one stumbling block in Tsui's otherwise extremely elegant model is illustrative of the way Follow up is generally viewed. It is balanced between a type of elaborate discourse device, used to show the addressee that the speaker has heard, understood and accepted the response, but with no other pragmatic function, and a slot which allows the speaker to express his/her opinions about, and evaluations of the Response. I would argue that it is essential that Follow up follows up the Response and does nothing more; it completes an exchange (and the aspect of the topic which that exchange was dealing with), so that it is never necessary to add anything further once an exchange has been Followed up: it does not set up an expectation of further linguistic activity. Therefore if the expression of opinion or evaluation *adds new information to the discourse* about the speaker's views etc, it cannot be Follow up because all new information needs to be acknowledged (i.e. responded to or followed

up), and moves the topic/discourse on rather than rounding it off. Consider the two following examples:

(4.37)

B: Got to have a telephone.

C: Yes, I I feel that.

B: You NEED it

(Data from Tsui (1994) p200)

(4.38)

I (inf 1) <\$2> <\$O156> You can encourage them to learn <\\$O156> er learn at a quicker rate than they are doing.

R/I (inf 1) <\$1> Yeah by pumping them with constant information. <\$O157> Yeah. <\\$O157>

R (Acc) <\$2> <\$O157> **Well yeah.** <\\$O157> **You can <\$O158> encourage <\\$O158> them.**

F(Acc) <\$1> <\$O158> Yeah. <\\$O158>

(CANCODE No.90503002)

Tsui argues that the utterances in bold are examples of endorsement: “further agreements with the preceding agreements” (p200). In the data used for the present study, however, the exchange always continues after comments like these; they seem to demand either further agreement, or some piece of additional commentary which the hearer supplies in an attempt to explain or qualify the preceding assessment of the situation. An initial assessment prospects another assessment which is either

positive (agreeing) or negative (disagreeing). If this further assessment is positive, it does not prospect either positive or negative assessment, as the second speaker knows the first speaker's opinion and knows that it corresponds with his/her own. Therefore this assessment simply prospects acceptance, which takes the form of a Responding move. It is when this accepting act receives yet more acceptance, with which the second speaker signals that convergence has been achieved in this matter, that a follow-up move can be said to have been produced. Example (4.37) seems to me intuitively to be incomplete, needing some further comment from C; in response to having already received an agreement, B is emphasising her/his previous statement or assessment, not simply showing convergence, but repeating the sentiment of the previous two moves and thereby strengthening it. (One explanation of this behaviour may be that announcing your opinion too strongly without finding out if your co-conversationalists agree with your viewpoint can be impolite.) Therefore a further comment from C seems necessary at this stage. However, the participants in example (4.38), after the Follow up, are free to move on to another aspect of their topic, or to a different topic.

Much of Tsui's category of 'endorsement' can either be shown not to be true Follow up, or can be subsumed into the 'acknowledgement' category. 'Endorsement' is often produced in a formulaic way, in response to a piece of information which is positive, where that positivity is a 'given'; i.e. both parties are aware that the Response will be received positively even before the it has been spoken. Consider the following:

(4.39)

- 1 I <\$2> So can you come round for tea tonight then?
 2 R <\$1> Yeah, yeah that'd be excellent,
 3 I what time d'you want us?
 4 R/I <\$2> Around 7 to 7:30?
 5 **R <\$1> Yeah fine, that'll be fine.**
 6 **F <\$2> Alright great,**
 7 I see you later then.
 8 R <\$1> Yeah, see you later
 9 I <\$2> Bye then.
 10 R <\$1> Bye.

(CANCODE No.90625001)

In the above case, it would be extremely marked linguistic behaviour if, after \$1's response in line 5, \$2 produced a negative evaluation like *how awful!*. The expected reply to \$1's obviously positive Response is some positive adjective like *Good* or *Great*, and optionally some kind of 'received and understood' marker like *Oh*, *Alright* or *Okay*. Anything else demands further linguistic activity and would continue the exchange. In producing the expected reply, \$2 cannot be said to be evaluating the response, but is merely finishing off the exchange in what is the expected manner in this context. Tsui's example (4.40) however, whilst it looks like (4.39) above, differs, because her *Okay, wonderful* (line 7) is a Response rather than a Follow up, showing that X accepts the time and place proposed by H. Moreover, it arguably needs some further comment from H, such as *fine* or *right, see you then* to indicate that the transaction is complete, i.e. a meeting has been arranged. This terminal move would be a more appropriate manifestation of Follow-up, although the word 'terminal' would apply only to the *exchange* under analysis here; it could be

argued that a closing exchange (e.g. X: 'Okay, bye'. H: 'Bye.')

would be needed to completely round off the interaction. (See (4.39), lines 9-10)

(4.40)

- | | | |
|---|-------------|---|
| 1 | I (el) | X: Where shall I meet you? |
| 2 | R/I (offer) | H: Well ah I'll be finished with my class at five, its |
| 3 | | [|
| 4 | | X: uhuh |
| 5 | | H: =right in Tsimshatsui, so maybe we'll meet you at the Peninsula, |
| | | between say |
| 6 | | 5:15 and 5:30? |
| 7 | R (+ve) | X: Okay, wonderful. |

(Data from Tsui, (1994) p194)

Turning now to Sinclair and Coulthard's original analysis of classroom discourse, we can see that a similar problem arises.

(4.41)

- | | | |
|----|---------|------------------------------------|
| T: | I (el) | What makes a road slippery? |
| P: | R (rep) | You might have rain or snow on it. |
| T: | F (e) | Yes, snow, ice. |

(Sinclair and Coulthard (1975) p68)

Willis (1992) would follow Sinclair and Coulthard by analysing the above as having an Initiation → Response → Follow-up structure. However, he would argue that the structural elements are realised at act level by Elicit → Offer → Evaluate, which, he says, explains the difference between eliciting exchanges like the one above, where

the teacher knows the answer to the question and is therefore the primary knower (Berry 1981) and exchanges like (4.35) above, where the questioner is genuinely seeking information, and is the secondary knower. However, one could argue that it is in the nature of Willis' 'Offer' to be both an attempt to fulfil the illocutionary intent of the Elicitation, (answer the question) and a suggestion which has the illocutionary intent of needing to be confirmed or denied; therefore Willis' acts should remain the same, but the structure change to Initiation → Response/Initiation → Response. This fits in with the fact that Offer acts are often spoken with a rising intonation, or even expressed using the interrogative grammatical form:

(4.42)

Quizmaster: In England, which cathedral has the tallest spire

Contestant: Is it Salisbury?

Quizmaster: Yes

Contestant: Oh

(From Berry (1981) p127)

Because the present study provides for an element of structure which responds and initiates simultaneously, Follow up cannot simply be identified by placement: that is, it is not simply the element which follows the Response but does not initiate. (In a sense, the quizmaster's *Yes* above follows a Response, but since it simultaneously follows an Initiation it cannot be analysed as a Follow up move). Arguably, one of the most important aspects of Follow up is that it terminates and encapsulates (Sinclair 1992) an exchange and does not add anything further to the discourse, and it is this which differentiates it from the Response. In this way, Follow up functions to accept the outcome of the exchange, and with Tsui's category of 'concessions' it

can also have a face-saving interpersonal function. It cannot evaluate the Response in terms of giving the speaker's opinion about it, because voicing an opinion would be adding new information to the discourse about the speaker's state of mind.

Taking this as the definition of Follow up, and applying it to the analysis of CANCODE data we find that it typically occurs in certain situational categories and not in others. Where language is being used for some specific transactional purpose, that is, finding out some specific piece of information, making arrangements, minimal service encounters, and so on, Follow up occurs quite frequently. (See all the examples of Follow up listed above: 4.31-6, 4.38-9) However, in casual conversation, where language is being used as a social tool for gossip, storytelling, swapping ideas or opinions etc., it occurs more rarely. This may well be connected with the fact that language as a social tool is almost an end in itself - people talk for the sake of talking, in order to express themselves (which is the same thing). It is a recognised fact that people dislike lengthy silences in conversation, preferring the talk to run smoothly along, one utterance flowing into another, rather than a staccato series of exchanges; and since Follow up functions to 'round off' an exchange by acknowledging the *outcome*, people are less likely to use it in situations where the outcome is less important than the conversation itself.

Interpersonal aspects of listenership.

Although positive Follow-up moves following the production of a preferred second are, as argued above, a 'given', so that their transactional function is simply to acknowledge a successful outcome to the exchange, this does not diminish their effect in the relational mode. This affective dimension, showing pleasure after a

positive response (as with example (4.32) above), or addressing the face issues involved in a negative one, (as with example (4.34) above) is crucial, and has, like the role of listenership itself, been under-researched by discourse analysts. In any discourse genre there are always the two strata of ideational and interpersonal discourse present; in face-to-face argumentation, these are manifested by the argumentation stratum (content/persuasion/evaluation) and the Relational stratum: (feeling of well-being/convergence/affective elements). McCarthy (forthcoming) argues that in both Responding and Follow-up moves, listeners regularly “do more than just acknowledge or confirm, they show engagement and interactional bonding with interlocutors” (p1). He identifies 18 ‘non-minimal response tokens’ the use of which demonstrates how listeners are orientating “towards the creation and maintenance of sociability and affective well-being in their responses.” (ibid, p14). Using a 3.5 million word sample of the CANCODE corpus, combined with the Cambridge North American Spoken corpus (both of which are the copyright of Cambridge University Press), he analysed how often these tokens appeared as a single-word response (see McCarthy forthcoming, p6). The following is a table comparing his findings using these corpora with a similar analysis of the mini-corpus of discussive data used in the present study:

Item	Occurrences as response in McCarthy’s data	% of total occurrences analysed (max. 1000)	Occurrences as response in discussive data	% of total occurrences analysed.
Absolutely ¹	433	67	2	11

Sure ²	258	40	3	11
True ³	614	61	5	18
Exactly	597	60	2	8
Right	379	38	221	27
Great	260	26	1	11
Good	115	11	3	9
Yeah ⁴			56	24
Mm or Mhm			80	90

¹ *Absolutely* only occurs as part of an extended response.

² 2 out of 3 instances where *sure* occupies a response slot are produced by an American speaker. They also form part of an extended response in both American cases, one of which Responds and Initiates simultaneously. In the British example the token is used as a rather dismissive accept act prior to refocusing the discourse:

(4.43)

M. <024> Yeah, yeah sure... <024> Can I just get to the moral issue here,

(Moral maze text 1)

³*True* occupies a Response slot as part of an accepting phrase, such as “this is true” or “yes, that’s true”.

⁴ *Yeah* also occurs as part of an extended response 42 times; see analysis in section 6.3.

The above table includes an analysis of the minimal response tokens *yeah* and *Mm* in the discussive data for comparison, and it is clear that the most popular response tokens in the mini-corpus are those which are most neutral with regard to evaluation of the speaker's utterance, and orientation towards the affective dimension (i.e. *right*, *yeah* and *Mm* or similar vocalisations). The above table also omits many of the tokens McCarthy included in his analysis (*fine*, *definitely*, *lovely*, *absolutely*, *gosh*, *wow*, *really*, *cool*, *brilliant*, *excellent*, *wonderful*, *certainly*, *marvellous*, *perfect* and *quite*) because they did not appear in either the Response or Follow-up slot in the discussive data. Whether this is due to the comparatively small sample of discussive data (7 texts, 41,424 words) or whether these tokens are rarely used in discussion is debatable. It would certainly intuitively seem that expressions of amazement or appreciation (*lovely*, *gosh*, *wow*, *cool*, *brilliant*, *excellent*, *wonderful*, *marvellous*, *perfect*) would be less likely in discourse aimed at persuading the listener; although narratives do frequently occur as part of discussion, when interlocutors tell stories and give examples which prove their points, and these narratives could reasonably be expected to be responded to by such tokens. In the following example \$2 provides an affective response which shows his convergence with the speaker (he is aghast at her ghastly tale) *during* her turn at talk. However once she has signalled that her narrative is over, (by concluding with an evaluation (or 'coda', Labov 1972), introducing her conclusion with 'by the end' and finishing it with 'like. You know') \$2 then responds to her move as to an exemplification act. This act provides empirical evidence to back up an opinion or standpoint. Although this type of informative does not overtly transmit an opinion, in that it is used to exemplify one, it is an 'opinion carrier', and as such is often responded to with another opinion carrying act. \$2 does respond with his own assessment of the situation she describes,

using the classic formulation *yeah but* which so frequently signals a second position (Sacks 1992) assessing or other Response/Initiatory opinion carrying act (see section 6.3).

(4.44)

<\$1> +they weren't ever sure how mentally okay she was after she started this illness. And erm luckily they waited until she was six before they thought about having another child cos they're both really sort of nurturing nice excellent people. And er <=\$=> this g= <=\$=> this lass Kirsten <=\$=> was like she start= <=\$=> when she started wasting that was when they were thinking about having another child. So <=\$=> then they w= <=\$=> they both went in for these tests and found it was some kind of thing that was <=\$=> there <=\$=> any child between the two of them was bound to be deformed in this way. And and <\$O14> she just started wasting away <\\$O14>.

<\$2> <\$O14> **Oh God.** <\\$O14>

<\$1> She lived until she was twenty odd. <=\$=> And er by the end er by <=\$=> For the last like ten years they had to do absolutely everything for her and it completely ruined their lives for ten years like. <\$O15> You know. <\\$O15>

<\$2> <\$O15> **Yeah. But** then <\\$O15> it's <=\$=> like you you can you're al= <=\$=> almost like always waiting on a knife edge that they're gonna die.

<\$1> Yeah.

(CANCODE No 90503002)

The following example, with its repeated use of minimal tokens which are used relatively infrequently given the amount of speech they relate to, is more common:

(4.45)

And then there was then there was the story of the firemen. <\$=> That there was erm two twins identical twins that had been farmed out to different their <\\$=> One of them brought up on the east coast of America and one of them brought up on the west. And they'd lived in different religion families+

<\$2> **Mm.**

<\$1> +and erm they'd both converted to Roman Catholicism. <\$=> And then they'd erm <\\$=> Well I mean I don't know about their economic status but <\$=> they'd been <\\$=> the families had been quite sort of different in the sense that one one family were like the kids at school like were really really scientific and the others were more sort of like commercial and whatever and and that was the sort of direction in which they were kind of pushed by their brothers and sisters and stuff <\$O226> like <\\$O226> that.

<\$2> <\$O226> **Yeah.** <\\$O226>

<\$1> In the end they both ended up being firemen. <\$=> And then one w= <\\$=> The way they met was that <\$=> one guy from one of the erm <\\$=> one of the guys worked <\$=> in a <\\$=> you know in a fire department <\$=> and wa= and <\\$=> and a colleague of his went to a c= er like a conference or a getting together of fire-fighters and erm saw this guy and went up to him and said Hi so and so like this and realized that it wasn't the same guy. Thought Fucking hell you're absolutely the spitting image of this other guy to the point where they knew that they must be brothers they must be identical twins cos they were absolutely spit of each other. <\$=> And these <\\$=> And so they got in touch with each other <\$=> and found out that they had in fact bo= <\\$=> and they both like asked about <\$=> their up= <\\$=> you know their adoption and stuff like that and found that they'd both been twins and all this. So they knew that they must be twins. So then they they m= met each other in some airport. <\$=> And they're bo= both wearing the same suit and they'd both bought each other a China plate of exactly the same design to give it to each other as a as a <\\$=> You know they hadn't

discussed that they were gonna <O227> give <\O227> gifts or anything like that and they both brought the exact same item.

<\$> <O227> **Mm.** <\O227> Could be complete chance. Luck. <=\$=> But <O228> might <\O228> <\\$=>

(CANCODE 90503002)

Therefore although it is clear that interlocutors in a Discussion do use Response tokens to signal affective involvement, this kind of behaviour is perhaps less frequent within this text type. Looking at exemplification acts, which are the acts where most narrative occurs in discussive discourse, and examining Response tokens produced during these acts, we find that the neutral *Mm* is the most frequently used, followed by *yeah* which also qualifies as a minimal Response token.

Response tokens produced during and after Exemplification acts.

<i>Mm</i>	<i>Yeah</i>	<i>Laughter</i>	<i>Oh God</i>	<i>Nice</i>	<i>No</i>
24	9	5	1	1	1

With a mini-corpus of the size used in the present study, only very wide generalisations can be made, because, as McCarthy (forthcoming) comments: “to be useful as a tool for generalising about a speech community, a corpus needs to be at least in the hundreds of thousands of words” (p1), and this applies equally to a speech genre or text type. However, as argued in section 6.1, Discussion is an unusual text type from the viewpoint of the affective dimension, firstly in that it

intrinsically involves directly confrontational behaviour, and secondly because it has a perceived 'intellectual' nature; Van Eemeren and Grootendorst (1984) call it an "articulated form of disunity which may be able to make a (more or less modest) contribution to intellectual progress." (p1) This perhaps allows participants in a Discussion to ignore or place on hold the need to maintain interpersonal relationships and create affective convergence to a greater extent than with other text types. In this way the lack of these affective response tokens in my data may go some way to proving Brown and Levinson's (1987) theory that certain more confrontational text types such as Discussion take place in a kind of linguistic 'jousting arena' where face issues are less important.

4.6 Backchannelling.

The term ‘backchannel’ (BC) is used to identify a class of utterances such as ‘mmm’, and ‘yeah’, and “other things that come between sentences” as Schegloff (1981) puts it. It is often understood to refer to some kind of ‘minimal response’, one of those small interjections conversationalists frequently make during the course of a conversation, though often semi-unconsciously, i.e. without fully being aware that they have done so. Perhaps because even the participants in an interaction are only partially aware of these pieces of speech, this area of discourse has in the past been under researched by analysts. However a proper understanding of these responses and their function in the discourse is essential to understanding the discourse; as Schegloff (1981) puts it: “disengaging the listener behaviour from its local sequential context not only undercuts the possibility of understanding what it is doing, it can remove an important basis for understanding what is going on *in the discourse itself.*” (p86). Therefore, when attempting a detailed analysis of any spoken text it is necessary to have a strict working definition of this feature of naturally occurring conversation - a clear idea of its function, its typical form, and its ‘place’ in the text – in order to differentiate it from other discourse moves or acts.

This term was first used by Yngve in 1970. He identifies the backchannel as a piece of speech which is produced out of turn by a conversationalist: “The person who has the turn receives short messages such as ‘yes’ and ‘uh-huh’ without relinquishing the turn. The partner, of course, is not only listening, but speaking occasionally as he sends the short messages in the backchannel.” (Yngve 1970, p568) He goes on to intimate that the function of the backchannel lies in the domain of conversational

maintenance: “(it) appears to be very important in providing for monitoring of the quality of communication.” He tells us that the speaker will begin to feel that s/he is not being listened to if the hearer “stop(s) sending the expected short reassuring messages” (ibid., p568). In this way, the backchannel functions to show that the listener is paying attention, a kind of ‘Received’ indicator very like Follow-up (although as Schegloff (1981) comments, BC behaviour “at best claim(s) attention and/or understanding, rather than *showing* it or *evidencing* it” (p78)). In fact for the analyst, the superficial similarity between the backchannel and other conversational moves constantly creates problems.

To add to the confusion, other forms of BC have also been identified. Duncan (1973) includes ‘sentence completion’, ‘requests for clarification’ and ‘brief restatements’ in his version of backchannelling. Ron White (1997) in his discussion of BC, similarly allows that “a bid for repair, such as clarification of meaning” (p325) should be considered as a backchannel. However, this definition of BC is problematic, as there is a clear difference in placement, form and function between Yngve’s “short reassuring messages” and all three of the above types of utterance. In White’s examples of ‘clarifiers’ the difference in function is very clear. He classifies seller’s first utterance in the example below as BC, even identifying seller’s *so* as a “BC cue”:

(4.46)

Buyer Or we could put the [0.67] the televisions up to one of the [0.48] you know A or B or
[0.5]something like that [unclear]

Seller So ah ah [2.83] your idea is ah [1.80] what price? [0.94]
eh B or A for televisions?

Buyer Yeah and then maybe typewriters [0.74]
 Seller hmm, hmm
 Buyer and vacuum cleaners
 Seller hmm, hmmm
 Buyer still [0.55] they they could be [0.89] they can be on the lower [0.47] end

(White 1997 p325)

White himself comments that Seller's question here is not simply seeking clarification of Buyer's price for televisions: "it is a step in the bargaining process....substantive information is being elicited through these questions" This is clearly a different type of utterance to Sellers 'hmm, hmm' which "performs no such function." (ibid, p325)

Yngve's messages consist of minimal utterances which do not require (and never receive) a response. However, requests for clarification, for example, often consist of whole sentences or clauses, and they always require a specific response, viz., the provision of further information about the identification of objects, persons, ideas in the discourse topic (see Burton, 1980 p151). Following Burton (1980) I would argue that \$1's utterance below constitutes a Challenge, which holds up the discourse, asking for more information about the \$5's inform before it can be fully accepted and the discourse topic can move on. (See section 4.3 on Challenging moves):

(4.47)

<\$5> +it <\$G1> that completely. And the mum won't let him remove them. So <\$=> when he <\\$=> when he's older he said that he erm erm erm he's gonna say he's gonna remove the rocks and he's gonna do a research on them and everything.

<\$1> Ghost rocks? Er what do you mean?

<\$5> <\$=> It <\\$=> You put these rocks down. It keeps ghosts away.

(CANCODE No. 70473001)

Vitally, requests for clarification differ from BC because they entail a speaker shift, i.e. a new speaker turn, where the original speaker falls silent and allows the hearer to ask a question, *and then responds* to that question. For example, there is a clear speaker shift from \$5 to \$1 in the above example, and the ongoing discourse is affected by \$1's interjection (in the sense that \$5 had to respond to it.) In fact Schegloff (1981) posits that it may actually be one function of some BC behaviour to withhold requests for clarification and the like, which he identifies as 'repair'; "uh-huh, nods, and the like, in passing the opportunity to do a full turn at talk, can be seen to be passing an opportunity to initiate repair on the immediately preceding talk." (p88)

However Schegloff himself (1981) argues that BC is needed after a recognitional reference form, like the name of a person or other referent which the speaker thinks the hearer might know. On these occasions the speaker might solicit some sign from the hearer that s/he does know the referent, but when a next action from the hearer is actually requested by the speaker in this manner, it becomes doubtful whether this next action can really be considered to be in the back channel. In one of Schegloff's examples we can see that the hearer's move does receive a response of its own, and as such can be seen to have seized the turn in order to achieve some transactional

purpose, (to find out if W knows who 'Missiz Holmes Ford' is) which, it could be argued, disqualifies it as a piece of BC behaviour:

(4.48)

L. Well I was the only one other than the uhm tch Fords?

I Uh Missiz Holmes Ford? You know uh the the cellist?

[

R W. Oh yes. She's she's the cellist

F L. Yes.

(Example from Schegloff, (1981) p80. See also example 4.5.4 below.)

Similarly sentence completion also takes over the turn, as with the following example, where \$4's contribution has to be acknowledged by \$3 before s/he can begin to go on with the turn:

(4.49)

<\$3> +local local people. <\$=> But but they once once the invading forces got established they would then start <\\$=>

<\$4> Creep up behind them. Yeah.

<\$3> Yeah. <\$=> Cr= you know sort of <\\$=>

(CANCODE No. 70382001)

As Duncan and Niederehe (1974) concede, in these cases it is difficult to tell the difference between backchannelling behaviour and a full speaker turn, especially in the case of longer backchannels. In this way it is arguably one of the principal distinguishing features of the backchannel that BC moves do not make any claim to take over the speaker turn.

Completing a previous speaker's sentence, or restating or repeating all or part of a previous speaker's sentence, also performs the function of allowing the current speaker to collaborate in the development of the discourse topic, thereby showing solidarity or agreement with the previous speaker. However, the question of whether or not minimal BC messages such as 'yeah' or 'uh-huh' indicate that the hearer is not only paying attention to, but also agreeing with the speaker is a debatable but not unimportant one. Ron White, (1997, following Hayashi and Hayashi, 1991) discusses the idea of 'judgmental' and 'non-judgmental' BC. He notes that Japanese people speaking English tend to use BC of the form 'hmm' or other "[judgmental] prompters", whereas Americans tended to use "[+judgmental] reinforcers", such as 'yeah' or 'okay'. He uses Coulthard et al (1981) to back this up, in that, he argues, the Japanese BCs "tend to be acknowledge acts, whereas those of the Americans tend to be accept acts" (White p324). Coulthard et al, however, define an accept act as one which "implies at least minimal understanding of the utterance it accepts" (p25) which is not the same as 'judging' the utterance, i.e. agreeing or disagreeing with it. (In fact, as with Follow-up, a negative 'judgement' or a disagreement, cannot qualify as BC, because, as argued above, it requires a response, whereas true BC, like true Follow-up but for different reasons, does not. See section 4.5.2 on Follow-up, and Hoey (1991) p76 "Negative Follow-up").

Whatever the status of ‘yeah’ etc, there seems to be consensus that some types of BC, minimal utterances such as Mmmm and other non-word vocalisations, are ‘-judgmental’, i.e. do not necessarily indicate agreement.

It can be further argued that they do not always indicate full understanding; White (1997) points out that in his data a move he refers to as a ‘BC cue’, *I see* often appears at the end of rather than within a turn, and implies some understanding on the part of the hearer (p327). That this turn-ending ‘understood’ marker is necessary, despite there having been plenty of BC signals during the turn, shows that BC doesn’t necessarily indicate full understanding, although it does perhaps indicate understanding of each separate phase of the speakers extended turn. (Also see the discussion of Schegloff’s (1981) notion of the ‘continuer’, below). In the following extract \$1 provides regular BC moves throughout \$3’s story, (in lines 2 and 4) until he becomes confused as to the identification of various referents, at which point some Challenging moves are produced (lines 6, 8 and 10). As speakers \$2 and \$3 explain the situation, \$1 provides BC moves (lines 12 and 14) showing that he is following each stage of the explanation, until the whole becomes clear to him, and he produces a full turn acknowledging that fact (line 18).

(4.50)

1 <\$3> Shut the door and went. So me mother gathered me up+

2 <\$1> Mm.

3 <\$3> +and put her coat on.

- 4 <\$1> Yeah.
- 5 <\$3> <\$=> And wai= <\\$=> He expected to find her where he'd left her you see. Anyway+
- 6 <\$1> Who?
- 7 <\$3> +I can remember going up to this house.
- 8 <\$1> <\$=> Who did he expect <\\$=> I I'm lost now. Who did he expect to find where he'd left her?
- 9 <\$2> His wife.
- 10 <\$1> Well where had he left her?
- 11 <\$3> My mother and me.
- 12 <\$1> Yeah. Yeah. Yeah.
- 13 <\$3> He expected to
- 14 <\$1> Yeah.
- 15 <\$3> find us where he'd left us.
- 16 <\$2> With his mother.
- 17 <\$3> With his mother.

18 <\$1> Oh I see. Sorry. And you were with someone else's mother.

(CANCODE No.70402001)

The term 'backchannel' carries with it the implication that discourse can be divided into back channel and main channel, where the main channel can be taken to mean the transactional and relational 'business' of the discourse, while the back channel involves linguistic activity which contributes to the maintenance of the discourse. Tsui (1994) introduces the idea of the 'turn passing act' in which the interactant "is indicating that he has no more to say and wishes to relinquish the floor" (p61). She classifies this as a type of Follow-up move which occurs after one Follow-up move has already been produced, and she further argues that, in certain types of interaction, even the first Follow-up move "serves as a 'turn-passing' signal". This idea of a 'turn passing signal' fits very neatly into the 'discourse maintenance' category of move as described above, and a strong resemblance may be seen between this and Schegloff's (1981) notion of 'continuers'. Schegloff (1981) argues that the uses of BC are context specific: "although appeals to signalling attention, interest, and/or understanding appear equivocal when invoked on behalf of the aggregated occurrence of tokens such as 'uh-huh', 'yeah', and the like removed from their particular environments, such accounts may be viable and strong when introduced for delimited and described cases in which the relevance of these issues *for the parties to the conversation at that point in the talk* can be shown." (p80). However, he does identify general uses for BC moves, and he describes a type of BC move which, he argues, functions to display interlocutors' "understanding, when appropriate, that an extended turn is under way" (ibid, p81). He labels these moves as 'continuers', and argues that they are produced at possible turn completion points. In this way they 'help propel' (p84) an extended turn, or in more specific terms: "The

continuer usage rests on the observation that uh-huh, etc. passes the opportunity to do any sort of fuller turn". (ibid, p87)

Sacks, Schegloff and Jefferson's (1974) concept of 'transition relevance' may help us to differentiate these utterances from other types of BC behaviour. It is not hard to find examples of BC which do not occur in a "possible turn position" (Schegloff 1981, p81), and which consist of minimal utterances, such as non-word vocalisations and 'yes/yeah', 'oh' or 'okay'. Speakers can receive these from their audience in between subordinate clauses where both speaker and backchanneller must be aware that the speaker's turn is ongoing because the speaker has signalled this through his/her use of a subordinator:

(4.51)

<\$2> If I introduced you to a catholic, a practising catholic, [**BCH** <\$1> **Yeah**] wouldn't you make all sorts of assumptions and <16> judgements about that person? <\16>

(Extract from 'religion' text)

Backchannel can also be produced during the brief pauses speakers make due to the natural rhythm of speech, as with the following where the speaker's repetition of the word 'to' shows the analyst that there is a slight falter on the speaker's part here, into which her interlocutor has inserted a Backchannel:

(4.52)

<\$2> +and I haven't got <08> I haven't got the patience [**BCH** <\$1> **Yeah**] <\08>to to prove it.

(Extract from 'religion' text)

and BC can even be produced whilst the speaker is in the process of speaking, (simultaneous talk), as with the following:

(4.53)

<\$2> Yeah well I have faith. [BCH <\$1> Yeah] I've got no way [BCH <\$1> Yeah] of proving it+

(Extract from 'religion' text)

The main function of these minimal types of BC, does appear to be to show attention. Carter and McCarthy (2000) in their paper on response tokens, point out that: "listeners regularly do more than the absolute bare essential, and the 'extra' material found in response moves reveals that respondents orientate as much towards the interactional/relational aspects of the conversation as to the content of the message and the need to keep the backchannel open and to acknowledge incoming talk." (p3)

These possible differences in the discourse function of BC are best expressed as a cline of involvement, i.e., the level to which those producing the BCs can be said to be involved in the development of the discourse, and concurrently may also be said to illustrate the level of conversational involvement their producers express in producing them.

Low involvement

BC signals attention given.



BC implies understanding



BC can indicate judgement/ agreement.



Greater involvement BC can comment on/show reaction to the developing discourse topic.

The lowest level on this cline can be seen to be realised by minimal response tokens (to borrow a term from Carter and McCarthy (2000)) and examples (4.51) to (4.53) are instances of this type of BC. However, as Schegloff (1981) points out, it is unclear why these vocalisations are necessary to show continued attention, why “attention is taken to be problematic in the first place” and cannot be simply taken for granted, or assumed as a result of hearer behaviour such as continued gaze at the speaker (p78). In this way, the ‘discourse maintenance’ function of BC is not enough to explain the presence of this type of BC, nor does it explain why some speakers produce these tokens much more readily than others. For example, in the ‘religion’ text, (see appendix) BC moves of this type are all produced by one of the speakers. (see table below).

BC type.	\$1	\$2
Continuer/turn passer, produced at the end of a free clause or complete sense unit.	7	2
BC at end of a subordinate clause.	3	
BC mid clause/sense unit, or simultaneous with ongoing speech.	4	

Tannen (1989) defines involvement as: “an internal, even emotional connection individuals feel which binds them to other people as well as to places, things, activities, ideas, memories, and words” which is “not a given but an achievement in conversational interaction” (p12) and backchannelling behaviour is one way in which speakers can signal their involvement. BC tokens, because they are indicative of shared understanding, signal the hearer’s participation in the sensemaking of the discourse, and therefore his/her involvement with both the discourse and the speaker. As Tannen says of written texts: “ the more work readers or hearers do to supply meaning, the deeper their understanding and the greater their sense of involvement with both text and author” (ibid, p23). Different speakers have different strategies for signalling their involvement, and it may be that it is part of \$1’s strategy to produce alot of BC moves, which accounts for the above figures. Therefore BC does not function solely to contribute to the transactional business of the discourse by showing that each stage of an extended turn has been heard, understood, or agreed with, but also helps the relational aims of the discourse. In a discussion, (perhaps also in other text types) where often interactants will have to struggle to get and retain the ‘floor’ (Edelsky, 1981) or occupy the speaker turn, in order to get their views expressed, a further relational aim may be achieved through BC: BC moves may contribute to both interactants’ face maintenance, by illustrating the hearer’s willingness to relinquish the floor.

The next level on the cline, BC functioning to show understanding, overlaps with the previous level to a certain extent, but it is at this stage that non-minimal response tokens (Carter and McCarthy, 2000) start to creep in, as with the following:

(4.54)

<\$1> You can have one egg which has been impregnated by a sperm and then divides.

<\$2> **Right.**

<\$1> And it's the last one that makes identical twins.

<\$2> **Right.**

<\$1> So if it's a brother and a sister+

<\$2> **Right.**

<\$1> +it's one of the other two. Always. <\$=> So they're not i= they've got <\\$=> They've gotta be absolutely identical you know. They've gotta be clones of each other.

<\$2> **Right.** <\$E> pause <\\$E> **Mm.**

(CANCODE No. 90505001)

At the next level of involvement, positive agreement takes place, though as with the following extract this need only be agreement with the first stage of an interactant's extended turn, or one part of a speaker's utterance. In the following extract from a discussive text, \$1 is in the middle of an ongoing turn, and produces an exemplification as a 'proof' device (see section) to back up his argument. The other speaker agrees with this exemplification, but not necessarily with the head act of his ongoing turn, the 'point' of his argument (which is that it is better to be able to freely

express your spirituality even if that means disagreeing with members of your own spiritual community):

(4.55)

<\$1> <\$=> Whereas what we c= can say is that what you've we we we had <\\$=> We had lots of discussions when I allowed you to get a word in edgeways. And I mean some of the deep things you were trying to explain feelings within you and we were all struggling to put them into words.

<\$?> <\$H> **Yes we were.** <\\$H>

<\$1> <\$=> But the <\\$=> Only struggled with the words. Did not deny the truth of the feelings within. Now that applies to the spirituality. <\$=> In that in that the spirituality for so= <\\$=> We express it in different ways.

(CANCODE No 90640001)

At the highest level on the cline, it is suggested that BC can comment on, or show reaction to the ongoing speaker turn.

(4.56)

<\$4> I just bent down by this table and to pick up litter and I was standing up and there was this bloke going <\$E> sighs <\\$E> mashing up his speed. <\$E> laughs <\\$E> <\$=> And I <\\$=>

<\$2> **You're kidding.**

<\$4> And I looked at him and then I said <\$H> Do you want any <\\$H> <\$G2>?

(CANCODE No. 70532001)

Schegloff (1981) argued that different bits of BC behaviour are each designed in a detailed way to fit to the ongoing talk by the teller, and 'to fit' may involve either 'co-operating' with what the talk seems designed to get, or withholding (p86). In the above extract \$4's talk seems designed to gain a 'shock' reaction from the speaker; the fact that the speaker continues his turn as if uninterrupted indicates that in the context of this interaction, \$2's response is the expected one, and as such, functions as a BC move.

For the purposes of the present study, it seems expedient to characterise these different types of BC behaviour under the same heading of 'Backchannel tokens', or R3 moves, and to base their identification on (a) their consisting of relatively short, or minimal interjections, (b) their lack of response from the ongoing speaker and (c) that speaker's continuing as if uninterrupted on their turn. However, in one text, 'religion', I have chosen to separate these R3 responses into minimal BC interjections, (and to place these interjections in the transcription as [BCH]), and more complete response tokens which demonstrate a greater level of involvement (transcribed as R3). Having acknowledged their crucial contribution to the transactional and relational meaning of a text and the development of that meaning, I shall nonetheless discard these utterances when analysing the exchange structure of a text. This is because BC tokens do not constitute a move, i.e. they cannot be counted as an element in exchange structure, situated as they are within an ongoing move, where the talk following them is not structurally altered by their production. It is within moves, in move structure, that BC is truly important.

Chapter summary.

In this chapter I have outlined the framework used to analyse the discussive data, and defined each element of structure in turn. In the next chapter I shall be looking at notions of genre, and outlining the view of genre and text types taken by the present study. I shall also be examining the complex problem of delineating what is meant by a 'spoken text'.

Conclusion

This thesis set out to examine several issues:

1. To look at ways to adapt the Sinclair and Coulthard model of discourse to cope with discussive discourse, from the point of view that the kinds of adaptations needed will serve to elucidate the generic structure of discussion. In short, the thesis has attempted to build a viable bridge between exchange structure theory and the notion of genre. The hypothesis was posited that the perceived problems with applying the exchange structure model to types of interaction other than teacher-fronted classroom discourse would turn out to be related to generic differences between the texts the model is used to analyse, rather than a problem with the premises behind the model itself (i.e. the hierarchical organisation of discourse into acts, moves and exchanges). The analyses have, by and large, shown this to be the case, at least that there is a notable tendency for exchange patterns to correlate with generic characteristics.

2. To use the adapted model to analyse and illuminate the nature of discussive discourse, and to show that it has a prototypical exchange structure pattern which can help to distinguish it from other text types. It was found that recursive Response/Initiatory moves, a comparative lack of Follow-up and a very specialised use of Focussing moves was typical of discussive discourse. Recursive Response/Initiatory moves and lack of Follow-up reflect the combative nature of discussion, whilst the way in which Focussing moves are so frequently embodied by Summarising acts tracks the emergent nature of

opinion and argument. At act level, elicitation in discussive discourse was found to reflect persuasive strategies which allow the speaker to assume an attacking stance. In particular the Rhetorical elicit was identified, which was found to be a device whereby interactants signalled the ‘unanswerable’ nature of their reasoning and argument, challenging their interlocutor to provide any reasonable retort.

3. Further, the relative lack of relational behaviour in terms of responding moves coupled with the inherently confrontational nature of some of the acts, and the repeated use of minimal agreement prefaces such as *Yes/yeah but*, illustrated the inherently intellectual or ideational nature of discussion, in that discussion represents a ‘jousting arena’ in which normal rules of politeness can be temporarily suspended (Brown and Levinson 1987). In short, the study has attempted at the structural level to do what, at a broader, pragmatic level, Fraser (1987) outlines as a challenge to Grice’s co-operative principle.

Limitations of the present research.

Any corpus-based research must be read with the constant proviso that a corpus only represents its own contexts of collection, and language-wide generalisations may not be reliable. Corpus size is a continual issue, but is usually only crucial in studies with a lexicographical goal, where the relatively low occurrence of items may demand a corpus of many tens of millions of words. In the present study, quantification is only part of the

picture, and qualitative interpretation benefits from more detailed analysis of smaller amounts of data. Indeed, in many discourse- and conversation analyses, single texts are used to great effect. The present study sees a bonus in having at its disposal the 41,424 words of its corpus, which have made possible the observation of patterns across different data samples and different discussive contexts. However, the range of data is still, necessarily, limited.

In the case of spoken corpora, difficulties not necessarily encountered in written corpora surface. Not least is that of identifying just what does constitute a complete 'text' or 'extract' from a stream of conversational speech. As Atkins *et al* (1992) observe, there are various ways of defining textual characteristics in speech (e.g. the moment interactants come together or part, or the signalling of opening and closing features linguistically, and so on). This problem is ultimately insoluble and depends largely on the researcher's goals. In the present study, every attempt has been made to analyse relatively freestanding extracts, where discussion is initiated, develops and moves to some sort of recognisable resolution or truce/agreement to differ. In the case of the broadcast data, this is less of a difficulty, since the radio programme itself determines its own boundaries, and a feeling of conclusion and completeness is important to listeners, but in the case of the more casual, intimate data, one can never be sure to what extent there are degrees of intertextuality or continuity over time, understood by participants but invisible to the researcher. What is more, the collection of intimate data for spoken corpus based studies is always difficult, and when the chosen area of study concerns a combative and therefore intrinsically face threatening type of interaction, the collection of data becomes all the more challenging, and informants' sensitivities must be

respected inasmuch as they are prepared or not, as the case may be, to release data. The CANCODE corpus and the mini-corpus derived from it was not immune from such difficulties, and in an ideal world would have sought a wider variety of data (in the sense of the identity of the participants) from the intimate end of the data collection matrix. However, within these limitations, the data has proved to be a rich source of information on how ordinary conversational partners discuss issues, alongside the more 'professional' arguments engaged in on radio discussion.

One cause for concern in any study like the present one is the necessary subjectivity of any labelling system which attempts to attribute functions to forms. Although formal features such as grammar and lexis may help to signal the kind of move or discourse act being produced, and also the analyst is working within the confines of a model which has been described as exhaustively as possible, ultimately it remains the decision of the analyst as to how to label each utterance. To do this, a considerable interpretive effort is involved, with co-text and context exploited to the maximum; but ultimately, as Widdowson (2000) has argued, the task of recontextualising conversation uprooted from its original context of utterance is a massive challenge. Although the analyst's own lifetime of experience of being a participant in interaction may arguably be helpful in this process, this subjective element contributes to a reduced empiricism in the analysis. In the final analysis, decisions concerning labelling are a composite of textual and contextual evidence, an overlay of human experience and reliance on the research of others, whose collective voices point to agreed modes of interpretation.

Directions for further research.

In the course of analysing the data for the present study some interesting exchange structure patterns were noticed which appeared to correspond with changes in the discourse on the cline of transactional → relational. Transactional discourse, primarily concerned with the imparting of information, goods and services, has a clearer I→R→F or I→R structure, depending on whether the exchange involves elicitation or informatives. An interesting direction for further research might therefore involve applying the Sinclair and Coulthard model to interactions in contexts such as travel agencies, where it might be possible to track the emergence of transactional and relational goals using exchange structure analysis. Yläne-McEwen (1997) has already shown the importance of the relational dimension in travel agency encounters, but a parallel study along the lines of the present research could offer added insights to our understanding of how relational elements are negotiated and emerge in the exchange as a unit of discourse.

In the present study, some lexico-grammatical elements have been singled out as crucial to the signalling of the functions of discussive moves, for example *yes/yeah but*, *Well*, *I'm/you're saying*, *to me* or *I find*. Quite clearly more work could be done at the lexico-grammatical level which is beyond the scope and space limits of the present thesis. *Well* has long been considered a key discourse marking item in modifying and shifting speakers' perspectives (see Lakoff 1973; Owen 1981; Schiffrin 1985), but other items remain to be more closely investigated. Capone's (1993) study of *obviously* in the

London-Lund corpus is one such study; he convincingly argues that *obviously* correlates with a concessive function. Many of the ‘modal’ and stance adverbs of this kind would undoubtedly yield support at the lexico-grammatical level for a higher-level description of discussive discourse. Similarly, Lee and Peck’s (1993) study of rows and arguments in an Australian TV fly-on-the-wall documentary notes the importance of ‘modalising’ remarks to protect face in this more raucous kind of conflict. Such studies would be considerably enhanced by a robust corpus of data, where quantification at item level might usefully support qualitative interpretation and structural labelling.

Finally, an exchange-oriented study such as the present one does not exhaust the possibility of structural or pattern-based description, and the work on adjacency and preference organisation within the conversation analysis (CA) tradition also has much to offer for potential research into discussive data. Kotthoff’s (1993) study of disagreements and concessions focuses on preference organisation and suggests, once again, possible further investigations where a corpus could add the sizeable power of a large amount of relevant data to the CA research paradigm.

Implications and applications of the study.

Discussion and argumentation has been a neglected field in pedagogy. In Britain there have been isolated projects aimed at improving spoken argumentation amongst learners, (see Andrews et al, 1993). However for the most part argumentative techniques and

practices are not taught in either primary or secondary schools, nor in the language classroom, despite the fact that argumentation is an important social skill. Exercises involving the use of some of the discourse acts and argumentative strategies outlined in this thesis might be useful in the development of these skills, or, at the very least, exposure to what is perceived as typical, skilled argumentation, whether in the form of broadcast data or spontaneous conversational data (edited or unedited), could be seen to be useful in raising awareness of the pervasive nature of the genre in public and private interaction.

In second language pedagogy, a similar lack of engagement can be perceived on the spoken side. The long rhetorical and discourse tradition epitomised in the paradigms of LSP (languages for specific purposes) teaching and realised in journals such as *ESP Journal*, alongside the considerable work on the presentation of fact, opinion and stance in academic genres (see, above all, Swales 1990), has not, so far, been matched by frameworks for pedagogy in spoken language. Similarly, the considerable work on genres in Australia (in both first and second language contexts) has provided much invaluable insight into argumentation in writing (see Hammond and Deriewanka 2001 for a useful brief overview), and while debate still continues as to the direct educational benefit of implementing such insights in the classroom, one could envisage at least the possibility of similar programmes in the spoken domain, or at least more research into educational contexts of argumentation. Baynham's (1996) work on the rhetoric of the classroom is an interesting pointer for such research. What is not in dispute is the ubiquitousness of the 'discussion' lesson in second language syllabuses, and teachers around the world constantly engage in trying to promote debate and argumentation

amongst often unresponsive learners. Task-based approaches offer some prospects for building in more realistic conditions for opinion exchange in the second language classroom, and activities such as Robinson's (1998) consensus-reaching task could perhaps be developed into more contentious areas of opinion exchange and discussion. Apart from such direct intervention, there is much to be said simply for exposing learners to as wide a variety of spoken data as possible, including naturally-occurring discussion. Carter and McCarthy (1997) offer some examples of this which could be developed further within the more specialised domain of discussive discourse. Overall, much remains to be done on the second language side, and it is hoped that the present study can make a small descriptive contribution in this direction.

On a personal note, I have always enjoyed participating in discussion, and in the process of writing this research I have learned a great deal about the techniques and strategies involved. I feel very strongly that it is important to be able to 'hold your own' in an argument, partially from the perspective that we are thereby able to defend views in which we may believe passionately, and perhaps even persuade others round to our viewpoint. Equally important though, is the perspective that it is through participating in discussion that we are able to develop our opinions in the first place. In a Vygotskian sense, opinions are formed and exist in 'social space'. Costello (1995) talks about the importance of teaching argumentation in schools in order to "extend children's voices" (p114) where 'voice' is taken to mean the child's ability and desire to participate in different types of discourse. A lack of ability in discussion is, in my view, disempowering; and it also deprives its possessor of a highly enjoyable linguistic 'game' through which it is possible to gain important introspective insights.

Sample of analysis from 'religion' text.

<\$2> Do you believe that in the atom do you believe that the atom exists? <pause>	R/I	EI 1
<\$1> Evidence exists to say that the atom exists yes.	R	Rep
<\$2> So you believe in the atom [BCH <\$1> Mmm] because you've heard say <02>that the atom exists? <\02>	I	EI 2
<\$1> <02>And there er <\02>are there are repeatable experiments that I can do in order to verify	R	Rep
<\$2> But have you done them?	I	EI 4
<\$1> No, but I can do them.	R/I	Inf 2
<\$2> How d'you know you can?	R/I	EI 1b
<\$1> Because I can. Because I've studied other laws that back up the theory behind+	R	Rep
<\$2> But you've never actually seen an atom and you haven't got any personal proof that an atom exists.	I	Inf 6
<\$1> I've had no <03> personal experience of <\03>an atom.	R	Acc
<\$3> <03>But its provable<\03>	I	Inf 4
<\$1> But its provable.	R	Acc
<\$2> Why, how do you know that, because somebody's told you its <04> provable? <\04>	R/I	EI 1b
<\$3> <04> No because<\04>	(int)	
<\$1> No <04> because <\04> I've worked it out for myself. I've gone through, I've I've looked at the da- y'know I've looked at the the theory behind it and I've looked at the y'know lots of other mathematical theory, observational er experimental theory and there's so much else that rides on the back of this that you can verify and things like that that <pause>	R	Rep
<\$2> I believe in the atom.	I	Inf 2
<\$1> Yeah	R3	
<\$2> I believe that y'know the world is full of little electronic particles [BCH <\$1> Yeah] and I don't have any way of proving it, I just believe it [BCH <\$1> Right] because I've heard say <\05>in my Chemistry class <\05> so I am practising hear say	I cont'd	Cont'd
<\$1> <05> Okay let's say let's<\05> <06> so that that's faith<\06>	R/I	Inf 6
<\$2> <06> I'm believing in something <\06> yeah, I am having faith that the people who tell me that the world is made of atoms are telling me the truth and some gut feeling tells me that its real its true.	R/I	Inf 2
<\$1> Yeah	R	Acc
<\$2> But I am doing the same as you say religious people are doing	I	Inf 4

they're just believing they're just thinking <07>well some<07> enough people have told me		
<\$1> <06>No but they they have faith <07>	R/I	Inf 4
<\$2> Yeah well I have faith. [BCH <\$1> Yeah] I've got no way [BCH <\$1> Yeah] of proving it+	R/I	Inf 2
<\$3> You have.	C (quality) (Ignored)	Inf 5
<\$2> +and I haven't got <08> I haven't got the patience [BCH <\$1> Yeah] <08>to to prove it.	R/I cont'd	Cont'd
<\$3> <08>Jason can tell you.<08>	C cont'd, ignored	
<\$1> But no <09> one can prove<09> <10> research. <10>	R/I	Inf 4
<\$2> <09> I'm not even bothered<09> about <10> proving<10> it. I'm quite happy just to believe in it.	R/I	Inf 2
<\$1> But do you accept that pe- that s- that that that people exist which can prove the existence of atoms I mean erm	R/I	EI 3
<\$2> Yes because I have faith, <11>what what makes you believe <11> that people can <12> do that? <12>	R I	Rep EI 4
<\$1> <11> What I no no no er<11> <12> no I mean <12> what I'm trying to make a distinction between is the idea of faith and the idea of belief and how religion is wholly about belief whereas and you and your and your personal framework yeah I mean there could be a certain amount of erm faith in there but erm y'know somewhere er somewhere down the line in the world there exists people who can+	R/I (focus)	Inf 6
<\$2> So what if someone has a religious experience that makes them believe, they've had a very physical experience that convinces <13> them<13>	R/I	Inf 4
<\$3> <13> <G?> they believe <13> that. Its not true. Its not repeatable.	R/I	Inf 1
<\$2> No just because its not repeatable doesn't mean it didn't happen though. <pause> There are lots of things that aren't repeatable but they still happened.	R/I	Inf 4
<\$1> Sorry <14> er er I missed I missed the <14>	C (KS 2) (ignored)	Inf 5
<\$2> <14> I can't repeat y'know <14> I can't repeat being born, but you all three of you believe that I was born, don't you?	R/I cont'd	EI 3
<\$1> Yes. So where does this fit in with the idea of religion and+	R/I	EI 1b
<\$2> That people have experiences, religious experiences and they believe because of those experiences, they think [BCH <\$1> Yeah] that's the proof I need.	R/I	Inf 4
<\$1> Yeah. Yeah, alot of the things that are cited when I'm talking to people who have caught religion of whatever persuasion erm they alot of people have quoted the bible and said Oh, this has happened, Jesus said this, Jesus said that, this this that and believe implicitly that that because I don't believe in Jesus or God that I'm going to hell and I'm a sinner. And	R/I	Inf 3

<p>y'know people have said that to my face. Yet what they base their assumption on is the the it er er their b- er their faith on er y'know what the whole basis of what they're saying to me is based on a book who they don't know who wrote it they don't know when it was wrote they don't know how many times its been edited since it was wrote and again I find it quite amazing that people are judging me saying that I'm a sinner and I'm evil and I'm bad because I don't think in a certain way and I, I'm not as good as them because I don't think in a certain way</p>		
<p><\$2> But don't we all <15> make judgements constantly <\15></p>	R/I	El 4
<p><\$1> <15> But in in a in a completely <\15> not that strongly I just because</p>	R	Rep
<p><\$2> If I introduced you to a catholic, a practising catholic, [BCH <\$1> Yeah] wouldn't you make all sorts of assumptions and <16> judgements about that person? <\16></p>	I	El 4
<p><\$1> <16> Because that that er that's the nature of <\16> that's the nature of of who we are but I don't m- I make assumptions and judgements on them through my own personal beli- er er experiences not on something that I've read in a book somewhere that I know very little about, and I'm quite prepared to revise those judgements within the minute that I meet them <pause></p>	R/I	Inf 2
<p><\$2> For the tape Paula is laughing at the naivety of the scientist</p>	R/I	Inf 1b
<p><\$1> What why what come on why's it naïve what's the</p>	R/I	El 1b
<p><\$2> Because you're assuming that unless something can be proven then its not legitimate <17> and its not real <\17> and there's no <18> truth in it<\18></p>	R	Rep
<p><\$1> <17> No I don't no <\17> <18> No I'm not saying <\18> that at all you're inferring that</p>	R/I	Inf 6
<p><\$2> But your whole argument is based on whether something can be proved or not.</p>	R/I	Inf 6
<p><\$4> No, that's mine.</p>	C (quality)	Inf 6
<p><\$2> <Laughs></p>	R	Acc
<p><\$1> No, erm, what I'm saying</p>	(int)	
<p><\$4> The basis of <19> science is fiction<\19></p>	I (ignored)	
<p><\$1> <19> what I'm say, <\19> what I'm saying is that's again, I mean y'know I mean somebody's judging me on something that is I find quite offensive whereas my judgements on somebody could be based y'know Oh on my y'know my own experiences I mean somebody's judging on er me about something about something that they've been told by somebody else that erm I mean y'know it can be the same with with racism racism is the same er a similar sort of thing they're judging somebody almost terminally so, fatally so, erm on something that they've heard or been told or th- that they rationally believe <20> about another race <\20></p>	I	Inf 2
<p><\$2> <20>But we all do that<\20> we <21> all do that<\21></p>	R/I	Inf 4
<p><\$1> <21> Not to such an extent <\21> I mean yeah the world is y'know,</p>	R/I	Inf 2

is full of greys we all judge people but not to such an terminal way I mean I wouldn't condemn someone to everlasting evil, or y'know, damnation just because they don't believe in the law of gravity which is what <22> Christianity or religion <22> has done		
<\$2> <22>No but you might <22> but you might have, you can accept that you have prejudices prejudice within you	R/I	El 3
<\$1> Oh yeah there are certain people that <23> I dislike, there are certain people that I hate <23>	R	Acc
<\$2> <23> And you will make assumptions about people, <23> and treat them <24> a certain way <24> won't you?	I	El 3
<\$1> <24> Well because I know them <24> there are certain people that I do hate but because I know them, not because of what they might believe in. I don't I don't condemn somebody for their belief, I condemn somebody for their actions and what they've done.	R	Rep
<\$2> What about if you meet somebody that you don't know, you're saying that you meet them and they're just a clean palette to you, you have made no <25> assumptions about them? <25>	I	El 2
<\$1> <25>No no I infer things <25> it's a yeah I mean there's there's a certain amount of black and white that's been, I mean there's extremes, I mean I don't yeah, I mean of course I like meet somebody and think	R	Rep
<\$2> If you see somebody crying on the street and it's a man [BCH <\$1> Yeah] you will infer different things and treat him differently, to if you see a woman crying on the street I'm sure	I	Inf 4
<\$1> Yeah, I'm not I'm not saying that <26> I'm completely without <26>	R	Acc
<\$2> <26>We all when we <26> come across people make assumptions <27> about them <27>	I	Inf 4
<\$1> <27> Of course we <27> do	R	Acc
<\$2> And if Christians believe, if a Christian believes that you will go to hell if you're not if you don't believe in God +	I	Inf 4
<\$1> No they have faith in that	R/I	Inf 4
<\$2> + <28> then they're just <28>	(ignored) C (KS 1)	Inf 4 cont'd
<\$1> <28> They don't believe, <28> I mean there's a	Re-I	Inf 4
<\$2> It's the same thing.	C (L 6)	Inf 5
<\$1> No it isn't, belief and faith is very different.	C (L 6)	Inf 5
<\$2> Well I'd say faith is a subset of belief.	R/I	Inf 1
<\$1> No.	R/I	Inf 1
<\$2> But the point I'm trying to make is that we all walk round with a set of prejudices and ideas about people [BCH <\$1> Uh-huh] and we will make assumptions when we meet people <29> regardless of <29> what, y'know, what <30> we know about them.<30>	I focus	Inf 6

<p><\$1> <29>Of course we will. <\29> <30> Oh I don't deny that. <\30> <31> I'm talking about the degree <\31></p>	R	Acc
<p><\$2> And so if somebody meets you <31> and says, I think <\31> you're going to hell, that's based on their ideas of, they're not willing you to go to hell, they may be <32>saying because they <\32></p>	I	Inf 6 cont'd
<p><\$1> <32> But that's not <\32> based on their own personal experiences, that's what I'm saying, that 's the difference that I'm making.</p>	R (focus)	Inf 6
<p><\$4> If a scientist says to you if you keep smoking you may catch cancer, he can prove that <33> but if someone says to you if you keep <\33></p>	I	Inf 4
<p><\$2> <33> So if a scientist says to you its perfectly <\33> healthy to eat British beef, we should just believe them because they've obviously proved it?</p>	R/I	EI 4
<p>H, J & N <simultaneous grumbling></p>		
<p><\$3> That's not science</p>	R/I	Inf 1
<p><\$4>. That's not science, that's somebody issuing a statement without backing it up with evidence</p>	R/I	Inf 1
<p><\$1> That's a politician speaking.</p>	R/I (1)	Inf 1
<p><\$2> But science has to back track constantly and <34> make claims <\34> +</p>	R/I (2)	Inf 4
<p><\$1> <34> Yeah that's a politician, <\34> that's that's a</p>	R/I (1)	Cont'd
<p><\$2> +science issues decrees and they say we have proved this,+</p>	R/I (2)	Inf 4 cont'd
<p><\$3> But we haven't proved it</p>	R/I	
<p><\$2> +and then they'll say we thought we'd proved it <35>but in actual fact we now realise this <\35></p>	(ignored) C (KS 1)	Inf 4 cont'd
<p><\$3> <35> When science is testing <G?><\35></p>	Re-I (int)	
<p><\$1> No no no I think that's more that's more er a result of er how people perceive science sometimes as a set of absolute truths and it isn't a set of absolute truths its far from it and a scientist wont <36>have<\36></p>	R/I	Inf 1
<p><\$2> <36> It can be <\36> absolutely wrong <37>sometimes <\37></p>	R/I	Inf 4
<p><\$1> <37> Well it yeah <\37> <38> Yeah it can be <\38></p>	R	Acc

Sample of analysis from CANCODE No.90505001.

<\$1> You think that if I was cloned+	I	EI 2
<\$2> Mhm.	R3	
<\$1> +and put somewhere else I'd be capable of working at Burger King for all my life and be content.	I cont'd	Cont'd
<\$2> Maybe.	R	Rep
<\$1> <\$E> sighs <\\$E>	I	Inf 1b
<\$2> <\$H> You don't know that. <\\$H> I think there's just some little thing in everyone that's just different. And maybe there always will be. Maybe the the human body will just advance just to keep that little thing out of reach <\$O1> of <\$G2> <\\$O1>.	R/I	Inf 1
<\$1> <\$O1> Oh. As in <\$=> we're <\\$O1> racing <\\$=> the human body is racing the geneticists.	R/I	Inf 1
<\$2> How do you know what's going on.	C (L 5)	EI 4
<\$1> Well now you're starting to get spiritual.	Re-I	Inf 1b
<\$2> What's wrong with that?	R/I	EI 1
<\$1> Well nothing's wrong with that. I'd love to agree with you. I'd love for there to be some fundamental characteristic of us which was just us. But I think <\$=> if if you <\\$=> if I was cloned and taken somewhere else whatever else I went through I wouldn't be capable of doing some mindless repetitive task. I'd <\$O2> go out of my mind <\\$O2>.	R/I	Inf 1
<\$2> <\$O2> You yourself. <\\$O2> Yeah. You yourself. Or the person that's been cloned from you?	C (KS 3)	EI 1
<\$1> No. They're a clone.	R	Rep
<\$2> They're a clone physically.	C (KS 3)	EI 3
<\$1> And mentally. They're exact copy <\$O3> and replica <\\$O3> of me.	R	Rep
<\$2> <\$=> <\$O3> In men= <\\$O3> maybe in <\\$=> I don't know about mentally.	I	Inf 1
<\$1> Yeah. <\$=> But that <\\$=> Maybe that's where we disagree. Because I think that if you took someone and actually cloned them exactly they end up being physically and mentally exactly the same. And <\$O4> that maybe <\$=> your <\\$=> <\\$O4> their expectations differ.	R/I	Inf 1
<\$2> <\$O4> But it can't be that. <\\$O4> I don't <\$O5> think it can be that <\$G2> <\\$O5>.	R/I	Inf 1
<\$1> <\$=> <\$O5> If you brought someone up in a <\\$O5> say er <\\$=> Say er the clone of me was brought up in a family where all their family had worked at Burger King since the beginning of time and their parents both work at Burger King and their brothers and sisters <\$=> both work <\\$=> all work at Burger King and here's me living this life. So the person is probably going to think that she's going to end up working at Burger King. But <\$=> er I <\\$=> you know her expectations might be different but she's	R/I	Inf 4

gonna be enough me not to be able to manage that I'm sure.		
<\$2> I don't know. That's why I just keep thinking you've got this little thing inside you that <\$E> pause <\\$E> that's just different. <\$O6> You just can't clone it. <\\$O6>	R/I	Inf 1
<\$1> <\$O6> But you've got to admit <\\$O6> that the possibility that I'm right is also true. <\$=> I mean you <\$O7> you you cannot say <\\$O7> <\\$=>	R/I	El 3
<\$2> <\$O7> Well yeah. Possibly it's quite <\\$O7> true yeah. I don't know like there's no proof.	R	Rep
<\$1> Well there's no proof.	R	Acc
<\$2> There's no proof whatsoever. There's no proof that people can clone someone exactly the same.	I	Inf 4
<\$1> Well they can clone sheep already.	R/I	Inf 4
<\$2> You can clone sheep <\$=> in the <\\$=> in the fact that they'll breed the same and they'll they'll come out the same <\$O8> <\$H> beautiful <\\$H> stock. <\$=> And like <\\$=> <\\$O8>	R/I	Inf 4
<\$1> <\$=> <\$O8> Well they come out the same genetic <\\$O8> they come out the same <\\$=> D N A <\$O9> looks exactly the same <\\$O9>.	R/I (ignored)	Inf 4
<\$2> <\$O9> Be able to sell them at <\\$O9> forty five pounds a pound <\$O10> or whatever or something ridiculous <\\$O10>.	C (KS 1)	Inf 4 cont'd
<\$1> <\$O10> The D N A looks exactly <\\$O10> the same. The sheep looks exactly the same. The sheep is exactly the same.	Re-I	Inf 4
<\$2> But does it do the same thing? <\$=> Does it wander round the field <\$O11> thinking <\\$O11> <\\$=>	R/I	El 4
<\$1> <\$O11> Oh we <\\$O11> we aren't gonna know the answer to that question <\$O12> until we've cloned a human <\\$O12>.	C (L 12)	Inf 5
<\$2> <\$O12> I know. That's what I'm saying. We don't <\\$O12> know. No. <\$O13> What I'm saying is <\$=> looking at even looking at <\\$=> <\\$O13>+	R/I	Inf 6
<\$1> <\$=> <\$O13> But I mean are we going to ever <\\$O13> go t= <\$O14> to the extent <\\$O14> <\\$=>	(int)	
<\$2> +<\$O14> even looking at a <\\$O14> sheep does that sheep wander round the field thinking Oh that grass over there looks nice and the other s= er sh= sheep that's been cloned the same thinking Ooh that bit of grass over there looks nice. And they go over there and they're both chomping at the same grass. They're fighting each <\$O15> other to get the <\\$O15> same <\$=> bit of <\\$=> blade of grass cos they both think it's nice.	R/I cont'd	Cont'd
<\$1> <\$O15> <\$E> laughs <\\$E> <\\$O15> But we don't know what sheep's minds are like.	C (L5/6)	Inf 5
<\$2> Well I know. <\$=> But that's exactly <\\$=> <\$O16> It's the same with humans. <\\$O16>	R/I	Inf 1
<\$1> <\$O16> We do know what humans' <\\$O16> minds are <\$O17> like	R/I	Inf 1

<\\$O17>.		
<\$2> <\$O17> We do <\\$O17> not.	R/I	Inf 1
<\$1> Well we do because <\$O18> we are human <\\$O18>.	R/I	Inf 3
<\$2> <\$O18> We don't. <\\$O18>	R/I	Inf 1
<\$1> No we do because we're human right.	R/I	Inf 3
<\$2> We <\$O19> haven't got a clue <\\$O19>.	R/I	Inf 3
<\$1> <\$O19> <=> You're saying <\\$=> <\\$O19> Yeah but y= you're you're going through the thought process of a sheep as if you had any grasp of what a sheep might think.	R/I	Inf 1b
<\$2> I know. <=> But I'm <\\$=>	R (ignored)	Acc
<\$1> As if a sheep might look at a piece of grass and think Ooh that looks nice. I'll go over there and chew that. <\$O20> You don't know what they're thinking. <\\$O20>	R/I cont'd	Inf 1b cont'd
<\$2> <\$O20> Right then. Let's get back to this <\\$O20> Burger King thing. Burger King right. <\$H> There are <\\$H> two sheep in a field right.	I focus	Inf 3
<\$1> <\$E> laughs <\\$E>	R	Acc
<\$2> One sheep's wandering in the field. These two cloned sheeps wandering round.	I	Inf 3
<\$1> Yeah.	R 3	
<\$2> One of them sees a bit of grass over the other side. Absolutely beautiful plush grass. No one's stood on it shit on it or anything. That sheep thinks Ooh look at that grass over there runs over to it starts eating it. The other one that's cloned exactly the same looks round the field and think Ooh that bit of grass over there. I'm gonna do that. That's mine. I'm going for it now. And they're both racing over to the bit of grass. Whereas the other sheep might just think Oh I'll just wander over and have this grass <\$O21> here. Just <\\$O21> nibble on this bit right next to a fucking horse's shit or <\$O22> something like that <\\$O22>.	I cont'd	Cont'd
<\$1> <\$O21> <\$E> laughs <\\$E> <\\$O21> <\$O22> <\$E> laughs <\\$E> <\\$O22> <\$O23> Yes but that's what I'm saying. We don't know <\\$O23> how a m= <\$O24> a sheep's mind <\\$O24> works.	R/I (ignored)	
<\$2> <\$O23> <=> And that <\\$=> So that sheep there is content. <\\$O23> <\$O24> <=> That sheep <\\$=> <\\$O24> That sheep is <=> c= a cloned <\\$=> a cloned sheep of the other one. A clone of the other one. It's eating a bit of grass here. The other one's eating some beautiful grass over the other side. In the same way that you say you couldn't work in <\$O25> Burger King <\\$O25>.	I cont'd	Cont'd
<\$1> <\$O25> No. But <\\$O25> that's that's what I'm saying. You can't draw that simile. You can't draw that comparison <\$O26> because you don't know how <\\$O26> a sheep's mind <\$O27> works. <=> We don't know <\\$=> <\\$O27>	C (L.6)	Inf 6
<\$2> <\$O26> What between sheep and humans. <\\$O26> <\$O27> But we don't know. <\$E> laughs <\\$E> <\\$O27> We don't know how human minds	C (L 6)	Inf 6

<p><\$O28> work. That's what I'm saying. <\\$O28></p>		
<p><\$1> <\$O28> Yeah. <=> We <\\$=> I know <\\$O28> <=> in my <\\$=> how my mind works. <\$O29> And I am conjecturing <\\$O29> right. <=> I am projecting <\$O30> that <\\$O30> <\\$=></p>	R/I	Inf 6
<p><\$2> <\$O29> <=> Yeah that's what <\\$=> I know you do. <\\$O29> <\$O30> So I'm <\\$O30> saying there's always <\$O31> something <\\$O31>.</p>	(Int)	
<p><\$1> <\$O31> Well wait. <\\$O31> Let me finish right. <=> <\$O32> I'm proj= I'm I'm <\\$O32> p= projecting that a clone of mine <\\$=> My hypothesis is that a clone of mine wouldn't be able to work at Burger King right.</p>	R/I cont'd	Cont'd
<p><\$2> <\$O32> <\$E> laughs <\\$E> I'm not even started. <=> I mean <\\$=> <\\$O32></p>	R/I Ignored	Cont'd
<p><\$1> <=> And your s= you're trying to compare that with+</p>	R/I cont'd	Inf 6
<p><\$2> And I'm disagreeing.</p>	R/I (ignored)	
<p><\$1> +does a sheep <\\$=> I mean because we don't know how a sheep's mind works. We don't know if sheep habitually walk round fields thinking Oh that looks like <=> a pie= <\\$=> a good piece of grass. We don't know w= what motivates them to do anything. We cannot get inside sheep's minds. So if you've got two sheep you can't say Oh that one is mentally the same as that one because they've both gone for that bit of grass <=> or they have er <\\$=> or they're different because they haven't. <\$O33> Because <\\$O33> we don't know how sheep's minds work.</p>	R/I cont'd	Cont'd
<p><\$2> <\$O33> Yeah. <\\$O33></p>	R 3	
<p><\$1> <\$O34> And it's not <\\$O34> until someone makes <\$O35> a clone <\\$O35> of me and that girl can or cannot work at Burger King that we can establish whether or not <=> they're <\\$=> we are mentally the same.</p>	R/I cont'd	Cont'd
<p><\$2> <\$O34> Yeah. <=> But we don't <\\$O34> <\$O35> we don't <\\$O35> <\\$=></p>	R 3 (I int)	
<p><\$1> Do you know what I mean?</p>	R/I cont'd	Cont'd
<p><\$2> Yeah. <=> But er that sounds <\\$=> I know. But like they haven't been <\$H> able to <\\$H> like clone humans yet.</p>	R I	Rep Inf 4
<p><\$1> Yeah. Well no they haven't. So well you can't prove anything+</p>	R/I	Inf 4
<p><\$2> I know. Well <\$O36> there's <\\$O36> there's just no proof.</p>	R	Acc

Sample of analysis from CANCODE No.90503002. The interactants are discussing the reasons why people have children, and have previously been talking about the things that can go wrong in childbirth, and various negative things about children: now \$1 brings the discussion back to the search for any positive aspects of starting a family.

<p><\$1> Yeah but say say if it was healthy. Why do people do it? It suddenly made me question why anyone does it. Thinking about <\$O41> it <\\$O41> in terms of that you're taking a big risk. <\$=> That it could be <\\$=></p>	<p>R/I (Focus)</p>	<p>El 4</p>
<p><\$2> <\$O41> Mm. <\\$O41> <\$E> laughs <\\$E> I'm sure a lot of people don't think about the risk involved. They just fancy having children.</p>	<p>R/I</p>	<p>Inf 4</p>
<p><\$1> <\$=> Oh like yeah but <\\$=></p>	<p>(int)</p>	
<p><\$2> Some= someone they can share things with as they're getting older. See them grow up.</p>	<p>R/I cont'd</p>	<p>Cont'd</p>
<p><\$1> Why? Yeah but why is it good to see them grow up?</p>	<p>R/I</p>	<p>El 1b</p>
<p><\$2> Well the same reason I enjoy going round to Helen's and playing with Libby and Daniel.</p>	<p>R</p>	<p>Rep</p>
<p><\$1> Because you get <\$O42> a kick out of being with little kids. But <\$=> they <\\$O42> get but you're <\\$=> like you <\$O43> say they're not your kids <\\$O43>.</p>	<p>F I</p>	<p>Ack Inf 6</p>
<p><\$2> <\$O42> Just really enjoyable. <\$=> You're getting <\\$O42> <\$O43> you're getting something</p>	<p>Trying to I and being ignored</p>	
<p><\\$O43> <\\$=> Well yeah but you're getting something back from them. Erm.</p>	<p>R/I</p>	<p>Inf 1</p>
<p><\$1> What are you getting back from them?</p>	<p>R/I</p>	<p>El 1b</p>
<p><\$2> Well just a response. <\$=> Even a basic like <\\$=> You're just getting a response back from them. But they just really really <\$=> as er <\\$=> look as though they wanna learn. Whatever you're doing they're interested in.</p>	<p>R</p>	<p>Rep</p>
<p><\$1> <\$=> Yeah but you could say you could say that you could have+</p>	<p>R/I (int)</p>	<p>Inf 1</p>
<p><\$2> You <\$O44> feel like you're teaching them something <\\$O44>.</p>	<p>R cont'd</p>	<p>Cont'd</p>
<p><\$1> +<\$O44> like a child <\\$O44> <\\$=> <\$=> No but you could say that you could like turn some child or you know make some offspring and as long as it was willing to learn <\\$=> It's not just that they're willing to learn that you have them is it. <\$=> That that <\\$=></p>	<p>R/I cont'd</p>	<p>Cont'd</p>
<p><\$2> No <\$O45> <\$=> I wasn't saying <\\$=> I'm sure I wasn't <\\$O45> saying that.</p>	<p>R/I</p>	<p>Inf 6</p>
<p><\$1> <\$O45> Like that they're so impressionable. <\$=> Or <\\$=> <\\$O45></p>	<p>R/I cont'd</p>	<p>Cont'd</p>
<p><\$2> That it's just because they were willing to learn. <\$=> I'm saying <\$O46> <\$E> loud background noise <\\$E> <\$G?> I'm saying that's <\\$=> <\\$O46></p>	<p>R/I cont'd</p>	<p>Cont'd</p>
<p><\$1> <\$O46> Well what is it that you get out of <\\$O46> interacting with kids?</p>	<p>R/I</p>	<p>El 1b</p>
<p><\$E> pause <\\$E></p>		
<p><\$2> No I thought you were saying then that's why you have children because they're willing to learn. That's not <\$O47> it at all. I'm saying I enjoy <\\$O47> going round to like Helen's because they're just so interested in whatever you do. <\$=> And just er it's as though they look up to you and <\\$=></p>	<p>R/I focus</p>	<p>Inf 6</p>
		<p>Inf 6</p>

<p><\$1> <\$O47> No. No. <=> I'm saying what is it <=> <\$O47> Yeah but you've just repeated what I've said. <=> I'm saying right that you have kids because you enjoy interacting with them in so= on some level like you enjoy going around <=> Er like er that's why I think that you would enjoy having kids even though you say that you wouldn't. It's because you love going round and playing with Libby and stuff.</p>	R/I	
<p><\$2> Yes. Financially I wouldn't. <E> laughs <E></p>	R I	Acc Inf 2
<p><\$1> Yeah I know. But</p>	R	Ack
<p><\$2> Fucking nightmare.</p>	R/I	Inf 1
<p><\$1> Yeah but I mean <\$H> well <\$H> say we were like financially set up. That's why we don't want them now cos we+</p>	R/I	Inf 4
<p><\$2> Yeah I <\$O48> would have kids <=> if I was like <=> <\$O48> if I <\$H> earned <\$H> a lot of money I would have kids.</p>	R	Acc
<p><\$1> +<\$O48> we've got things to do. <\$O48> <E> yawns <E> Well we will have a reasonable amount of money at some point <\$O49> in our lives surely <\$O49>.</p>	R/I	Inf 1
<p><\$2> <\$O49> At the moment I can't even <\$O49> afford to keep <\$O50> myself going <\$O50>.</p>	R/I	Inf 1
<p><\$1> <\$O50> Well obviously <\$O50> now. But <=> say you so s= <=> even if you had all this money still what's the point of having a child? <=> What do y= <=> I mean it's like you you start thinking about it in terms of what you get out of it. And most people don't think like that about kids though do they. They think somehow that you've got to f= put the child first. But before you have the child it's just like in your own mind so in a way before you have the child you're thinking about what you're gonna get out of it really aren't you. I mean you don't have a child for the child's benefit because <=> you haven't <=> it's not even there yet. It's not even a real thing yet. When you start thinking about having the child <\$O51> it's not <\$O51> even alive.</p>	R I	Acc Inf 1
<p><\$2> <\$O51> Yeah. <\$O51></p>	R3	
<p><\$1> So it's all to do with what you think and what you want and do you want a child. It's a selfish thing first of all unless it's unplanned like everyone seems to be unplanned that we know.</p>	I cont'd	Cont'd
<p><\$2> Mm.</p>	R3	
<p><\$1> Cos then <=> when you <=> when you have an unplanned pregnancy <=> then you're thinking <=> then you're sort of thinking well I've got to go through an operation and maybe it's a live thing and you start thinking guilt thoughts about this could be a person and have <\$O52> I got the <\$O52> right to deny it its life and all this stuff.</p>	I cont'd	Cont'd
<p><\$2> <\$O52> <=> Yeah you <=> <\$O52> Maybe it's just you're just not sure but you just want to have a child because <\$O53> everyone e= everyone else <\$O53> <E> laughs <E> has had one.</p>	R/I	Inf 1
<p><\$1> <\$O53> Cos everyone else does. <\$O53></p>	R	Acc
<p><\$2> And you think they look like they're having fun when they're out playing and playing kites <\$O54> and kicking footballs playing with their dolls <\$O54>.</p>	R/I cont'd	Cont'd
<p><\$1> <\$O54> Yeah but do they look like they're having fun? <=> Do we <=> We wouldn't <\$O54> wanna be running around with a child all the time now.</p>	R/I	Inf 2
<p><\$2> Not all the time. <=> But I mean I I mean <=> Like last year when we had those barbecues and stuff. I mean I enjoy sort of like playing out the back and like Sam was there and <\$O55> like he just sort of <\$O55>+</p>	R/I	Inf 2

<p><\$1> <\$O55> Well but er <\/\$O55> that's it. <\$E> yawns <\/\$E></p>	(int)	
<p><\$2> +playing on the swing <\$O56> and stuff like that <\/\$O56>.</p>	R/I cont'd	Cont'd
<p><\$1> <\$O56> <\$=> But you're j= <\/\$=> You <\/\$O56> just said Not all the time. And the point about being er the parent is that it is all <\$O57> the fucking time <\/\$O57>.</p>	R/I	Inf 1
<p><\$2> <\$O57> Oh I know it is yeah. <\/\$O57> It's a nightmare. That's why I'm not too keen on it.</p>	R/I	Inf 2
<p><\$1> Well I'm just trying to work out why I'm keen on it. <\$=> Why I do actually I mean I mean I'm sat sitting here it seems like I'm arguing the point of view that+</p>	R/I	EI 4?
<p><\$2> I mean you could be <\$O58> sat here <\/\$O58> now and all of a sudden there'd be a whine from next door.</p>	R/I	Inf 4
<p><\$1> +<\$O58> people <\/\$O58> <\/\$=></p>	I cont'd (int)	
<p><\$2> You'd have to go in change a nappy feed the bottle feed the baby.</p>	R/I cont'd	Cont'd
<p><\$1> But don't you sometimes feel that like couples like that haven't got kids don't you occasionally feel that there's something missing in their lives? Or is that just social conditioning?</p>	R/I	EI 3
<p><\$2> <\$H> Aye <\/\$H> <\$=> it's like <\/\$=> it's like my Uncle Barry and Auntie Josephine. <\$=> And like they still haven't had <\/\$=> I mean I never really sort of pushed it after I was younger but I sort of said Oh why why haven't they got any children. And my mum and dad always used to say Oh well they've got their business and things like that and they haven't got time and erm I don't think they want children and er blah blah.</p>	R/I	Inf 3
<p><\$1> Mm.</p>	R3	
<p><\$2> And they they've got the absolute ideal family <\$H> pattern <\/\$H>.</p>	R/I cont'd	Cont'd
<p><\$1> Cos they've got <\$O59> loads of cash haven't they <\/\$O59>.</p>	R/I	EI 5b
<p><\$2> <\$O59> If they don't have <\$G1> <\/\$O59> cos they've got <\$=> a lot <\/\$=> a lot of money.</p>	R	Rep
<p>But now I think about it <\$=> whether they <\/\$=> whether they couldn't have children whether there's something wrong or whether they just didn't want kids because they were such a tie. And they still like <\$H> have a laugh now <\/\$H>.</p>	I	Inf 3
<p><\$1> Yeah.</p>	R	Acc
<p><\$2> Well maybe <\$O60> <\$H> they've sort of <\/\$O60> got a <\/\$H> bit missing like with+<\$2> +<\$O61> family coming round <\/\$O61>.</p>	I (ignored)	Inf 3
<p><\$1> <\$O60> <\$=> But then <\/\$=> <\/\$O60> So why <\$O61> do people have children <\/\$O61>?</p>	C (KS 1)	EI 1
<p><\$1> Why does anyone have children? I mean cos it's like <\$=> you're <\/\$=> then you're thinking Oh well you know so they're all right now. But</p>	Re- I	EI 4
<p><\$2> Why do people have <\$O62> <\$E> laughs <\/\$E> children <\/\$O62>?</p>	C (L12)	EI 1
<p><\$1> <\$O62> Don't you think <\/\$O62> people maybe have <\$O63> children out of a <\/\$O63> totally selfish desire to know that <\$=> when they're getting er <\/\$=> as they get older together this couple who are gonna have these children any couple then they're thinking I'm gonna get older and <\$O64> possibly my <\/\$O64> spouse might die and then I'll be alone.</p>	R/I	EI 3
<p><\$2> <\$O63> <\$=> Maybe there's some <\/\$=> <\/\$O63> <\$O64> <\$H> Well surely it comes <\/\$H> <\/\$O64> No. Surely it <\$=> comes d= <\/\$=> it comes down to real basic <\$=> why do <\/\$=> why do r= rabbits breed? <\$=> Why do all</p>	R/I	Inf 1

anything < \\$=> Why does anything breed? < \\$O65> To keep their own species going. < \\$O65>		
< \\$1> < \\$O65> < \\$=> Is it not does it not < \\$=> < \\$O65> Well yeah. < \\$=> But is it not < \\$=>	(int)	
< \\$2> < \\$=> But < \\$O66> maybe there is some sort of underlying thing that is < \\$O66> < \\$=>	(int)	
< \\$1> < \\$O66> Isn't the main instinct < \\$O66> to breed to do with having sex which we could do without having kids. < \\$E> pause < \\$E> < \\$=> I mean isn't < \\$O67> there < \\$H> I mean me and like < \\$H> < \\$=> < \\$O67>	R/I	El 3
< \\$2> < \\$O67> Yeah but that's pleasure though < \\$O67> isn't it.	R/I	Inf 1
< \\$1> Yeah. < \\$O68> < \\$=> But like we < \\$=> < \\$O68>	R (+ int)	Acc
< \\$2> < \\$O68> I mean animals < \\$O68> don't get pleasure out of sex. < \\$=> And < \\$O69> it's not been it's not been < \\$O69> < \\$=>	I	Inf 4
< \\$1> < \\$O69> Yeah. < \\$=> I think < \\$=> No. < \\$O69> I think they do. It's to do with urges and satisfying i= pra= you know primitive urges to have sex. < \\$O70> < \\$=> I don't think they < \\$=> < \\$O70>	R/I	Inf 1
< \\$2> < \\$O70> It's never been proven < \\$O70> though has it. I mean like < \\$=> with I < \\$=> I'm sure like some some species the male gets pleasure out of it but the female doesn't.	R/I	Inf 1
< \\$1> Why? Why do you think that?	R/I	El 1b
< \\$2> < \\$=> I'm sure there was something like < \\$=> Is it with dogs or something like that?	R/I	El 5
< \\$1> < \\$=> With cats < \\$O71> that that cats are have a < \\$=> Yeah < \\$O71>.	R	Rep
< \\$2> < \\$O71> I thought it was like dogs or cats it's absolutely torture for < \\$O71> the female.	I	Inf 3
< \\$1> Yeah. But have you s= ever seen a female on heat? < \\$=> It's all < \\$=> It all happens because of the female being on heat when a cat has sex. The female gets on heat can't stand it any more and goes and writhes around outside going< \\$E> makes cat noises < \\$E> like that. And er the males are like queuing up for miles around. And she has sex not once but many many many times. And it is supposed to be absolute torture cos m= male cats are supposed to have < \\$O72> like a hook on their dick < \\$O72>.	R/I	Inf 4
< \\$2> < \\$O72> Yeah so that just comes down to < \\$O72> reproducing though doesn't it.	R/I	El 3
< \\$1> I don't think so. I don't think a cat thinks Oh I want babies. I'm gonna go out and < \\$O73> < \\$H> while < \\$H> in a courtyard < \\$O73>.	R/I	Inf 1
< \\$2> < \\$O73> Yeah. < \\$=> But that that urge must just < \\$O73> might might come from erm I mean it might be after er I mean it's i= < \\$O74> like < \\$H> having some < \\$H> < \\$O74> < \\$=>	R/I (int)	Inf 4
< \\$1> < \\$O74> It's satisfying < \\$O74> and it's like smoking.	R/I	Inf 1
< \\$2> Yeah satisfying an urge but what is the urge?	R/I	El 1b
< \\$1> Sex.	R	Rep
< \\$2> Yeah but what is the urge of sex? For what? For pleasure or for < \\$=> re= er reprodu= < \\$=> reproduction?	R/I	El 1b
< \\$1> Well it depends how you look at it. If you're looking at it from the cat's point of view I think it's from sex. It's for sex. But if you look at it from like an	R	Rep

evolutionary point of view the reason why cats have a implanted urge to have sex is so that they will reproduce and continue the <O75> species <\O75>.		
<2> <O75> Yeah. <\O75> So how do we know we're not like that?	R/I	EI 4

Exchange structure patterns for CANCODE No. 90071001

	I	Re-I	C	R/I	R	F	Focus
Preceded by I				4 (22%)	5 (29%)		2 (40%)
Followed by I					9 (53%)	1 (50%)	
Preceded by Re-I					1 (6%)		
Followed by Re-I			1 (100%)				
Preceded by C		1 (100%)					
Followed by C					1 (6%)		
Preceded by R/I				11 (61%)	6 (35%)		
Followed by R/I	4 (40%)			11 (61%)	4 (24%)		1 (20%)
Preceded by R	9 (90%)		1 (100%)	4 (22%)		2 (100%)	2 (40%)
Followed by R	4 (40%)	1 (100%)		8 (44%)			4 (80%)
Preceded by F	1 (10%)						
Followed by F					2 (12%)		
Preceded by Focus				2 (11%)	4 (24%)		
Preceded/ followed by nothing						1 (50%)	1 (20%)
Followed by Focus	2 (10%)				2 (12%)		
Total number of each element	10 (24% of total)	1 (2% of total)	1 (2% of total)	18 (32% of total)	17 (34% of total)	2 (3% of total)	5 (3% of total)

Total number of moves = 54

Exchange structure patterns for CANCODE No. 90640001

	I	Re-I	C	R/I	R	F	Focus
Preceded by I				5 (45%)	3 (30%)		
Followed by I					4 (40%)	2 (67%)	1 (33%)
Preceded by Re-I					1 (10%)		
Followed by Re-I			1 (100%)				
Preceded by C		1 (100%)					
Followed by C				1 (9%)			
Preceded by R/I			1 (100%)	3 (27%)	5 (50%)		2 (66%)
Followed by R/I	5 (63%)			3 (27%)	2 (20%)		1
Preceded by R	4 (50%)			2 (18%)		3 (100%)	
Followed by R	3 (38%)	1 (100%)		5 (45%)			1 (33%)
Preceded by F	2 (20%)						
Followed by F					3 (30%)		
Preceded by Focus	1 (13%)			1 (9%)	1 (10%)		
Preceded/ followed by nothing					1 (10%)	1 (33%)	1 (33%)
Followed by Focus				2 (18%)			
Total number of each element	8 (22% of total)	1 (3% of total)	1 (3% of total)	11 (30% of total)	10 (27% of total)	3 (8% of total)	3 (8% of total)

Total number of moves = 37

Exchange structure patterns for CANCODE No. 90503002

	I	Re-I	C	R/I	R	F	Focus
Preceded by I			6 (23%)	51 (19%)	28 (28%)		
Followed by I			1 (4%)	4 (1%)	69 (68%)	10 (91%)	1 (8%)
Preceded by Re-I			3 (12%)	8 (3%)	4 (4%)		
Followed by Re-I			15 (58%)				
Preceded by C	1 (1%)	14 (100%)		5 (2%)	5 (5%)		
Followed by C	6 (7%)	3 (21%)		12 (4%)	4 (4%)		1 (8%)
Preceded by R/I	4 (5%)		12 (46%)	190 (70%)	62 (61%)		8 (62%)
Followed by R/I	51 (59%)	8 (57%)	5 (19%)	186 (68%)	13 (13%)		7 (53%)
Preceded by R	72 (83%)		4 (15%)	13 (5%)		11 (100%)	3 (23%)
Followed by R	30 (34%)	3 (21%)	5 (19%)	62 (22%)			3 (23%)
Preceded by F	10 (11%)						
Followed by F					11 (12%)		
Preceded by Focus	1 (1%)		1 (4%)	7 (3%)	3 (3%)		1 (8%)
Preceded/ followed by nothing	1 (1%)			1 (0.3%)		1 (9%)	1 (8%)
Followed by Focus				7 (3%)	3 (3%)		1 (8%)
Total number of each element	88 (17% of total)	14 (3% of total)	26 (5% of total)	273 (52% of total)	101 (19% of total)	11 (2% of total)	13 (2% of total)

Total number of moves = 526

Exchange structure patterns for CANCODE No. 90505001

	I	Re-I	C	R/I	R	F	Focus
Preceded by I			2 (10%)	18 (18%)	17 (35%)		1 (17%)
Followed by I					34 (71%)	3 (50%)	1 (17%)
Preceded by Re-I			2 (10%)	3 (3%)	4 (8%)		1 (17%)
Followed by Re-I			10 (50%)				
Preceded by C		10 (100%)	1 (5%)	7 (7%)	3 (6%)		
Followed by C	2 (5%)	2 (20%)	1 (5%)	18 (18%)	2 (4%)		
Preceded by R/I			13 (65%)	61 (61%)	21 (44%)		2 (33%)
Followed by R/I	17 (45%)	3 (30%)	6 (30%)	63 (63%)	6 (13%)		2 (33%)
Preceded by R	34 (89%)		3 (15%)	6 (6%)		6 (100%)	
Followed by R	17 (45%)	4 (40%)	2 (10%)	22 (22%)			3 (50%)
Preceded by F	4 (11%)						2 (33%)
Followed by F					6 (13%)		
Preceded by Focus	1 (3%)	1 (10%)		2 (2%)	3 (6%)		
Preceded/ followed by nothing	1 (3%)						
Followed by Focus				2 (2%)		3 (50%)	
Total number of each element	38 (17% of total)	10 (4% of total)	20 (9% of total)	101 (44% of total)	48 (21% of total)	6 (3% of total)	6 (3% of total)

Total number of moves = 229

Exchange structure patterns for 'Religion'.

	I	Re-I	C	R/I	R	F	Focus
Preceded by I			1 (7%)	12 (19%)	7 (23%)		2 (33%)
Followed by I				1 (2%)	19 (63%)		1 (17%)
Preceded by Re-I		1 (33%)	1 (7%)	1 (2%)	1 (3%)		
Followed by Re-I			3 (21%)				
Preceded by C		2 (66%)	2 (14%)	6 (10%)	3 (10%)		
Followed by C	1 (5%)	1 (33%)	2 (14%)	8 (13%)	1 (3%)		
Preceded by R/I	1 (5%)		10 (71%)	32 (52%)	17 (57%)		3 (50%)
Followed by R/I	12 (55%)	1 (33%)	7 (50%)	33 (53%)	8 (27%)		3 (50%)
Preceded by R	19 (86%)			8 (13%)		1 (100%)	
Followed by R	7 (32%)	1 (33%)	2 (14%)	17 (27%)			2 (33%)
Preceded by F							1 (17%)
Followed by F					1 (3%)		
Preceded by Focus	1 (5%)			3 (5%)	2 (7%)		
Preceded/ followed by nothing	1 (5%)				1 (3%)		
Followed by Focus	2 (9%)			3 (5%)		1 (100%)	
Total number of each element	22 (16% of total)	3 (2% of total)	14 (10% of total)	62 (45% of total)	30 (22% of total)	1 (1% of total)	6 (4% of total)

Total number of moves = 138

Exchange structure patterns for Moral maze text 1

	I	Re-I	C	R/I	R	F	Focus
Preceded by I		1 (50%)	2 (50%)	7 (28%)	2		
Followed by I				3 (12%)	5 (50%)		3 (38%)
Preceded by Re-I			1 (25%)				1 (13%)
Followed by Re-I	1 (8%)		1 (25%)				
Preceded by C	1 (8%)	1 (50%)			3 (30%)		
Followed by C	2 (16%)	1 (50%)		1 (4%)			
Preceded by R/I	3 (25%)		1 (25%)	14 (56%)	4 (40%)		3 (38%)
Followed by R/I	7 (58%)			14 (56%)	2 (20%)		2 (25%)
Preceded by R	4 (33%)			2 (8%)			3 (38%)
Followed by R	2 (16%)		3 (75%)	4 (16%)			1 (13%)
Preceded by F							
Followed by F							
Preceded by Focus/Or g	3 (25%)			2 (8%)	1 (10%)		1 (13%)
Preceded/ followed by nothing	1 (8%)						1 (13%)
Followed by Focus		1 (50%)		3 (12%)	3 (30%)		1 (13%)
Total number of each element	12 (20% of total)	2 (3% of total)	4 (7% of total)	25 (41% of total)	10 (16% of total)		8 (13% of total)

Total number of moves = 61

Exchange structure patterns for Moral maze text 2.

	I	Re-I	C	R/I	R	F	Focus
Preceded by I			3 (75%)	2 (29%)	4 (36%)		1 (13%)
Followed by I					6 (55%)		3 (38%)
Preceded by Re-I					5 (45%)		
Followed by Re-I			4 (100%)				
Preceded by C		4 (100%)					
Followed by C	3 (33%)						1 (13%)
Preceded by R/I				4 (57%)	1 (9%)		2 (25%)
Followed by R/I	1 (11%)			4 (57%)	1 (9%)		1 (13%)
Preceded by R	5 (55%)			1 (14%)			4 (50%)
Followed by R	4 (44%)	4 (100%)		1 (14%)			
Preceded by F							
Followed by F							
Preceded by Focus	3 (33%)		1 (25%)		1 (9%)		1 (13%)
Preceded/ followed by nothing	1 (11%)						1 (13%)
Followed by Focus	1 (11%)			2 (29%)	4 (36%)		1 (13%)
Total number of each element	9 (21% of total)	4 (9% of total)	4 (9% of total)	7 (16% of total)	11 (25% of total)		8 (19% of total)

Total number of moves = 43

7.1 A text-by-text introduction to the data.

90071001

This text is taken from the CANCODE database, and formed part of an introductory session of a discussion group for both qualified and trainee teachers. At this meeting the interactants had been provided with a series of activities, such as introducing themselves with a small speech which had to last ten minutes, and also some questions for discussion. These questions and activities were read out by a member of the group, who therefore very informally acted as chairperson for the meeting. His/her control over the meeting does not seem to have extended beyond reading the questions out. and the group managed the meeting between them; matters such as how long the group spent on any one topic were interactively decided. One of these questions: “<\$2> So the question is why should people learn a foreign language? What do you think Judith?” initiated a discussion about which language should be most widely taught, and whether the current situation in which English has become a kind of international language, is good or bad. Since there was disagreement on this issue, this was the extract used in the present study.

This text was classified in CANCODE as *sociocultural: collaborative idea*.

90640001

This text is taken from the CANCODE database, and was recorded at a meeting of a religious group. Speaker one is male, and because takes an authoritative, almost didactic, role in the interaction because of his status as a priest. He therefore dominates the discourse, and is responsible for over 50% of the moves, with the

other interactants sharing the remaining 48% or so. The header information further tells us that speakers two and three are female, where speaker four (who made the recording) is a forty-eight year old male. The extract used by the present study is the only example of disagreement in this text, and involves much more interactivity than the rest of the text. We can see that the interactant whose objections to the priest's views on the church begin the discussion is loathe to criticise by his/her (the transcriber could not identify the speaker at this stage, and therefore we have no information as to the gender of the speaker, although in a study where gender issues were important it would of course be possible to listen to the tape to ascertain this information) hedging behaviour (in bold):

<\$?> Well er do you know what I think. **Quite honestly** I think it's time that you clergymen got your act together then. **I'm sorry MX but this is how it comes over to me. You know I mean** <\$=> we <\\$=> we and <\$O303> all ignorant expecting to be led <\\$O303>.

This text was classified in CANCODE as *sociocultural: collaborative idea*.

90503002 and 90505001.

These texts, both from CANCODE, are examples of an interaction between partners. They form part of an ongoing source of intellectual disagreement in this relationship, where although both parties have decided they do not want children, they disagree as to why, and on a deeper level they further disagree about genetic inheritance. Speaker 1 (the same speaker in both texts) believes that we are to a very large extent what our genetic programming makes us, whereas speaker 2 believes that we acquire our personalities and belief systems through our upbringing and experiences.

Speaker 1 (the author of the present study) is female, aged 26 at the time of recording; speaker 2 is male, aged 28, an organic production chemist.

These texts were classified under the CANCODE matrix as *intimate: collaborative idea*.

'Religion' text.

'Religion' text is a recording of an interaction involving 4 participants. It was recorded in the home of speaker 2 and speaker 4, who are partners. Speaker 4 is the interactant responsible for the recording, and he is male, aged 33, a photographer from Yorkshire; speaker 2 is female, aged 33, a university secretary from the Wirral, who is studying to become a practitioner of herbal medicine. Speaker 1 is male, aged 29, a nuclear physicist from Newcastle, and speaker 3 is also male and aged 29, a web designer from London.

Under the CANCODE system, this text would have been categorised as *socio-cultural: collaborative idea*, although these interactants know each other much better, than those in 90640001 or 90071001.

Moral maze texts 1 and 2.

These texts were both taken from the BBC Radio 4 programme 'The Moral maze'. In text 1, speakers E, R and M are male and speakers S and J are female. M is the chairperson and S is the 'expert witness', whilst the other speakers are panel members.

In text 2, all five speakers are male. \$1 is the chairperson and \$2 is the 'expert witness'. The chairperson is the same person in both texts.

Under the CANCODE system these texts would be classified as *professional: collaborative idea*.

6.5 Contextual configuration and Discussion structure.

McCarthy and Carter (1994), using the system for the examination of textual patterning developed by Winter and Hoey, found that certain textual patterns, such as problem-solution, general-particular, or hypothetical-real can occur across a variety of written genres, for example different scientific discourses, advertising, or journalism. However they did find that some types of pattern were more prevalent in some discourses than others: for example, problem-solution patterns occur frequently in expository texts (p55). In the same way discussive discourse can occur in a variety of different contexts. Although the various argumentative and persuasive strategies outlined above are all available for interactants engaged in a discussion to use in any informal (or semi-formal) situation, as the contextual configuration of discussion alters, so we might expect the structure to alter with it. Although, as argued elsewhere, discussion is a speech activity which requires less attention to be paid to interactants' face requirements than other types of speech activity, discussions which take place in more formal situations, and/or where the social distance between interactants is towards the maximal end of the scale, might be expected to involve more politeness strategies, with interactants placing greater importance on the maintenance of each other's face. Perez de Ayala (2001) in her study of British Parliamentary Question Time shows how the rules laid down by Erskine May in his *Treatise on the law, privileges, proceedings and usage of Parliament* (which, she argues, reflect Brown and Levinson's notion of politeness strategies) affect the discussive strategies Members of Parliament can use in this situation. Quite apart from the other aspects of this extremely formal situation which will affect the discussive structure, (for example the predetermined format of

Question Time in which one interactant asks another a question which the hearer will already have seen, and can only then ask a more spontaneous supplementary question), the Erskine May treatise places limitations on the kinds of utterances MPs are allowed to produce. For example, as Perez de Ayala points out, May's treatise does not allow for "questions which seek an expression of an opinion, or which contain arguments, expressions of opinion, or which contain inferences or imputations" (May, 1989, p287, quoted from Perez de Ayala (2001) p149). In this way politeness rituals, which differ in different types of formal situation, and the adherence by participants to different 'levels' of politeness due to minimal or maximal social distance, affects the structure both of moves and exchanges.

In the mini-corpus of discussive data used in the present study, although the basic structure is the same in all the texts, in that the various discourse acts used by interactants are those which are fairly specific to discussive discourse and the exchange structure is very similar, there are differences between the structures of the texts which can be related to their differing contextual configurations. The table below is arranged in ascending order of formality; the first two texts would be classed under the CANCODE matrix as 'intimate', and the third, fourth and fifth are 'sociocultural' (see Ch.3), but the third takes place between friends who know each other extremely well, whereas with the fourth and fifth texts the interactants are less well acquainted and the setting is more formal. In the fourth text, not only is the social distance fairly maximal (Halliday and Hasan, 1985) but there is also a status differential, in that this is a meeting of a religious group, one member of which is a priest. The sixth and seventh texts are taken from a BBC Radio 4 broadcast, the 'Moral maze', where again there is a status differential, although of a different kind,

in that one speaker acts as a chairperson. Also, being a public, broadcast interaction, the setting is quite formal (and could arguably be classed as 'professional' in that the participants are journalists or politicians, so that this is what they do for a living.) However, it is possible that at least some of the interactants in these two texts do know each other quite well, and would be at ease with each other.

In the following table we can see how the distribution of the various structural elements alters with the differing contextual configuration of each text. The number of instances of each element is shown, along with the figures for each element expressed as a percentage of the total number of moves in that text. The downward arrow shows the move from less to more formal contexts.

Text	I	Re-I	C	R/I	R	F	Focus
90503002	88 (17%)	14 (3%)	26 (5%)	273 (52%)	101 (19%)	11 (2%)	13 (2%)
90505001	38 (17%)	10 (4%)	20 (9%)	101 (44%)	48 (21%)	6 (3%)	6 (3%)
Religion	22 (16%)	3 (2%)	14 (10%)	62 (45%)	30 (22%)	1 (1%)	6 (4%)
90071001	10 (24%)	1 (2%)	1 (2%)	18 (32%)	17 (34%)	2 (3%)	5 (3%)
90640001	8 (22%)	1 (3%)	1 (3%)	11 (30%)	10 (27%)	3 (8%)	3 (8%)
Moral maze 1	12 (20%)	2 (3%)	4 (7%)	25 (41%)	10 (16%)		8 (13%)
Moral maze 2	9 (21%)	4 (9%)	4 (9%)	7 (16%)	11 (25%)		8 (19%)



The table illustrates how Recursive Response/Initiatory moves in discussive discourse often have a fairly confrontational nature because they often entail a direct disagreement with the interlocutor's preceding Assessment. Significantly, it is the socio-cultural texts where the social distance between the speakers is fairly maximal

where the least amount of the discourse is taken up with recursive R/I moves; CANCODE No. 90640001 (28%) and no. 90071001 (32%). In CANCODE No. 90640001 there is also a relatively high percentage of Follow-up moves which reflects the fact that one speaker is higher in status than his interlocutors, not only from the point of view of respect (members of a religious group will obviously respect their priest) but also in that, as they are discussing religion, a priest's knowledge of this subject is unlikely to be overtly questioned. In this way the supremacy of his opinion allows him to assume a stance in which persuading his interlocutors round to his point of view is seen to be the desired outcome *for all concerned* rather than just for him. Therefore he can ask questions which carry his opinion and then acknowledge the answers as if his elicit had been an elicit:inform:

<\$1> <\$O308> <\$H> Yes. <\/\$H> <\/\$O308> <\$O309> But now do you <\/\$O309> understand? Now do you understand?

<\$?> Yes but <\$=> I'm +

<\$1> <\$O310> **Good. Great.** <\/\$O310>

(CANCODE No. 90640001)

Another obvious difference between the texts is that there are no Follow-up moves in either of the 'Moral maze' texts. The Moral maze has a pre-ordained format in which one interactant assumes the role of an 'expert witness'. Typically this witness will have appeared recently in the media, either by writing an article in a newspaper or magazine, or by speaking publicly about an issue on the television or radio.

Therefore this interactant's views will be known to the other participants, who are usually journalists or politicians, and who will have prepared questions and arguments for the witness to answer. They are allocated turns by the chairperson in which to put these questions, and because of this are not often allowed to pursue the ensuing discussion with the witness to any kind of conclusion. This explains the absence of Follow-up, in that this move typically indicates convergence between interactants, which is arguably unachievable in the short time allotted to each 'questioner'. Also, each interactant is aware that their public Face is at stake, and that to be seen to be conceding a point would be undesirable; again this would preclude convergent activity between interactants. (For a view of 'public face' see Gruber (1993) and Perez de Ayala (2001))

At act level, there are also differences between the texts of different relationship types. Certain acts are arguably more confrontational in nature, such as the Evaluate act (Inf 1b). This act typically negatively evaluates the interlocutor's line of argument, so in that sense it resembles a personal attack; the interlocutor is lying (in which case the Evaluation would realise a Challenging move) or not making sense, or their argumentation is fallacious. Therefore this act occurs more in intimate discourse; though it might also be expected to occur in conflict talk. (Grimshaw 1990).

Personal statements, in which the speaker uses the self and their own belief systems as an example to 'prove a point' are less used in formal situations in the data, and do not occur in either of the moral maze texts nor in CANCODE No 90071001. In 90640001 this act is only used by a 'lower status' speaker, as perhaps there is a lack

of 'professionalism' about locating the self in a discussive text. Because it refers directly to the self this act might be seen as more relational in content, and therefore less appropriate to a public arena such as broadcast radio.

Similarly, the fact that the moral maze texts take place in a public arena also affects the type of elicitation that is used. Elicit:opinion is much less used in the Moral maze texts, since interactants are often as concerned with conveying their own opinions to the listening public as they are with asking for the witness's opinion. Therefore they use Elicits 2,3 and 4 (the Defining elicit, Elicit: agreement and the Rhetorical elicit) more commonly.

Apart from these few differences, however, the acts used and the exchange structure patterning remains very similar across the different contextual configurations. As argued elsewhere in the present study, the text type discussion has an inherently combative nature, and therefore represents a discoursal 'space' in which normal rules of politeness (Brown and Levinson 1987) are suspended. Therefore we might expect to see less difference in either structure or in the kinds of discourse acts employed by interactants across a scale of formality than we could predict for other text types.

Chapter summary

In this chapter the text type 'discussion' has been defined and described, and we have seen that it has a combative nature, though it is at the same time an arena in which interactants can express disagreement and display other face-threatening types of behaviour, without offending other participants. This is explained by the fact that it is a generic feature of discussion to be combative and to pay little attention to the

interpersonal needs of interactants; discussion is an intellectual ‘game’ which conversationalists engage in in order to explore their own attitudes and beliefs as well as exploring and attempting to influence those of their fellow interactants. Other approaches to the analysis of discussive texts (and localised features of these texts) have been examined, and an attempt has been made to collate these insights about the nature of discussion into an integrated system for its analysis. This analytic system was based on the Sinclair and Coulthard (1975) model of classroom discourse, and in this chapter I explored the ways in which their model would have to be adapted in order to cope with discussion.

In the next chapter I present my data (the mini-corpus of discussive discourse) and the accompanying analysis.

6.4 Move structure for discussion: a taxonomy of discursive discourse acts.

McCarthy (1998 p38-46) argues that a marriage between the analysis of lexicogrammatical features of language as a local level, and the identification of structure at a more global level would form the ideal approach to genre studies. Certain lexicogrammatical forms are typical of particular genres, for example “language-in-action” contains a high number of deictic items, such as this, the, here and there. (McCarthy 1998 p29). Using an approach to analysis which is based on Sinclair and Coulthard’s (1975) model, it is possible to incorporate a certain amount of lexical and grammatical analysis in the identification of act types.

In my analysis I have labelled moves and, for the most part, identified only the ‘head’ act which embodies them. Sinclair and Coulthard, in their analysis of classroom discourse, did not encounter any difficulty in identifying which part of a move might be the head act, and, beyond the idea that all other acts in a given move are optional, they did not indicate how this might be done. One approach to this problem would be to argue that the head act may be said to be the ‘point’ of the move. Several analysts (Polanyi, 1979, Labov, 1972) have argued that in storytelling, it is the evaluative element of a story which signals its ‘point’: evaluation is “the means used by the narrator to indicate the point of the narrative, its *raison d’être*: why it was told and what the narrator is getting at” (Labov 1972, p366). Polanyi (1979) examines a piece of data in which a woman tells a story about having fainted on the subway, and she observes that the speaker uses an evaluative remark “It was a very um...uh frightening experience” to signal that she “intends that

her audience consider the story to be about a frightening experience” (p210) In this way the evaluative element consists of the speaker foregrounding what the point of the story is, i.e. this is why the story is culturally, socially, or personally interesting.(Polanyi 1979, p211). Similarly, in discussion, if an overtly evaluative/assessing element is present in a move, it is this element which lies at the core of the move; as Schiffrin (1985) argues, in a single argumentative turn, speakers present their position at the boundaries of their turn, which “establish(es) as the outer boundaries of the argument the information that is being conveyed as the main point, and enclose(s) within those boundaries the information that plays a subordinate role.” (p39)

In the following move the interactants are engaged in trying to identify what motivates people to have children.

(6.56)

<\$1> One motive is that <\$=> they're that like < \$=> you do get a lot of reward.	Inf 1
We know from playing with other people's children that there is a a reward in playing with kids and watching how they learn and you know. It's the same as whe= when Slinky's all curious and stuff like that. That's why we like having the cat because she's like curious about stuff and we enjoy showing her stuff and giving her pleasure.	Inf 3
So there's that. There's th= enjoying playing with the kids but er with kids you know that there's a <\$O84> whole < \$O84> load of huge pain.	Inf 1
<\$2> < \$O84> Mm. < \$O84>	R3
<\$1> I mean with Slinky all she does is shit behind the sofa for a few years well for half a year. And then after that she's no hassle at all and all you have to do is buy her	Inf 3

<p>cat food and put it in a bowl. And that's the end of your duties.</p> <p><\$2> Nice. <\$O85> <\$E> laughs <\\\$E> <\\\$O85></p> <p><\$1> <\$O85> But with kids <\\\$O85> you're changing their nappies you're doing all this shite. You know they're helpless for ages and ages and ages. You've got to worry about them <\$O86> twenty four hours a day <\\\$O86>.</p>	<p>R3</p> <p>Inf 3 cont'd</p>
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(CANCODE No. 90503002)

The speaker uses an Assessment (Inf 1) to open her move, followed by an Exemplification (Inf 3) which provides 'proof' of the Assessment's validity. Then she continues with her assessment, confirming her prior view, but pointing out another aspect of it, which she then 'proves', with another Exemplification. In this way the 'proof' here is subordinate to the Assessment act (which is in two parts), so that this move would be analysed as an Initiation realised by an Assessment.

This can be seen most clearly in Replies to Elicit: opinions, in that the head act will be that which most directly answers the question by overtly producing that opinion, as with (6.57) below:

(6.57)

<p><\$2> <\$O78> I know cos that's what I'm saying. <\\\$O78> <\$O79> <\$=> Yeah but I'm saying <\\\$=> <\\\$O79> That's what I'm saying. <\$=> You've got the <\\\$=> You've got humans and you've got animals. Why do animals reproduce and why do humans?</p>	<p>E1 1</p>
<p><\$1> <\$=> Well I think <\\\$=> Well this is what I'm saying is that I think animals reproduce because of the desire to have sex. Because the desire to have sex <\$=> is</p>	<p>Inf 6</p>

<p>implant= is er <math>\Rightarrow</math> is like an evolutionary thing because <math>\Rightarrow</math> if you didn't <math>\Rightarrow</math> if there wasn't the desire to have sex they wouldn't bother and therefore their species would die out. <math>\Rightarrow</math></p> <p>If cats never wanted to have sex like cats <math>\Rightarrow</math> Cos Slinky's neutered and she doesn't want to have sex. She's got no hormones going round making her go and wail in the courtyard. So therefore she's never gonna have sex in her entire life and she's perfectly happy.</p> <p>You know and so there has to be a sex drive implanted into wild animals and humans <math>\Rightarrow</math> that enables them you know <math>\Rightarrow</math> that makes them want to go and have sex.</p> <p>And <math>\Rightarrow</math> we do it <math>\Rightarrow</math> we do it out of pleasure.</p>	<p>Inf 3</p> <p>Rep</p>
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(CANCODE No. 90503002)

Here, in response to \$2's elicit, \$1 first summarises her prior argument (Inf 6), then produces an Exemplification to 'back up' this point, and finally answers the second part of his question. All of this move is designed to elucidate \$1's assessment of the reasons why humans and animals reproduce, but the final part of the move overtly does so and is therefore the head act. In this way, where an assessing act occurs, it reduces the status of the other acts around it to pre- or post-head 'backing up' moves.

Some moves, however, may not contain an overtly assessing element. They depend for their opinion carrying value either on a preceding assessing move made by the speaker at a prior point in the discourse, so that the hearer can use Grice's (1975) maxim of relevance to connect these moves (the speaker must be producing this act to 'back up' his/her preceding assessment), or on the hearer's extrapolating an opinion from the utterance. Baynham (1995) argues that argument in narratives (narratives in the present system of analysis are classified as Exemplifications) are

not always explicit, and describes the opinions contained in narratives as *virtual arguments* “to be reconstructed pragmatically by the interlocutor” (p39). In the following example another speaker has been arguing that, in his view, teachers ought to force/encourage schoolchildren to do sport, and that the perceived lack of sport in schools is the teachers’ fault. S uses a Premise, the universal truth that ‘it is not possible to force anyone to learn, or to like something’ to attack this view, and in this way her move ‘carries’ an opinion, but at no point does she actually produce an Assessment to the effect that the lack of sport in schools is not the teachers’ fault. Therefore this move ((6.58), below) consists of a Response/Initiation realised by a Premise.

(6.58)

S. I have worked in schools for 30 years in some of the most deprived areas, with kids who are school refusers, and you cannot force anybody to learn anything. <\$04>You can force them to be on a playing field, and you can<\$04>offer them the choice, you cannot force them to learn, and most important, <\$05> you cannot<\$05> force them to like or <\$06> love something.<\$06>

(Moral maze text 1)

6.4.1 Starter

Schegloff (1980, 1981) identified a type of utterance which he called a “pre-pre”, in which “ a course of talk is projected which involves more than one turn constructional unit” (1981, p76). He used this description to characterise discourse acts which served to introduce a move from the speaker by requesting permission to produce it from the hearer; for example “Can I ask you a question?”. Similarly other Conversation Analysts have described the concept of ‘pre-sequences’ which are

“built to prefigure the specific kind of action that they potentially precede” (Levinson 1983, p346). In this way, a pre-announcement, for example, would describe utterances like “A: Guess what? B: What?” (ibid p349). This is reminiscent of the type of utterance Sinclair and Coulthard (1975) labelled the ‘Starter’, which “direct(s) attention or thought toward an area in order to make a correct response to the Initiation more likely” i.e. they prefigure the Initiation. Levinson’s pre-sequences are all two part pairs of utterances, but it would be easy to conceive of a situation in which the above pre-announcement did not receive a second part, because the speaker immediately continued with the announcement without waiting for one; in which case it would be very like a Starter. Similarly, in an interaction where the status of participants is more equal than teacher-fronted classroom discourse this kind of discourse managing activity might be expected to have a more interactive quality.

This type of ‘introductory’ activity occurs in the discussive data used by the present study several times, both as a pre-head in a single speaker move, and as a two part exchange. As a pre-head, Starters often signal a focussing move, as with example (6.59) below:

(6.59)

<\$4> **I don’t want to talk so much about immigrants I want to talk about society as a whole and a snapshot of society**, I want to read you something that you wrote, that ultimately there are certain core values about love of country, of parliamentary democracy, of city and countryside, of tolerance, courtesy, good humour and tradition. Do you think that’s what twentieth century, twenty first century Britain is really like?

(Moral maze text 2)

As a two-part exchange a Starter and its accompanying Accept often prefigure a new line of argument or reasoning, and thereby serve to refocus the discussion. In the example below, the ‘head’ act of E’s move consists of an Assessment (Inf 1), but this first part of E’s move consists of what Schegloff (1980, 1981) called a ‘pre-pre’. In this way the first part of E’s move and S’s acceptance of it form a preliminary unit to E’s Assessment.

(6.60)

E. <\$01>Er<\\$01> <\$02>Its er<\\$02> Okay, okay, that was my joke and that was your joke, so let me ask you a semi serious question+	R (Acc) I (S)
S. Alright	R (Acc)
E.+Which is this; the charges made on the other side, <\$03>serious this is <\\$03>	I cont’d
S. <\$03>Alright<\\$03>	R3
E. Is that we used to have a modest amount of compulsory sport	I cont’d (Inf 1)

(Moral maze text 1)

Similarly a Starter and its accompanying Accept can embody a focussing move entirely, as with the following:

(6.61)

\$3 <\$04>Well <\\$04> <\$05>well<\\$05> Let’s talk about something more recent	I focus (S)
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<p>than that the argument about the so-called European army.</p> <p>\$2 Mm-hmm</p> <p>\$3 Er the allegation from er your party of preference er is that er that proposition is an unpatriotic proposition, why is it unpatriotic <\$06>it may be right it may be wrong<\$/06></p>	<p>R (Acc)</p> <p>I (EI 1)</p>
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(Moral maze text 2)

Informatives.

The need for new classes of informative which allow the speaker to express their viewpoint is immediately obvious. As Schiffrin (1985) argues, “beliefs, opinions, judgements and feelings differ from assertions and statements of fact because they are representations of internal, cognitive states that are available for neither observation nor verification.” (p 40) Speakers do this in a variety of ways in discussion.

6.4.2 Assessment (Inf 1).

This act consists of the speaker stating his/her opinion. It includes utterances which evaluate a referent, such as ‘football is rubbish’; or subjectively define the characteristics of a referent, for example ‘no arms is severely disabled’ ((6.63), below); or assign evaluated features to a referent (for example (6.62) below); and so on. It can also consist of hypothesising, ‘setting the world to rights’ e.g. ‘we/the govt/ people should do such–and–such and then everything would be great’.

(6.62)

<\$2> <\$O4> <\$=> I think I'm no on <|\$=> I think I'm no on both of them. <|\$O4> <\$O5> **There's absolutely no quality of life there.** <|\$O5>

(CANCODE No. 90503002)

(6.63)

<\$4>. That's not science, that's somebody issuing a statement without backing it up with evidence

(Extract from 'religion' text)

In first position in argument, it predicts agreement or disagreement, and therefore prospects another 'opinion carrying' act in return (i.e. an R/I Infs 1-4,) and this can be recursive; in second position an R/I Assessment can be followed by an accepting Responding move. In a persuasion sequence, however, it is often followed by an eliciting act.

Assessment (Inf 1) in discussion mini-corpus.

Followed by	As Challenge*	As Re-Initiation	As Initiation	As Response/Initiation
Inf 1	3 (1.6%)		16 (8.6%)	46 (25%)
Inf 2-4	4 (2.1%)		7 (3.8%)	23 (12.5%)
Inf 6			1 (0.5%)	8 (4.3%)
El 1-3			2 (1%)	16 (8.6%)
El 4			2 (1%)	8 (4.3%)

I focus Inf 6				6 (3.2%)
C		1 (0.5%)	3 (1.6%)	12 (6.5%)
R Acc		3 (1.6%)	3 (1.6%)	20 (10.8%)

* Every time an Assessment embodies a Challenging move, this is a KS 1 type Challenge, “he may refuse to give his attention” where the speaker has chosen to ignore the other interactant’s contribution, and state his/her opinion instead.

On rare occasions, as we can see from the table above, an Initiating Assessing act *can* be followed by a Responding Accept. This only happens when the Assessment in question has already been agreed with at some prior point in the discourse (as with (6.64) below). This is because where an Assessment is fulfilling the Initiation element, it is usually prospecting another Assessment which either agrees or disagrees, rather than an utterance which simply accepts the speaker’s viewpoint.

(6.64)

<\$2> <\$O15> Yeah. But then <\$O15> it's <\$=> like you you can you're al= <\$=> almost like always waiting on a knife edge that they're gonna die.	R/I (inf 6)
<\$1> Yeah.	R (Acc)
<\$2> What's the quality of that? There's <\$O16> nothing <\$O16>.	I (Inf 1)
<\$1> <\$O16> Mm. <\$O16> Mm mm. Oh no there isn't.	R (Acc)

(CANCODE No. 90503002)

6.4.3 Evaluate (Inf 1b)

This act consists of evaluative remarks about an interlocutor's argument, an obvious example of which is (6.65) below:

(6.65)

<\$2> <\$O129> You don't <\\$O129> know. That's rubbish.

(CANCODE No. 90503002)

Although a highly confrontational discourse act when it involves negative evaluation (which is always the case in discussive discourse), it is possible to use politeness strategies to minimise its confrontational effect, and when this happens a more complex Evaluate act is produced. In the following, \$1 has been arguing that English, because it is the most widely spoken of languages, should be the international language, taught the world over, to obviate communication difficulties for the traveller. \$3's return move first uses a preface to minimise the threat to \$1's face: "I can see what you're getting at". S/he then evaluates \$1's argument as faulty reasoning, which is a less direct approach than a more straightforwardly negative evaluation (lines 1-3 and part of 5). \$1 accepts this in line 4, and \$3 then goes on to overtly state that \$1's viewpoint is 'idealistic' and 'ridiculous'. \$2 joins in with his/her own evaluation of \$1's argument as 'dangerous'.

(6.66)

1 <\$3> I can see what you're getting at but then <\$=> just because more people speak	R/I
2 English <\\$=> just because more people speak English doesn't mean to say that	(Inf 1b)

3. English should be the language <\$=> that em <\\$=>+	
4 <\$1> No no.	R (Acc)
5 <\$3> +that <\$=> is <\\$=> is spoken universally. Er but it's a very idealistic+	R/I cont'd
6 <\$2> Mhm.	R/I (Inf 1b)
7 <\$3> +concept. But totally ridiculous concept.	R/I cont'd
8 <\$2> Dangerous more than idealistic.	R/I (Inf 1b) cont'd

(CANCODE No. 90071001)

Hoey (1991) argues that Follow-up, (which in Hoey's taxonomy consists of the evaluative 'feedback' notion of Follow-up) when it is negative, always generates further linguistic activity (see section 2.5). In this way the Evaluate act always embodies a Response/Initiation, in that it contains an assessment/opinion, which prospects further linguistic activity, but it is 'tied' to a previous opinion carrying move. A negative evaluation of a preceding information-giving (transactionally orientated) informative, however, would constitute an L6 Challenge 'P is a reasonable piece of information' (see appendix 1).

Proof-providing: utterances which reinforce a viewpoint.

6.4.4 Personal statements (Inf 2.)

This act consists of statements about the speaker's personal choices and wishes (see (6.67-8) below), expressions of likes and dislikes and personal feelings, e.g. "I'd be

upset if that happened to me” for example (6.69) below, in which the speaker talks about what she personally finds interesting about children:

(6.67)

<\$1> <\$O54> Yeah but do they look like they're having fun? <\$=> Do we <\\$=> We wouldn't <\\$O54> wanna be running around with a child all the time now.

(CANCODE No. 90503002)

(6.68)

<\$1> <\$O125> I think that's one of <\\$O125> the reasons.

<\$2> **I wouldn't even think about that.**

(CANCODE No. 90503002)

(6.69)

And I find that quite interesting just even with Libby that from one day to the next I'll go there and <\$=> she'll say and she'll say what's <\\$=> you'll say What's that and then she'll say such and such. And she's gone from just saying such and such <\$=> to saying <\\$=> and just naming objects that now she's started to like string sentences together and well not totally string sentences together but she's started to string together groups of words <\$=> to mean <\\$=> so that she's started to communicate more.

(CANCODE No. 90503002)

Lexico-grammatically, this act always involves the use of personal pronouns (*I, we* or *us*). It is also often signalled by the use of various constructions, analysed below.

Out of a total number of 53 personal statements in the mini-corpus:

- Self-reference plus a modal verb (*I would(n't)*) is used in Personal statements 14 times (26% of occurrences of Inf 2). See (6.67-8-7) for examples.
- Personal stance markers such as *to me*, *I find* or *in my mind* (e.g. 6.69) are used in Personal statements 7 times (13% of occurrences of Inf 2)

I find occurs 3 times, *For me* and *to me* occurs twice, *in my mind* occurs twice. In the example below we can see this combined with the pronoun ‘myself’ and the adjective ‘personally’ to emphasise the way the speaker is taking a personal stance here:

(6.70)

<\$1> <\$O188> I think the motive **for** <\$O188> **me myself personally** having a kid <\$=> is d= that s= <\$=> is that **I wouldn't** wouldn't mind recreating the erm the relationship me and my mum have <\$=> with the with another chi= <\$=> with a child. <\$=> And that+

(CANCODE No. 90503002)

- Personal statements also use expressions of future and possibility when the speaker projects how they will feel, or if their feelings will change, in the future; or how they would feel if their circumstances changed, as with the utterance in bold, below:

(6.71)

<\$2> I can't see myself being in a position to have a kid.	I (Inf 2)
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<\$1> Oh. Now you're just being difficult.	R/I (Inf 1b)
<\$2> I'm not being difficult. I just find it a very strange concept of being tied down by a little brat.	R/I (Inf 2)

(CANCODE No. 90503002)

This type of personal statement uses future tense verbs and expressions of possibility and doubt. It occurs 7 times (13% of occurrences of Inf 2): 1 instance of *I will* , 4 instances of *can* or *can't*, and *If I were* or *If I thought* occurs twice.

- Personal expressions of wants, likes and dislikes, also often form part of this discourse act along with expressions of feeling and belief (see table below). There are 20 examples of this in the mini-corpus (38% of occurrences of Inf 2).

Table showing numbers of occurrences of personal expressions in Inf 2 acts:

<i>I'm (not) bothered about</i>	<i>I Like</i>	<i>I enjoy</i>	<i>I'm not keen</i>	<i>I (don't) want</i>	<i>That's what gets me</i>	<i>I object to</i>	<i>I believe</i>	<i>Understand</i> (in the sense of empathise)
2	4	1	1	5	1	1	3	2

- This act also includes utterances where speakers use themselves or their own psyche, attitudes, feelings and behaviour as examples from daily life which prove their point, for example:

(6.72)

<\$1> <16> Because that that er that's the nature of <16> that's the nature of of who we are but **I don't m- I make assumptions and judgements on them through my own personal beli- er er experiences** not on something that I've read in a book somewhere that I know very little about, and **I'm quite prepared to revise those judgements** within the minute that I meet them <pause>

(Extract from 'religion' text)

(6.73)

<\$1> Cos like when I was that age I couldn't even tell whether I really liked someone for ages and ages. <\$=> I found it really hard to judge things properly <\$O192> when I was <\$O192> <\$=>

(CANCODE 90503002)

There are 8 examples of this type of Personal statement in the mini-corpus (15% of occurrences of Inf 2)

These lexical signals for Personal statements sometimes appear in combination with each other. In the following example an expression of possibility combines with a modal and a personal stance marker.

(6.74)

<\$2> I don't think so. <\$H> You see <\$H> I mean even **if I thought** about having a child now that's the last thing **that'd be on my mind**. When I get old and wrinkly that someone's gonna be there for me.

(CANCODE 90503002)

6.4.5. Exemplification (Inf 3)

This act is used by participants in a discussion to ‘prove the point’ i.e. provide empirical evidence drawn from the real world to back up an opinion or standpoint. Crucially this type of informative does not overtly transmit an opinion, though in that it is used to exemplify one, it is an ‘opinion carrier’. In this way, unlike classic, information-transmitting informatives (the Transactional informative (Inf 5) in this system of classification) they do not have the function of conveying information to the hearer, though it may be the case that the events described are unknown to the him/her.

Exemplification can take the form of a reference to a well-known event or circumstance:

(6.75)

\$2 **Well we have been doing this for centuries, we’ve had the entente cordiale we’ve had treaty after treaty, alliance after alliance, I mean there is nothing ever as far as I can see unpatriotic in forming alliances, treaty obligations, cooperations, collaborations, we’ve built the channel tunnel with the French we built concord with the French, noone said Oh mustn’t do that gosh you know, <\$10> those are the French we <\$10> can’t build a plane with the French, of course we can build a plane <\$11> with the French<\$11>**

It can also take the form of a narrative. Kress (1989) treats narrative as two distinct forms of text, arguing that narrative “provides a means of resolution of difference, of reproducing, in an uncontentious mode, the forms and meanings of a culture” so that its “fundamental characteristic is to produce closure”. (p12). As Baynham, (1995) argues, however, narrative can be a powerful argumentative move, as it is a way for participants to construct a truth claim in discourse (p37-39), so that it is perhaps this

'uncontentiousness' which makes narrative moves in discussion so powerful (see 6.65, below).

(6.76)

<\$=> There are just <\\$=> It's like there was this family that we knew in New Zealand where they had this child and she was perfectly all right until she was about I think she was six. And then after that she just started like wasting and she was like mentally okay and everything and <\$=> they didn't <\\$=>+

<\$2> Mm.

<\$1> +they weren't ever sure how mentally okay she was after she started this illness. And erm luckily they waited until she was six before they thought about having another child cos they're both really sort of nurturing nice excellent people. And er <\$=> this g= <\\$=> this lass Kirsten <\$=> was like she start= <\\$=> when she started wasting that was when they were thinking about having another child. So <\$=> then they w= <\\$=> they both went in for these tests and found it was some kind of thing that was <\$=> there <\\$=> any child between the two of them was bound to be deformed in this way. And and <\$O14> she just started wasting away <\\$O14>.

<\$2> <\$O14> Oh God. <\\$O14>

<\$1> She lived until she was twenty odd. <\$=> And er by the end er by <\\$=> For the last like ten years they had to do absolutely everything for her and it completely ruined their lives for ten years like. <\$O15> You know. <\\$O15>

(CANCODE No. 90503002)

Exemplification can also take the form of referencing, where an interactant quotes an opinion or belief someone external to the discourse has produced which supports their argument:

(6.77)

<\$2> You're basically y'know, there was some comedian who said about religions, its basically you fighting me over who has the best imaginary friend

(Extract from 'religion' text)

6.4.6 The Premise (Inf 4).

Again, this type of informative differs from an information-transmitting informative in that it is not simply intended to inform; it may even be repeating a fact which the speaker knows the hearer already knows, or simply uttering a 'given'; some obvious truth which the speaker genuinely feels both sides must agree with (See 6.67 –8, below). Premises can be used as building blocks for interactants to hang their arguments from, a starting point of agreement; or as a way of attacking an interlocutor's standpoint (see 6.69).

(6.78)

<\$2> With your friends I mean <\$=> you can <\\$=> you can change until you find the right person <\$=> that's <\\$=> you've just completely got <\$=> that <\\$=> just a real bond with.

(CANCODE No. 90503002)

(6.79)

<\$2> <26>We all when we <\26> come across people make assumptions <27> about them <\27>

(Extract from 'religion' text)

(6.80)

S. We could have aggressive games for the boys <\$013> let's have something for the rest of us <\\$013>

J. <\$013> Oh no, no, no, sorry, girls do have aggressions <\\$013>

(Moral maze text 1)

In this way Premises can be used like Exemplifications, as a form of providing 'proof', the difference being that Exemplifications are empirical, whereas these are 'universal truths', which because they are not empirical are subjective, and therefore may contain a bias – its an 'accepted' truth rather than an actual one meaning that they can more easily be argued against and contradicted, often by alternative premises:

(6.81)

<p><\$1> Yeah but <\$O108> it's just multiplying <\\$O108> it so you've got your primary friends and you've got your kids.</p>	<p>Inf 4</p>
<p><\$2> <\$O108> What if you have one? <\\$O108></p>	<p>(int)</p>
<p><\$1> It's a sure fire way of multiplying intimate relationships.</p>	<p>Inf 4 cont'd</p>
<p><\$2> Yeah but I mean I= look how many children don't get on with their parents.</p>	<p>Inf 4</p>

(CANCODE No. 90503002)

People may attack a premise, which presents as a generalised ‘accepted’ truth, by using an exemplification, which has a stronger status as ‘proof’ in that it consists of an empirical example. Van Eemeren et al (1997) provided an example of this:

(6.82)

Curtis: I’m a spaceman.

Uncle: You can’t be a spaceman. You’re not wearing a helmet.

Curtis: Han Solo doesn’t wear a helmet.

(Data from Van Eemeren et al (1997) p211)

Van Eemeren et al argue that the missing premise in the uncle’s argument consists of ‘all spacemen wear helmets’. Curtis challenges this by producing an act which (under the classification system used by the present study) would be considered an Exemplification act, in which he provides an ‘empirical’ example of a spaceman who does not wear a helmet. In the example below \$1 challenges the Premise that most religious people know a fair bit about their scripts by using an example of someone who did know about the Bible, but who could be considered exceptional because she had learned ancient Greek in order to read the Bible in its original language:

(6.83)

<p><\$2> I would say most religious people who are practising a religion will know a fair bit about their scripts.</p>	<p>Inf 4</p>
<p><\$1> Well I had a very interesting erm conversation with him erm, there was me there,</p>	<p>Inf 3</p>

<p>and this other guy that lived in the house, and one of his daughters who was studying theology at Oxford or Cambridge I can't remember and she'd erm learned ancient Greek in order to read the Bible in its original text, so her perception of the Bible was very different to mine, and very different again to his because I'd read certain bits of the Bible and read er er arguments about er er er certain bits of it and y'know there are lots of int- interpretations about what it says, yet her interpretation was very much more fundamental because it was in the original language of in which it was written so a lot of the words that I were using to describe certain instances, I mean she could say, well, y'know, in the original Greek that word means such-and-such a thing, and that changes the whole context of the story and where things might be coming from.</p>	
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(Extract from 'religion' text)

Premises also consist of utterances of the order of “say for the sake of argument that..”, or “imagine for a moment that the world were..” where speakers ask their interlocutors to accept as a truth a hypothetical situation or set of circumstances:

(6.84)

<\$1> Yeah <\$O112> but you have <\\$O112> children in the hope of creating <\$O113> further primary friends <\\$O113>.

<\$2> <\$O112> Where's the fun in that? <\\$O112> <\$O113> Yeah in the hope. Yeah. <\\$O113> **But you've had these children say you have three children. All three of them you can't stand the <\$O114> sight of <\\$O114>.**

(CANCODE No 90503002)

This kind of premise also often forms a pre-head to an Assessment:

(6.85)

<p><\$1> <\$=> <\$O5> If you brought someone up in a <\\$O5> say er <\\$=> Say er the clone of me was brought up in a family where all their family had worked at Burger King since the beginning of time and their parents both work at Burger King and their brothers and sisters <\$=> both work <\\$=> all work at Burger King and here's me living this life. So the person is probably going to think that she's going to end up working at Burger King.</p>	<p>Pre-head Inf 4</p>
<p>But <\$=> er I <\\$=> you know her expectations might be different but she's gonna be enough me not to be able to manage that I'm sure.</p>	<p>Inf 1</p>

(CANCODE No. 90505001)

Premises, like Assessments, prospect another ‘opinion carrying’ act in return, or an accept act (see section 6.3.4).

6.4.7 Information-transmitting acts (Inf 5).

This act most closely fits the description laid down by Sinclair and Coulthard (1975): “Realised by a statement. It differs from other uses of statement in that its sole function is to provide information. The only response is an acknowledgement of attention and understanding.” (p41). It is a non-opinion carrying informative, which simply passes on information which the speaker believes the hearer does not know, and is therefore ‘transactional’ in character, rather than discussive; it is not produced in order to prove a point (although since these are indisputable facts they still arguably can have a strong rhetorical effect). When this happens in discussion the line of argument is often temporarily suspended. In the following extract all \$1’s moves are embodied by Information transmitting acts (Inf 5s). The interactants have been discussing twins and clones, and disagreeing about whether they are mentally

and physically identical. \$2 has introduced the idea that because twins can be a brother and sister there can be gender related differences between them. \$1 then produces an Inf 5 in which she passes on her knowledge that identical twins can never differ in gender. \$2 treats her move as embodied by an Exemplification and Evaluates it, but \$1 insists on the status of her act as an Information-transmission with “this is true”. She goes on to produce another Inf 5, and this time \$1’s response shows that he accepts it as such as her tells her “I know that”, showing that he understands that her contribution has been aimed at straightforwardly ‘informing’ him:

(6.86)

<\$1> No. You cannot clone and be a different sex at the moment. It doesn't happen like that. I'm not saying it's impossible but <\$=> twins <\\$=> identical twins are always the same sex. Cos twins happen in two different ways. One time it's the the one zyg= the one egg is it called a zygote dividing and <\$=> being er e= e= the er <\\$=> One egg comes along and has been impregnated with a sperm and divides after the impregnation. <\$=> And <\$O91> one time <\\$O91> <\\$=>

<\$2> <\$O91> Well we don't <\\$O91> know this. This is all <\$O92> scientific shit <\\$O92>.

<\$1> <\$O92> No it's not. <\$=> It's <\\$=> <\\$O92> This is true. This true is true. This <\$O93> definitely <\\$O93> true.

<\$2> <\$O93> <\$H> But <\\$H> <\\$O93>

<\$1> Twins are made in two different ways. <\$=> You get you can <\\$=> Or three different ways. You can have two eggs impregnated by two different <\$O94> sperm <\\$O94>.

<\$2> <\$O94> Yeah. <\\$O94> I know that yeah.

(CANCODE No.90505001)

6.4.8 Summarise (Inf 6).

Interactants use this act to define and/or summarise their own argument (see (6.87), below), their interlocutor's argument, (see (6.88)) or the discussion so far (see (6.89)). Heritage (1985, p102-3) points out that this summarising an interlocutor's preceding talk allows the speaker to change the perspective of their interlocutor's contribution, for example by making implicit aspects explicit, or by altering the emphasis (see (6.88)). This is usually done for argumentative effect, with the speaker's own agenda behind the summary, so that the speaker's summary is on his/her own terms; see (6.87-8) below:

(6.87)

<\$2> But the point I'm trying to make is that we all walk round with a set of prejudices and ideas about people [BCH <\$1> Uh-huh] and we will make assumptions when we meet people <29> regardless of <29> what, y'know, what <30> we know about them.<30>

(Extract from 'religion' text)

(6.88)

<\$2> Yeah there's a long <\$H> list <\\$H> of positive aspects. <\$=>

I'm just sort of saying at the moment I just can't see myself <\\$=>

<\$1> Yes but that's <\$O201> at the moment <\\$O201>. Even you're saying At the moment.

(CANCODE No. 90503002)

(6.89)

<\$1> But that's where we must <\$O89> disagree about <\\$O89> twins and clones.

(CANCODE No. 90505001)

As with (6.87-8) above, this act is often lexically signalled by the present continuous tense, most commonly: *I'm saying* or *you're saying*. It is also frequently signalled by turn-initial *So*. Out of a total number of 95 Summarise acts in the mini- corpus, 71% of them contain this kind of lexical signalling:

<i>I'm/I was (not) saying/ arguing</i>	<i>You're/ you were saying</i>	<i>You said</i>	<i>I said</i>	<i>So</i>
38 (40%)	9 (9%)	2 (2%)	5 (5%)	13 (14%)

As I have argued elsewhere (section 6.3.3) this act frequently embodies the Focussing move, and could therefore appear almost anywhere in the discourse, embodying almost any type of move; although there are no examples in the data of its embodying a Response or a Follow-up. However, this act may 'interrupt' the structure, appearing as an Response/Initiation after a Response has been produced:

(6.90)

<\$1> What why what come on why's it naïve what's the	R/I (EI 1b)
<\$2> Because you're assuming that unless something can be proven then its not legitimate <17> and its not real <\17> and there's no <18> truth in it<\18>	R (Rep)

<p><\$1> <17> No I don't no <\17> <18> No I'm not saying <\18> that at all you're inferring that</p>	<p>R/I (Inf 6)</p>
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(Extract from 'religion' text)

As with other opinion carrying acts, this act prospects another Response/Initiatory opinion carrying move or an Accepting Response.

Elicitations

6.4.9 Elicit:opinion (El 1).

This act consists of elicits which are asking for an interlocutor's opinion rather than information (for example (6.91) below). When this act embodies either an Initiation or a Response/Initiation it always receives either a Reply (77%) in which the interlocutor states their opinion or gives a yes/no decision about what they think, a Challenge (9%) another Elicit (11%) or a Temporisation (2%).

(6.91)

<\$2> <\$O257> <\$=> I'm getting <\\$=> I'm getting <\\$O257> lost here. What are you saying about twins then?

<\$1> I'm saying <\$O258> that they are fundamentally <\\$O258> the same. Yeah.

(CANCODE No. 90503002)

The Elicits received in response to an Elicit: opinion mostly take the form of the speaker stating their opinion and then asking the interlocutor for theirs, often by the use of an elicit: agreement:

(6.92)

<p><\$2> +<\$O29> but say it <\\$O29> happened after the the date anyway after the time that you're allowed. What would you do? Arrange to get it adopted or think Right I'm gonna have to cope with this.</p>	E1 1
<p><\$1> I just wouldn't want to though would you?</p>	E1 3
<p><\$2> I mean it sounds selfish but <\$=> I'm not <\\$=> I don't know if I could.</p>	Rep

(CANCODE No. 90503002)

Like Premises, Elicit: opinions can ask the interlocutor to accept a hypothetical situation, and then comment on it. This is often characterised by the use of a “what if...” construction. In the following extract, \$2 moves from this ‘hypothetical’ type of Elicit: opinion to the firmer ground of a ‘universal truth’ type of Premise via \$3’s return move:

(6.93)

<p><\$2> So what if someone has a religious experience that makes them believe, they’ve had a very physical experience that convinces <13> them<\13></p>	R/I (E1 1)
<p><\$3> <13> <G?> they believe <\13> that. Its not true. Its not repeatable.</p>	R/I (Inf 1)
<p><\$2> No just because its not repeatable doesn’t mean it didn’t happen though. <pause> There are lots of things that aren’t repeatable but they still happened.</p>	R/I (Inf 4)

(Extract from ‘religion’ text)

6.4.10 Elicit: clarify (E1 1b)

Burton (1980) identifies a type of Challenging move in which the speaker “ask(s) for clarification of information about the identification of objects, persons, ideas in the discourse topic”. However, as I have argued elsewhere (section 4.3.1) this elicitation does not qualify as a challenge because it does not then demand a restatement or verification of this previous utterance. It instead prospects an explanation of, or justification for, a preceding opinion. In this way it always embodies a Response/Initiation.

(6.94)

<p><\$2> <\$O41> Mm. <\\$O41> <\$E> laughs <\\$E> I'm sure a lot of people don't think about the risk involved. They just fancy having children.</p>	R/I (Inf 4)
<p><\$1> <\$=> Oh like yeah but <\\$=></p>	(int)
<p><\$2> Some= someone they can share things with as they're getting older. See them grow up.</p>	R/I cont'd
<p><\$1> Why? Yeah but why is it good to see them grow up?</p>	R/I (E1 1b)

(CANCODE No.90503002)

(6.95)

<p><\$1> Oh I don't think that's true. That's not true.</p>	R/I (Inf 1)
<p><\$2> But why isn't it?</p>	R/I (E1 1b)

(CANCODE No. 90505001)

As can be seen from the above examples, Elicit: clarifies employ *wh*-interrogatives in their construction. Of a total 24 of these acts in the mini-corpus, *why* appears 15 times, and *what* 6 times. Of the remaining 3, one uses *how* in “How do you know?” and another uses *where* in “where does this fit in with the idea?” The final one uses a construction which avoids the use of *what* by taking the form “And they are?”

Elicits 2-3 are ‘leading questions’; elicits in which the speaker states an opinion. In these types of elicits the speakers are not seeking information in that they are asking questions where they have a good idea what the answer will be, but not in the ‘testing’ sense; they can be an attempt to lead the answerer to certain conclusions. They are also interrogatives which state the speaker’s viewpoint without relinquishing the attacking stance (2nd turn position).

6.4.11 The Defining elicit (El 2)

Here the speaker summarises someone else’s argument, often with their own agenda in mind, i.e. in order to point out the flaws in that argument: e.g. “so you think murderers are insane, and therefore shouldn’t be punished for what they’ve done but given counselling instead?” In the following extract, \$2 is trying to argue that \$1’s belief in the atom is based on hearsay and is an act of faith, in the same way as is religious people’s belief in God:

(6.96)

<\$2> So you believe in the atom [BCH <\$1> Mmm] because you’ve heard say <02>that the atom exists? <\02>

(Extract from ‘religion’ text)

However, sometimes speakers use this act simply to arrive at a definition of what their opponent's argument is:

(6.97)

<p><\$1> You know if they say What's that then you can just say Ball. That's a ball. <\$=> And they go <\\$=> And they're happy. But <\$O143> when they start <\\$O143> saying Why is this like this Mum?</p>	<p>Inf 1</p>
<p><\$2> <\$O143> They go <\\$O143> What is a ball?</p>	<p>EI 2</p>
<p><\$1> Well yeah. When they start getting concepts+</p>	<p>Rep</p>
<p><\$2> Mm.</p>	<p>R3</p>
<p><\$1> +and asking questions about concepts. <\$=></p>	<p>Rep</p>

(CANCODE No. 90503002)

This act bears a strong resemblance to Heritage's (1985) notion of 'formulations', which he described as "summarizing, glossing, or developing the gist of an informant's earlier statements". He argued that it was "rare in conversation" but that "in institutional settings it is most commonly undertaken by questioners." (p100). Hutchby (1996) argues that formulations can be benign, or 'co-operative', where a version of the interlocutor's argument to which they can agree is offered to them. (p53). They can also be used by hosts on talk radio shows to "contentiously reconstruct the position advanced by the caller" (p53) and he goes on to argue that "by relying on his ability to formulate the gist or upshot of the caller's remarks the host can issue challenges over some underlying agenda at work in the caller's

contribution” (p54). Hutchby calls formulations a ‘second position resource’ where the speaker retains the offensive by using elicits to avoid having to state their opinion and expose themselves to attack.

6.4.12 Elicit: agreement (El 3)

This act invites the interlocutor to agree with the speaker’s assessment, and often takes the form of a tag interrogative. Speakers use this act to express an opinion (usually their own unless they are ‘playing devil’s advocate’ for some reason) and it prospects agreement or disagreement in the form of a Reply or a Response/Initiatory opinion carrying move.

(6.98)

<\$2> <14> I can’t repeat y’know <\14> I can’t repeat being born, but you all three of you believe that I was born, don’t you?

(Extract from ‘religion’ text)

(6.99)

R. But life, er, life is going to be tough, isn’t it?

S. Of course life is tough

(Moral maze text 1)

Sometimes it invites the addressee to agree in such a way as to make it seem that it would be unreasonable not to agree, for example.

(6.100)

<\$1> <\$O6> But you've got to admit <\\$O6> that the possibility that I'm right is also true.

6.4.13 The Rhetorical Elicit (E1 4).

These are 'questions' which appear virtually rhetorical, where the speaker is not really asking for the hearer actually to provide an explanation; s/he is in fact arguing that theirs is the only viable assessment of the situation on offer. Because of the 'potential' this act has for being Replied to as to an elicit, because of its grammatical form (interrogative), and because they retain the second turn position 'attacking' stance, which has the function of displacing the 'burden of proof' onto their interlocutor, this act is classified in this taxonomy as a type of Elicitation (see (6.101) below).

(6.101)

E. Yes, my quite inoffensive point was there's very little compulsion upon boys, at any rate, by government, and that the people who've been neglecting sport are not the kids, who, given half the chance, do it, but a great many teachers in comprehensives, who think of a whole lot of excuses, to go on a crusade from one skive to the next

S. Er, may I ask you a question please,. How much work do you do without pay? How much volunteer work do you do that is your job, not a hobby? Not something you do by choice?

Rhetorical elicits are not used so much to carry the speakers own opinion as to negatively evaluate the reasoning in, or premises involved with, all or part of the hearer's previous utterance, and thereby attack it. For example in (6.102) below, \$2 is trying to arrive at a flaw in \$1's argument:

(6.102)

<\$1> Well it depends how you look at it. If you're looking at it from the cat's point of view I think it's from sex. It's for sex. But if you look at it from like an evolutionary point of view the reason why cats have a implanted urge to have sex is so that they will reproduce and continue the <\$O75> species <\\$O75>.

<\$2> <\$O75> Yeah. <\\$O75> So how do we know we're not like that?

<\$1> Yeah but the fact is from the cat's point of view it's just to have sex.

(CANCODE No. 90503002)

They require a linguistic response, and have the sense of ‘asking’ about them, but can equally be treated by the hearer as opinion carrying acts. In the mini-corpus of discussive data, Rhetorical elicits are treated as a method of stating an opinion a total of 23 times (62%) (see (6.103) below) but are answered like an elicit 11 times (30%) (see (6.104) below), receiving 8 Replies and 3 Challenges. Interestingly, on 3 occasions a Rhetorical elicit does not receive any kind of response; a Focussing or Organisational move is produced which redirects the discourse. It could be concluded that on these occasions the Rhetorical elicit is indeed ‘unanswerable’ either as a statement of opinion or as an elicitation (see (6.105); also (6.101) above is followed by an Organisational move) and its producer could be said to have ‘won’ at least that locally contextual part of the argument:

(6.103)

<\$1> Only your primary friends and how many of <\$O107> those <\\$O107> have we	R/I (E1 4)
--	------------

got?	
<\$2> <\$O107> Yeah. <\\$O107> Yeah but how many children do you have?	R/I (El 4)
<\$1> Yeah but <\$O108> it's just multiplying <\\$O108> it so you've got your primary friends and you've got your kids.	R/I (inf 4)

(CANCODE No. 90503002)

(6.104)

<\$1> <\$O114> <\$E> laughs <\\$E> <\\$O114> Yeah but <\$O115> what likelihood of is that <\\$O115> really? <\$O116> Like <\\$O116>	R/I (El 4)
<\$2> <\$O116> Well <\\$O116> I don't know. <\$O117> There are a lot of families that are like that. <\\$O117>	R (Rep)

(CANCODE No. 90503002)

(6.105)

<\$1> But do you accept that pe- that s- that that that people exist which can prove the existence of atoms I mean erm	R/I (El 3)
<\$2> Yes because I have faith,	R (Rep)
<11>what what makes you believe <\11> that people can <12> do that? <\12>	I (El 4)
<\$1> <11> What I no no no er<\11> <12> no I mean <\12> what I'm trying to make a distinction between is the idea of faith and the idea of belief and how religion is wholly about belief whereas and you and your and your personal framework yeah I mean there could be a certain amount of erm faith in there but erm y'know somewhere er somewhere down the line in the world there exists people who can+	R/I (focus) (Inf 6)

(Extract from 'religion' text)

Replies to Rhetorical elicits, while fulfilling the ‘Reply’ requirements, are unequivocally opinion carrying, contentious utterances, because Rhetorical elicits are designed by the speakers who produce them to be ‘unanswerable’ questions, which point out to the hearer the ‘unanswerable’ nature of the speaker’s position, as they throw with their question an irretrievable spanner into the works of their interlocutor’s argument. Therefore if a Rhetorical elicit receives an answer the answerer is showing that, far from this elicit illustrating a weakness in their reasoning, they can provide an immediate retort.

6.4.14 Elicit:inform (El 5).

This is the elicit which most closely resembles an ‘ordinary’ question. It is asking for information, which is not already known to the speaker. Replies to this act consist of supplying that information. As with Information-transmitting informatives (Inf 5) and Elicit:confirms (El 5b), where this act occurs the discussive nature of the discourse is often temporarily suspended.

6.4.15 Elicit: confirm (El 5b)

Following Tsui (1994) an elicit: confirm “invite(s) the addressee to confirm the speaker’s assumption. ...(they) can be realized by tag interrogatives...declaratives and positive and negative polar interrogatives.” (p82).

6.4.16 Directives

Are there any real directives in discussion? Utterances like “look at it from my point of view” could occur, but this is less a request for action and more an appeal to keep

the floor for a while (a Starter) or a location of self in the discourse (Inf 2). Arguably, it has the function of suggesting to the hearer that their mind is not open enough for argument on this point; its like saying 'listen' interlocutors very rarely say 'listen' in order to get people to listen, because in conversation the fact that the hearer is listening is usually a given.

Similarly, it is feasible (though it does not occur in the mini-corpus) that an interactant might produce an utterance of the order of "why don't you look at it this way" and again, although the form of this looks like advice, the discourse function it is performing is that of an appeal to hold the floor (a Starter).

In this way, one way of recognising the discussion text type will be the lack of directives.

Responses

6.4.17 Accepts

This act accepts (in the sense of agrees with, or concedes to) an opinion carrying informative or a Rhetorical elicit. Any disagreeing response would be a Response /Initiatory move (see negative responses, section 4.3). Accept acts may contain some evaluative element which could need further comment from the initiatory speaker in the form of Follow-up.

6.4.18 Acknowledge

Acknowledge acts consist of a minimal response token, or a repetition of the preceding utterance. It shows that the preceding Initiation or Response/Initiation has been understood. It never receives a Follow-up move.

6.4.19 Temporisation

Following Tsui, (1994) a Temporisation does not fulfil the interactional expectations set up by the preceding move, nor does it Challenge the presuppositions inherent in it; it “is postponing decision-making” (p59). It is realised by *I don't know* or similar, and in discussion it appears after Elicits 1-3 which all prospect a statement of opinion of some kind. (*I don't know* produced in response to an Elicit: inform would constitute a Reply.)

(6.106)

<\$1> <\$=> Not ne= you know I mean <\\$=> Not even necessarily artistic. <\$O65> But surely <\\$O65> you've got <\$O66> to admit <\\$O66> they're gonna be intelligent.

<\$2> <\$O65> I don't know. <\\$O65> <\$O66> I don't know. <\\$O66> I don't know.

(CANCODE No. 90505001)

6.4.20 Replies

Replies consist of acts which fulfil the expectations inherent in the elicitation which produced them, and provide the missing information (or opinion) it requested.

Elicit: opinion is followed by a Reply which is very like an Assessment, except it does not necessarily carry the need for further linguistic activity. It resembles the act

following an agreement to a preceding assessment in that respect, prospecting only acknowledgement if anything; though they can receive a disagreeing Response/ Initiatory Assessment.

6.4.21 Continuers and turn passers (R3)

Backchannelling behaviour in the mini-corpus of discussive data has been coded as R3, with the exception of one text, 'religion' where more minimal BC behaviour has been inserted into the text using the device [BCH]. This 'minimal' BC is differentiated from continuers using various criteria, outlined in detail in section 4.6. and briefly summarised below.

R3 moves:

- appear at point of transition relevance and pass "the opportunity to do any sort of fuller turn". (Schegloff, 1981 p87)
- Can demonstrate a greater level of involvement (e.g agreement) with the ongoing speaker turn.
- Can consist of non-minimal response tokens, or behaviour such as finishing the speaker's sentence for them, which can be seen as encouraging the speaker to continue and demonstrating a greater level of involvement, as with (6.107) below.

(6.107)

<\$2> But <\$=> I'm just <\\$=> I'm just suggesting <\$=> things that er <\\$=> a possibility that someone who's cloned the same as you has got something in their head that nobody can work out what

it is. $=>$ It's just something I know you might say I'm getting spiritual but it's like something that you just can't erm $=>$

1 Quantify.

2 Right. $=>$ You just you $=>$ You can't reproduce. You can't sort of put it down under a microscope and say

(CANCODE No. 90505001)

Minimal BC:

- Demonstrates that the hearer is paying attention.
- Is brief, consisting of minimal response tokens, spoken quickly, and inserted in the discourse in between subordinate clauses in the speaker turn, or at natural pauses in the rhythm of the speaker's talk, or even simultaneously with the speaker's talk.

6.4.22 Follow-up.

Follow-up is realised by an Accept act (where and Accepting agreement has already been produced by the interlocutor) or an Acknowledgement. As argued elsewhere, this move is produced at times of convergence between interlocutors in discursive discourse.

6.4.23 Organisational moves.

The BBC Radio 4 programme, the Moral maze, from which two of the texts in the mini-corpus were taken, has a format where one interactant acts as the 'host' or

chairperson, while the other interactants consist of an ‘expert witness’, who will have publicly expressed his or her views on a particular subject at some point in the recent past, and a panel of ‘experts’ who each in turn ask the witness questions based on this topic. The chairperson ostensibly has ‘control’ over the ensuing discussion, and allocates turns to the various members of the panel. These turn-allocating moves have been classified in the analysis as ‘Organisational’. They consist of acts in which the chairperson nominates an interactant, for example:

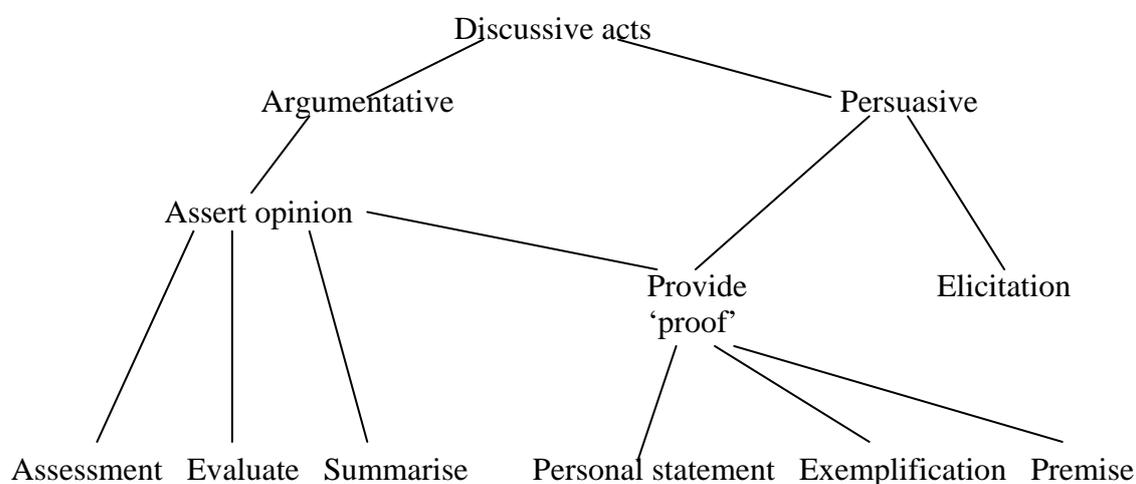
(6.108)

\$1 Ian Hargreaves your witness.

(Moral maze text 2)

Summary.

To summarise, argumentative and persuasive techniques can be represented diagrammatically as follows:



6.3. Exchange structure for discussion : Argument and Persuasion

Relating the above (section 6.1) ideas about discussion to the work of the Birmingham school, the speech acts involved in this text type will be about stating opinions or arguments, and persuading by providing ‘proof’ of various forms. The exchange structure which embodies these speech acts will reflect argumentative and persuasive techniques.

6.3.1 Response/Initiation.

A vital part of any discussion consists of at least one participant expressing their views, opinions or assessments and being subsequently disagreed with by at least one other participant. Hutchby (1996) argues that argument consists of ‘Action-Opposition sequences’ where an interactional move is treated by the interlocutor as an ‘arguable’ and an oppositional move is produced in response to it, so that “the first move in an argument sequence is also the second move in an underlying Action-Opposition sequence”. (p22) This opposition move is then itself treated as an arguable action, and an opposition move produced in response, forming a linked sequence. Although analysis based on the Sinclair/Coulthard model emphasises prospection through the Initiatory move as opposed to Hutchby’s view of argument as “response centred” (1996, p23) some discourse acts can be seen to be inherently ‘arguable’, for example those which express a speaker’s views (Informative 1a, the assessing act, most obviously achieves this end, but Informatives 2, 3 and 4 (see below) also ‘carry’ opinion). Hutchby (1996) concedes that “persons can ‘go looking’ for an argument, for instance by trying to needle a co-participant, making

blatantly controversial claims, and so on” (p23) In this way, these kinds of acts prospect a response which disagrees or agrees (argues) and/or attacks or defends, (persuades) the viewpoint inherent in them. In other words, a statement of opinion prospects another statement of opinion, fulfilling either an arguing or persuading function. A typical feature of the discourse structure of discussion involves this repeating pattern, with sequences of recurring Response /Initiations. These sequences will often consist of opinion carrying acts being repeatedly produced by interlocutors as they directly contradict each other over and over again. As Horvath and Eggins (1995) argue, “recursion is possible whenever disagreement arises, for example, whenever a counteropinion is disagreed with or evidence is rejected” (p43). It is to avoid this possible stalemate that one or both of the interlocutors will move to a ‘persuading’ sequence (see ‘persuasion’ below), or to an extended Exemplification.

These recurring Response/Initiatory argument sequences appear in various different ways.

Chaining

Sometimes interlocutors will simply repeat their own previous assessment in response to a contradictory remark from their ‘opponent’. Faced with this argumentative strategy the ‘opponent’ will often react in kind, and restatements or reformulations of the same act are produced in the form of Response/Initiatory moves, as interlocutors continue to assert their conflicting opinions. In the examples below, these moves are embodied by assessing acts (Inf 1s). This kind of argumentative patterning is characterised by the use of turn initial polarity terms

(“Yes” and “No”) as with (6.7) below, line 5, and negation (see the utterances in bold, below) of which (6.8) is an extreme example.

(6.7)

1 <\$1> <\$=> I think < \$=> Yeah. <\$=> No I < \$=> That's it. Er they would have	R/I (Inf 1)
2 to learn that lesson.	
3 <\$2> They wouldn't .	R/I (Inf 1)
4 <\$1> Either that or be miserable with themselves.	R/I (Inf 1)
5 <\$2> No they would not . They might be perfectly happy doing whatever they're doing.	R/I (Inf 1)

(CANCODE No. 90505001)

(6.8)

<\$2> It's <\$O218> your < \$O218> upbringing at the end of the day.	R/I (Inf 1)
<\$1> <\$O218> <\$=> Those < \$=> < \$O218> It's not your <\$O219> upbringing < \$O219>.	R/I (Inf 1)
<\$2> <\$O219> It is . < \$O219>	R/I (Inf 1)
<\$1> It's not .	R/I (Inf 1)
<\$2> It fucking <\$O220> is < \$O220> .	R/I (Inf 1)
<\$1> <\$O220> It's < \$O220> not .	R/I (Inf 1)

<\$2> Mm.	R3
<\$1> It's not.	R/I (Inf 1)
<\$2> It is.	R/I (Inf 1)

(CANCODE No. 90503002)

Even when interlocutors are not simply repeating or reformulating their own previous utterances, where an opinion carrying act has been produced, the interlocutor will often wish to counter this act on 'its own terms', i.e. turn the opponents argumentative strategy back on him/her by responding with another act of the same type. As McCarthy (1991) argues, supportive discourse has 'incremental' turns, i.e. interlocutors move the discourse forward, and turns rarely repeat themselves. By using non-incremental turns, arguers show their lack of convergence. (p132-133). In this way chains or pairs of acts are again produced. In example (6.9) below \$1 produces an assessing act (Inf 1) which is directly contradicted by another assessing act from \$2. In response to this \$1 produces a 'rhetorical' elicited (El 4) which in turn receives another El 4:

(6.9)

<\$1> Yeah. But I'd say that that you know we had this primary <\$H> frecondary <\$H> friend argument <\$=> that you <\$=> <\$O106> that you <\$O106> couldn't do that with your secondary friends.	R/I (Inf 1)
<\$2> <\$O106> Yeah. <\$O106> No. That's what I'm saying. You you can do	R/I (Inf 1)

this sort of bonding with friends though.	
<\$1> Only your primary friends and how many of <\$O107> those <\\$O107> have we got?	R/I (EI 4)
<\$2> <\$O107> Yeah. <\\$O107> Yeah but how many children do you have?	R/I (EI 4)

(CANCODE No. 90503002)

Interlocking

Alternatively different acts may be produced in an interlocking structure, as each interlocutor persists with their argument on ‘their own terms’ i.e. continue to use the same act to present their argument. In the same way as chaining, this can be achieved using repetition or reformulation, as with example (6.10) where repeated personal statements (Inf 2s) are produced by one interlocutor in response to repeated assessing acts from the other; or one speaker might re-use one type of act in response to their interlocutor re-using another (see example 6.11)

(6.10)

<\$2> <\$=> <\$O124> Or if <\\$O124> you're thinking <\\$=> No. That's what I've just said I wouldn't <\$O125>even think of that <\\$O125>.	Re-I (Inf 2)
<\$1> <\$O125> I think that's one of <\\$O125> the reasons.	R/I (Inf 1)
<\$2> I wouldn't even think about that.	R/I (Inf 2)
<\$1> Well I think it's one of the reasons.	R/I (Inf 1)

(CANCODE No. 90503002)

(6.11)

<p><\$2> With your friends I mean <\$=> you can < \$=> you can change until you find the right person <\$=> that's < \$=> you've just completely got <\$=> that < \$=> just a real bond with.</p>	R/I (Inf 4)
<p><\$1> But you have a bond with your family <\$O111> even if < \$O111> they're the not the same as you don't you like that's what I'm saying.</p>	R/I (Inf 1)
<p><\$2> <\$O111> Well yeah. < \$O111> Even if they're not the same as you but I mean like there's some families just can't even speak to each other. They hate each other's guts.</p>	R/I (Inf 4)
<p><\$1> Yeah <\$O112> but you have < \$O112> children in the hope of creating <\$O113> further primary friends < \$O113>.</p>	R/I (Inf 1)

(CANCODE No. 90503002)

In this way a typical structure for argumentative passages involves recursive Response/Initiations embodied by either interlocking or repeating chains of acts of the same type. Sequences of R/I moves (more than two R/I moves in next position to each other) occur 55 times in the mini-corpus of discussive data, involving 361 individual R/I moves. This is a very large percentage (73%) of the total number of R/I moves, showing that in discussive discourse the R/I move occurs recursively in the majority of cases. These 55 sequences are often embodied by chained or interlocked acts; 39 either entirely consisted of chained acts, or involved segments where chaining of acts took place (141 chained acts), while interlocking acts

occurred as part or all of a sequence 23 times (102 interlocked acts). 7 chains involved both an interlocking and a chaining pattern (see table below).

	Sequences involving chaining	Sequences involving interlocking
No of sequences	39 (71%)	23 (42%)
No of moves	153 (31% of the total number of R/I moves)	108 (22% of the total number of R/I moves)

Similarly, pairs of R/I moves occur 25 times of which 10 of these are chains.

Agreements and other face-saving prefaces to disagreements.

As we have seen, disagreements to preceding assessments mainly take the form of a Response/Initiatory move. In many cases these moves can be identified through the turn-initial use of ‘face-saving’ prefaces. As Pomerantz (1984) argues, disagreements to assessments will often open with a class of utterances Pomerantz refers to as “‘uh’s, ‘well’s and the like” (p72) which Hutchby (1996) calls “dispreference markers”. They may also be prefaced by small pieces of talk which display a qualified agreement with the preceding assessment, and both these devices serve to mitigate the confrontational nature of the disagreement. Brown and Levinson (1987) call this “token agreement” and identify it as a positive politeness strategy, in which speakers try “to appear to agree or to hide disagreement – to respond to a preceding utterance with ‘yes, but...’ in effect, rather than a blatant ‘No’.” (p114) The varied use of these prefaces is one factor which separates Van Eemeren and Grootendorst’s (1984) ‘intellectual’ view of discussion from more

angry, confrontational argument; Goodwin (1983) in his examination of children's disputes, labels non-mitigated disagreement as 'aggravated' opposition, which is a more intense, less 'friendly' type of disagreement.

In example (6.12) below, \$2 has been criticising the clergy (of which \$1 is a member) for not being able to agree on theological issues and present a united front to the laity. \$1 replies that theological disputes need not cause a division in the church and \$2 responds by 'accepting' that, although s/he goes on to disagree entirely, suggesting that it might 'cause splits' in the church.

(6.12)

<\$1> I think MX is probably the most central figure in the churches within <\$E> place name <\\$E>. Right? And we are friendly. We have a lot of meetings you know <\$H> not about <\\$H> <\$G?> <\$H> we pass er each other in the street <\\$H>. We've shared quite a bit together. And he and I would know we would take a different view on certain issues.

<\$2> Mm.

<\$1> Needn't be division. <\$O312> Needn't be division. <\\$O312>

<\$2> <\$O312> I can accept <\\$O312> that you know. <\$=> But if it's going to cause splits <\$O313> in the chu= <\\$O313> <\\$=>

(CANCODE No. 90640001)

Another type of preface consists of a partial repetition of the preceding utterance, as if the speaker at least partially agrees with it, but this 'partial agreement' may in fact

serve to point out the flaw in its reasoning. In the following extract, \$2 uses the partial agreement to point out that \$1 is making an unreasonable generalisation about the nature of family life:

(6.13)

<\$1> But you have a bond with your family <\$O111> even if <\\$O111> they're the not the same as you don't you like that's what I'm saying.

<\$2> <\$O111> **Well yeah.** <\\$O111> **Even if they're not the same as you** but I mean like there's some families just can't even speak to each other. They hate each other's guts.

(CANCODE No. 90503002)

'Yeah but...'

An extremely common construction in informal discussive discourse which flags the move in which it appears as a Response/Initiatory disagreement to a preceding assessment, is the use of turn-initial *yeah, but*. This is the most minimal form of 'agreeing' preface, and like partial repetition it suggests that the speaker appreciates, and to a point agrees with their interlocutor's preceding assessment, but has noticed a flaw in their reasoning. As Schiffrin (1985) argues: "A willingness to acknowledge the other's point of view before attacking that point is so frequent in argument that it is often reduced to ...(a) minimal token of ritualised agreement, in which the speaker displays mere awareness of the need for a display of co-operation, as in *yes but* prefaces" (p43). In this way interactants avoid having to overtly disagree with each other, although that may well be what in fact is happening.

(6.14)

<\$1> <\$=> What's <\$O72> to <\\\$=> Why are they not <\\\$O72> the same? Why are we not fundamentally the same? Just because this person has made different choices and come out with different <\$O73> results <\\\$O73>.

<\$2> <\$O73> **Yeah but** <\\\$O73> why have they made different choices then? <\$=> They're never <\$O74> ever gonna be the same and you're never ever gonna be <\\\$O74> <\\\$=>

(CANCODE No. 90505001)

The prevalence of this use of *yeah but* is analysed in the table below, where we can see that, although perhaps the most common use of the word *yeah* might be expected to be as a Response token, in fact it actually occurs more frequently as a preface.

	No. of acts containing the word <i>yeah</i>	Occurrences as <i>yeah but</i> (all R/I moves)	Occurrences of <i>yeah</i> as part of a preface in an opinion carrying move.	Occurrences of <i>yeah</i> as part of an extended R	Occurrences of <i>yeah</i> as a minimal response token.
Yeah	235	83 (35%)	25 (11%)	42 (18%)	56 (24%)

Yeah also forms part of moves which directly agree with the interlocutor but which are Response-Initiations, and it is also used mid-sentence in Initiations and Challenges as a stylistic feature (see (6.15) below). This accounts for the remaining 22% of acts containing *yeah* which do not feature on the above table.

(6.15)

<\$2> <06> I'm believing in something <\06> **yeah**, I am having faith that the people who tell me that the world is made of atoms are telling me the truth and some gut feeling tells me that its real its true.

(Extract from 'religion' text)

6.3.2 The Challenging move in discussion.

Maynard (1985) introduces the idea that the presuppositions inherent in an utterance can give rise to what he calls 'opposition' or argumentative moves. He contrasts semantic presuppositions which reflect the way that "lexical items or syntactical constructions in any given sentence....necessarily propose prior facts whose truth is not in question" with pragmatic presuppositions which reflect "how the meaning of a statement....is dependent on matters of context, such as common-sense and sociocultural knowledge for information that is taken for granted as true" (p14) Both types of presupposition can be challenged in discourse, but Maynard examines the way pragmatic presuppositions can form the 'arguable' content of an utterance which the speaker might not have been aware was contentious. Where a discussion is in progress, this kind of behaviour can lead to a 'narrowing down' of the argument, perhaps enabling interlocutors to see where the true focus of their disagreement lies. In the following extract, \$1's point has been that he finds the 'blind' unquestioning faith of religious people unacceptable, where \$2 has been comparing religious belief with the idea that everyone has a set of inherent 'prejudgements' which they use to analyse their context, and the people around them: " <\$2> <26>We all when we <\26> come across people make assumptions <27 about them <\27>" This different interpretation of religious belief/faith finally comes to light in the following extract

where each interlocutor uses a Challenging move to attack the presuppositions inherent in the other's utterance. Once these presuppositions have been identified as 'arguable' the pattern returns to Response/Initiatory assessing acts, as the interactants 'argue' about what constitutes faith and belief. (see (6.16)below)

(6.16)

<\$2> And if Christians believe, if a Christian believes that you will go to hell if you're not if you don't believe in God +	I (Inf 4)
<\$1> No they have faith in that	R/I (ignored) (Inf 4)
<\$2> + <28> then they're just <\28>	C (KS 1) (Inf 4 cont'd)
<\$1> <28> They don't believe, <\28> I mean there's a	Re-I (Inf 4)
<\$2> It's the same thing.	C (L 6) (Inf 5)
<\$1> No it isn't, belief and faith is very different.	C (L 6) (Inf 5)
<\$2> Well I'd say faith is a subset of belief.	R/I (Inf 1)
<\$1> No.	R/I (Inf 1)

(Extract from 'religion' text)

Challenging moves can also be used in discussion as a way of side-stepping an uncomfortable issue or redirecting the discussion. Where an interactant just ignores

another interactant's contribution in order to state their opinion, whatever that is, this is a (KS 1) Challenge: "He may refuse to give his attention" (See appendix 1). However, after this type of Challenge a Re-Initiatory move is not always produced, because if the first speaker's move has been ignored by the second speaker (whose move is therefore a Challenging move), it may be that the second speaker's Challenging move has 'moved the discussion on' to different point. In this way the first speaker would be ignoring the second speaker if s/he tried to Re-Initiate, i.e. restate his/her previous (ignored) move. Therefore KS 1 Challenges are rarely followed by Re-Initiatory moves. Completely ignoring a move in this way is highly confrontational behaviour, and may be seen as an attempt by the speaker to avoid a particular aspect of the subject under discussion, or to evade a weak area in their argument.

(6.17)

<p>1. <\$2> <39> But they're happy <\39> they're happy with their beliefs why hassle 2. them? <40> Let them be! <\40></p>	I
<p>3. <\$1> Yeah but they they've taught I mean, y'know, I mean throughout the years 4. they've, y'know, they've done, the Catholic Church <41> is responsible for so 5. many more <\41> crimes</p>	R/I (ignored)
<p>6. <\$2> <41> We have to listen, <\41> if you listen <42> to the news<\42> and 7. there's like scientists have just proved this, scientists <43> are putting 8. research <\43>into this</p>	C (KS 1)
<p>9. <\$1> <42> If there if there was <\42></p>	(int) C (KS 6)

10. <\$3> <43> But they haven't ,<43> the press are saying they've proved it.	
	R/I
11. <\$1> <44> The yeah the press say <44>	
	C (KS 1)
12. <\$2> <44> The scientists get <44> alot more press and alot more news	
13 attention than religious people bec- and you could say that's because religion	
14. stands still, but perhaps it	

(Extract from 'religion' text)

Here \$2's remark that 'if the Catholics are happy in their beliefs why should they be hassled?' is expressed as a kind of El 4, as if she believes there can be no retort to the 'live and let live' philosophy inherent in her utterance. However, she receives the reply that in fact the Catholics are responsible for 'crimes' and should therefore not be just 'let be', but \$2 ignores this and moves to the idea that science dominates the media. (lines 6-8). When part of her utterance here is challenged for its accuracy, she again chooses to ignore this, and reiterates her view that science gets more press attention than religious matters. (lines 12-14)

Challenge can also be used to call into question the validity of the argument and *ipso facto* the competence of the speaker who produced it. As Goodwin (1983) argues: "Opposition can thus call into question not only what has been said but also the general competence of someone who would produce such talk" (p149). In the example below \$1 challenges the validity of the comparison \$2 has been making between the mind of a sheep and the mind of a human in that, as humans, the interactants cannot know how a sheep thinks. \$2's retort to this attack is to turn the

challenge back on \$1, arguing that it is impossible to know how either mind works, so that his simile remains valid:

(6.18)

<p><\$1> <\$O25> No. But <\\$O25> that's that's what I'm saying. You can't draw that simile. You can't draw that comparison <\$O26> because you don't know how <\\$O26> a sheep's mind <\$O27> works. <=\$=> We don't know <\\$=> <\\$O27></p>	C (L 6) (Inf 6)
<p><\$2> <\$O26> What between sheep and humans. <\\$O26> <\$O27> But we don't know. <\$E> laughs <\\$E> <\\$O27> We don't know how human minds <\$O28> work. That's what I'm saying. <\\$O28></p>	C (L 6) (Inf 6)

(CANCODE No. 90505001)

6.3.3 Organisational/Focussing moves in discussion.

Focussing moves are a very useful argumentative tool which interactants often use in a metalinguistic way to 'take control' of the discussion, and to help the discussion to progress. They often take the form of 'Summarising' acts (Inf 6), which can sum up either the speaker's own argument, his/her opponent's argument, or the argument so far. The latter form of Summarising act is very similar to McCarthy's (1998) 'formulations', where speakers are "periodically summing up where they think the discourse is" (p36). He goes on to argue that formulations "enable participants to take the conversation in collaboration from one staging post to the next" (p36) which in discussion means that the argument can develop, and is less likely to reach a stagnant stalemate.

Focussing moves can be used in discussion to narrow the argument to a specific area of dispute. In example (6.19) below, \$1 has been taking an ‘anti-religion’ stance and \$2 has been opposing this. The discussion has been wide ranging, covering religious intolerance, media views of science and religion, the nature of faith etc. With the focussing act in lines 5, 6 and 8 \$1 narrows the field of argument by summarising his own argument in terms which redefine his stance as more specifically ‘anti-religious intolerance’.

(6.19)

1 <\$1> <47> Over the past few months what’s been going on <\47> over the past	R/I (Inf 3)
2 few months what’s been going on in the erm erm in the in the far East in around	
3. erm Israel is far more prevalent, I mean, y’know, that’s all down to religion,	
4. that’s all down to the politics of religion I should say.	
5 That’s probably what I’m getting at not so much religion per se, but the	I focus (inf 6)
6. politics of religion and how different religious+	
7 <\$2> And clashes.	R (Acc)
8 <\$1> +sects interact between	I focus cont’d

(Extract from ‘religion’ text)

Similarly interactants can summarise the argument so far, in order to pinpoint specific areas of dispute which they might feel are preventing them from reaching an agreement. In example (6.20) below the interactants have been disagreeing about nature and nurture, and how different environmental factors may influence the development of twins and make them turn out differently. \$2 has just declared that even with the same environment, twins may turn out differently, and \$1 at this point

uses a focussing move to identify the difference in their opinions, which is that \$1 believes that twins inherently think the same way as each other, and \$2 does not:

(6.20)

<\$1> But that's where we must <\$O89>disagree about <\\$O89> twins and clones..... Cos I think twins make the same basic decisions

(CANCODE No. 90505001)

Focussing moves can also be used to redirect the argument either because one interactant feels that it has 'gone astray', or moved away from the central topic under discussion. (see (6.21 and 6.22) below), or to move the discussion round to a topic the speaker is more interested in, as with (6.23 and 6.24) below:

(6.21)

R. I'm sorry to interrupt, but we're getting rather off the point, and its not the idleness or otherwise, of teachers, it is actually the nature of competitive sport, and whether its good for kids, and whether its<\$O12> necessary <\\$O12>for achievement.

(Moral maze text 1)

(6.22)

<\$2> +<\$O29> but say it <\\$O29> happened after the the date anyway after the time that you're allowed. What would you do? Arrange to get it adopted or think Right I'm gonna have to cope with this.

(CANCODE No. 90503002)

(6.23)

\$4 I don't want to talk so much about immigrants I want to talk about society as a whole and a snapshot of society, I want to read you something that you wrote, that ultimately there are certain core values about love of country, of parliamentary democracy, of city and countryside, of tolerance, courtesy, good humour and tradition. Do you think that's what twentieth century, twenty first century Britain is really like?

(Moral maze text 2)

(6.24)

<\$1> What about <\$=> the em <\\$=> the question <\$=> of <\\$=> of the growth of Europe <\$=> as a <\\$=> as a group though do you think we should have <\$=> a <\\$=> a more distinct policy for learning a language on the basis of that <\$=> this <\\$=> with nineteen ninety two coming up like they keep saying+

<\$2> Mm.

<\$1> +do you think <\$=> that <\\$=> that the countries that don't try very hard to learn a foreign language like England+

<\$2> Mm.

<\$1> +<\$=> should <\\$=> <\$O93> should <\\$O93> make a bigger effort?

(CANCODE No. 90071001)

Speakers can also use the focussing move to push the argument in a direction which proves a line of argument the speaker has been following. In example (6.25) below,

the speaker has been arguing that there should be room in the church for theological disagreement. He uses a focussing move as a powerful way of introducing what is actually an exemplification, in that the bishop of Durham is someone within the church whose views differ from the majority:

(6.25)

<p>Now I <I\$=> Who here has the same view of the Bishop of Durham+</p>	<p>I Focus (Frame) (EI 1)</p>
--	---

(CANCODE 90640001)

Similarly, in the following example \$2 uses a focussing move to try to turn the discussion towards an example from \$1's own life which he feels would prove his point, that it is a person's experiences that make them what they are. To do this he uses what McCarthy (1998) would term a 'recollection', which "refer(s) to participants' past experiences of social activities" and consists of "references to related or relevant other discourses." (p34-35) Here \$2 is linking his and \$1's present discussion with another discussion they had had the previous evening.

(6.26)

<\$2> Getting back to like what you were saying last night about erm the biggest turning point in your life.

(CANCODE No. 90505001)

Focussing moves embodied by Summarising acts are also used to ‘explain’ a line of argument. In the following extract (6.27), \$1 is answering two questions, which \$2 sees as separate issues, simultaneously, and she overtly declares this.

(6.27)

<\$1> Yeah. <\$=> But <\$O78> I'm just I'm <\$=> No I'm <\$O78> building both into <\$=> the s=
<\$=> <\$O79> to the same <\$O79> thing.

(CANCODE No 503002)

Similarly in (6.29) \$1 overtly declares that his entire argument strategy has been an attempt to draw a distinction between making judgements based on personal experience, and accepting someone else’s judgements based on their experiences, which is how he views religion. He does this by referring back to a point he made 23 moves earlier (6.28), so that (6.29) acts like a recollection *within* a discussion:

(6.28)

<\$1> <19> what I'm say, <19> what I'm saying is that's again, I mean y'know I mean somebody's judging me on something that is I find quite offensive whereas **my judgements on somebody could be based y'know Oh on my y'know my own experiences I mean somebody's judging on er me about something about something that they've been told by somebody else** that erm I mean y'know it can be the same with with racism racism is the same er a similar sort of thing they're judging somebody almost terminally so, fatally so, erm on something that they've heard or been told or th- that they rationally believe <20> about another race <20>

(6.29)

<\$1> <32> But that's not <\32> based on their own personal experiences, that's what I'm saying, that's the difference that I'm making.

(Extracts from 'religion' text)

Finally, Focussing moves are also employed as an argumentative tactic by interactants when they wish to metalinguistically signal that a "staging post" has been reached, some 'interim' resolution to the argument, where the interactants can 'agree to disagree'.

(6.30)

I mean you've got to admit we we surely we've got to a stage now where you have got to admit and I have got to admit that this is a purely subjective matter. And that we <\$O49> we <\\$O49> cannot prove either way. We <\$O50> could be <\\$O50> programmable machines.

(CANCODE No. 90505001)

In this way the focussing move is most often embodied by the Summarising act (Inf 6) as we can see from the following table:

Inf 1	Inf 1b	Inf 3	Inf 4	Inf 5	Inf 6	EI 1	EI 2	EI 3	EI 4	EI 5
2	1	4	1	2	16	8	2	1	1	1

Emergence

Focussing moves in discussive data often reveal the emergent nature of spoken discourse in contrast with written discourse, in that interactants work out their viewpoints in the process of discussing them with others, i.e. they do not necessarily begin a discussion with their opinions and/or arguments already minutely defined and pre-prepared. As Horvath and Eggins (1995) argue: “interactive exchanges of attitudes and judgements appear to represent an important means for interactants to explore their alignments on questions of obligation, necessity, right and wrong, and to establish positions of similarity and difference in the way they see the world.” (p44) In the following extract, \$1 has been attacking religion and religious people, and we can see him gradually coming round to the idea that it is precisely because religious groups do not adhere to the ‘live and let live’ philosophy which \$2 has tried to use in her defence of these groups, that \$1 despises them.

(6.31)

<p>1. <\$2> <39> But they're happy <39> they're happy with their beliefs why</p> <p>2. hassle them? <40> Let them be! <40></p>	<p>I (E1 4)</p>
<p>3. <\$1> Yeah but they they've taught I mean, y'know, I mean throughout the</p> <p>4. years they've, y'know, they've done, the Catholic Church <41> is responsible</p> <p>5. for so many more <41> crimes</p>	<p>R/I (inf 1) (ignored)</p>
<p>6. <\$2> <41> We have to listen, <41> if you listen <42> to the news<42> and</p> <p>7. there's like scientists have just proved this, scientists <43> are putting research</p> <p>8. <43>into this</p>	<p>C (KS 1) (Inf 4)</p>
<p>8. <\$1> <42> If there if there was <42></p>	<p>(int)</p>

<p>9. <\$3> <43> But they haven't ,<43> the press are saying they've proved it.</p>	<p>C (KS 6) (Inf 1)</p>
<p>10. <\$1> <44> The yeah the press say <44></p>	<p>R/I (Inf 4)</p>
<p>11. <\$2> <44> The scientists get <44> alot more press and alot more news 12.attention than religious people bec- and you could say that's because religion</p>	<p>C (KS 1) (Inf 1)</p>
<p>13. stands still, but perhaps it</p>	<p>R/I (ignored)</p>
<p>14. <\$1> No. <45> No I disagree <45></p>	<p>C (KS 1) (Inf</p>
<p>15. <\$2> <45> Does it ever occur <45> to you that religious people might not 16. want all this scientific stuff being thrown at them, y'know, you people talk</p>	<p>1 cont'd</p>
<p>17. about religious people y'know like stuffing <46> their ideas down your 18. <46> throat +</p>	<p>(int)</p>
<p>19. <\$1> <46> Over the past few years <46> Over the past few months</p>	<p>C (KS 1) cont'd</p>
<p>20. <\$2> +but scientists stuff their ideas down your throat constantly, you <47> 21. watch any shampoo advert its <47> all science.</p>	<p>R/I (Inf 3)</p>
<p>22.<\$1> <47> Over the past few months what's been going on <47> over the past 23. few months what's been going on in the erm erm in the in the far East in around</p>	<p>I focus (Inf 6)</p>
<p>24. erm Israel is far more prevalent, I mean, y'know, that's all down to religion, 25. that's all down to the politics of religion I should say.</p>	<p></p>
<p>26. That's probably what I'm getting at not so much religion per se, but the 27. politics of religion and how different religious+</p>	<p>R (Acc)</p>
<p>28. <\$2> And clashes.</p>	<p>I focus cont'd</p>
<p>29. <\$1> +sects interact between</p>	<p></p>

(Extract from 'religion' text)

Prior to this piece of text, the interactants had been discussing (and on \$1's part, negatively evaluating) the rigidity of religion and its resistance to change. \$2 with her remark in lines 1-2 therefore has just 'moved the goalposts' of the discussion around to accusing \$2 of intolerance, perhaps (as suggested earlier) to evade having to accept this negative evaluation of religious inflexibility. \$1 takes this accusation and turns it onto religion, which does not 'let the rest of us be' (to use \$2's words) but instead commits 'crimes'. \$2 again neatly side-steps this point by turning the accusation of intolerance back onto science and \$1, in that science dominates the media; "you people talk about religious people y'know like stuffing <46> their ideas down your <46> throat"...but..."scientists stuff their ideas down your throat constantly". We can see that \$1 then *redefines his standpoint* as he builds it out of these two strands of argument, one concerning the media and one concerning intolerance, which he draws together in lines 26-27 in a Summarising (Inf 6) act. He even makes a metalinguistic observation on the emergent nature of his opinion here, as he comments "That's probably what I'm getting at" (line 24).

6.3.4 Responding moves in discussion

Convergence

Where convergence is being achieved in a discussion, this is often signalled by the presence of Responding acts. Where a previous assessing act (Inf 1) has already been agreed with via another assessing act, further agreement in the form of a Responding accept act may follow. (see (6.32) below:)

(6.32)

<p><\$1> +to me <\$=> one minus ma= <\\$=> minus one arm <\$O10> means you can still have a really <\\$O10> good <\$=> up= <\\$=> good life.</p>	I (Inf 1)
<p><\$2> <\$O10> What about no arms though? <\\$O10></p>	R/I (El 1)
<p><\$1> No arms at all is you're getting towards being severely disabled aren't you.</p>	R/I (El 2b)
<p><\$2> It's a fucking nightmare.</p>	R/I (Inf 1)
<p><\$1> Mm.</p>	R (Acc)

(CANCODE No. 90503002)

Premises, however, although they carry an opinion, can receive an immediate accepting act, because in the sense that they are expressing a universal truth, they can immediately receive a response which accepts that truth :

(6.33)

<p><\$2> <26>We all when we <26> come across people make assumptions <27 about them <27></p>	I (Inf 4)
<p><\$1> <27 Of course we <27> do</p>	R (Acc)

(Extract from 'religion' text)

Where a resolution to a discussion is being arrived at, and full convergence is being achieved, this is often signalled by the presence of a Follow-up move. If, after an

accepting Responding move has been produced, still further agreement then occurs, this must be analysed as a Follow-up move, which is accepting the accept and indicating that total agreement has been achieved, as with example (6.34) below:

(6.34)

<p><\$1> <48> If you if you if you <\48> got a big group of people who all believe the same thing there'd be harmony. But that's just not, that just doesn't happen.</p>	<p>I Inf 1</p>
<p><\$2> No it'd be rather an unvarying bland as well.</p>	<p>R/I (Inf 1)</p>
<p><\$1> And boring yeah.</p>	<p>R (Acc)</p>
<p><\$2> Mmmm</p>	<p>F (Acc)</p>

(Extract from 'religion' text)

Well as an argumentative discourse marker.

Attention has been drawn by discourse analysts to the widespread distribution of the marker *well* (Pomerantz 1984; Schiffrin, 1987). In terms of its placement, *well* seems to be able to occur in any move in the exchange, typically initially, and is indeed of relatively high frequency (occurring turn-initially 2975 times per million words in the five-million word total CANCODE corpus). Its function seems to be to shift the direction of the discourse in some way. For example, boundary-marker *well* may occur as a topic or transaction-boundary marker, while *well* at the beginning of a responding move may indicate an unwillingness on the part of the respondent to respond in the terms of the speaker's initiation. Examples (6.35) and (6.36) show, respectively, the topic marking function and the direction-shifting function.

(6.35)

\$3 <\$04>Well <\$\04> <\$05>well<\$\05> Let's talk about something more recent than that the argument about the so-called European army.

(Moral maze text 2)

(6.36)

\$3 Freddie a lot of the argument about patriotism now in Britain is about Europe, to do with Europe er you are strongly opposed to further British integration into the European union I'm reasonably strongly in favour of it

\$2 Without a referendum I'm opposed

\$3 <\$01> well <\$\01>

\$2 <\$01> I think <\$\01> we should be <\$02>consulted <\$\02>

\$3 <\$02>Well we <\$\02> have different <\$03>views <\$\03>on European questions

\$2 <\$03>Okay <\$\02>

(Moral maze text 2)

However, *well* frequently co-occurs with *yes/yeah*, and seems to have two slightly differing functions, depending on whether the turn consists only of *well yes/yeah* or whether there is a continuation consisting of a shift towards overt disagreement ('minimal agreement prefaces').

(6.37)

<\$2> And then you're stuck with it.

<\$1> **Well yeah.**

(CANCODE No 90503002)

(6.38)

<\$1> Because you get <\$O42> a kick out of being with little kids.

But <\$=> they <\\$O42> get but you're <\\$=> like you <\$O43> say they're not your kids <\\$O43>.

<\$2> <\$O42> Just really enjoyable. <\$=> You're getting <\\$O42> <\$O43> you're getting something <\\$O43> <\\$=> **Well yeah but you're getting something back from them.** Erm.

(CANCODE No 90503002)

In short, there is no particular correlation between the distribution of *well* and any element of structure (whether move or act). Therefore, the present study considers it to be a pragmatic marker whose domain is primarily interpersonal rather than structural.

6.3.5 Persuasion

All argument is persuasion and vice versa, in that even stating an opinion can be seen as an attempt to influence the interlocutor, and the opinion speakers are trying to persuade the interlocutor to adopt is inherent in their persuasive tactics. However, it is useful to draw a distinction between them for the purposes of the present study because persuasive ‘tactics’ involve different acts, and have different structure, from

argumentative sequences. More use of Elicitation is made, which necessarily shortens the exchange length, and alters the ‘typical’ structure from recursive R/I moves to I → R exchanges. Elicits allow the speaker to attack the interlocutor’s opinion and reasoning without stating their own, and thereby laying themselves open to attack. Van Eemeren et al (1997) discuss the classical idea of ‘dialectic enquiry’ in argument, where “the protagonist puts forward a claim and then provides answers to a sceptical questioner (an antagonist).” (p214). This places the burden of proof on the protagonist, which means that in discussion, the interactant asking the questions is in a much stronger position than the answerer, because they do not have to build a defence for their own position (Sacks 1992, Vol.2 p340-347, Hutchby 1996 p48-55). As Hutchby (1996) points out, certain discussion forums have the allocation of this powerful second turn position to a particular interactant as a predetermined feature. He notes that in talk radio shows, it is the caller’s role to declare their assessment of a given topic for discussion in their opening move, leaving the host free to attack it without having to reveal his own position. Similarly, in the data used for the present study, two texts taken from the BBC Radio 4 programme “The Moral maze” have a predetermined format in which a panel of journalists etc. ask questions of an ‘expert witness’. These ‘witnesses’ have been chosen because they have already stated an opinion elsewhere in the media, which places them in the same position as Hutchby’s caller, needing to justify their views in response to a series of elicits from their co-interactants:

(6.39)

\$3 As one who loves patriotism, what would your advice be to someone living in a country convinced of the evil of its emerging government and culture, Hitler’s Germany?

\$2 <\$19> Well I mean <\$\19> this er I've spoken to Germans about this matter and it was for er many of them a a an absolute crisis of conscience. There were Germans who loathed Nazism, loathed Hitler, but loved their country and they they did face this you know er question do I volunteer for the colours or do I not, I –

\$3 But simply simplistic patriotism could not have been right <\$20> in such circumstances? <\$\20>

\$2 <\$20> No no you're talking <\$\20>about my country right or wrong I do not actually agree with that never have.

(Moral maze text 2)

Even where both participants have already made their positions clear elicitation can still be used to place the opponent 'on the defensive', so that in everyday argument this technique is often used to attack the opponent's position. In example (6.40) below, \$2's position is that he believes that animals have sex because they have an inbuilt desire to reproduce, and the existence of this inbuilt desire in animals may go some way to explaining why humans want to have children. \$1 feels that the inbuilt instinct in animals to have sex does not necessarily link in their minds with reproduction, they cannot make the informed choice that humans can make, so the comparison is not valid. \$2 uses elicitation to attack her position:

(6.40)

<\$1> <\$O74> It's satisfying <\\$O74> and it's like smoking.

<\$2> Yeah satisfying an urge but what is the urge?

<\$1> Sex.

<\$2> Yeah but what is the urge of sex? For what? For pleasure or for <\$=> re= er reprodu= <=> reproduction?

<\$1> Well it depends how you look at it. If you're looking at it from the cat's point of view I think it's from sex. It's for sex. But if you look at it from like an evolutionary point of view the reason why cats have a implanted urge to have sex is so that they will reproduce and continue the <\$O75> species <=>.

<\$2> <\$O75> Yeah. <=> So how do we know we're not like that?

(CANCODE NO. 90503002)

Of course, although these attacking elicits do not overtly state the speaker's position, in that they cause the co-participant to defend herself, they imply that the speaker holds an opposing view. In example (6.39), \$2 enunciates this fact as he extrapolates \$3's implicit criticism from his question when he says "No no you're talking about my country right or wrong.". However some types of elicit (Elicit: clarify (El 1b), Defining Elicit (El 2), Elicit: agreement (El 3) and Rhetorical elicits (El 4)) can allow the speaker to state their own opinions without relinquishing second turn position (Sacks 1992), as with the following examples (6.41-3):

(6.41)

<p><\$2> Some= someone they can share things with as they're getting older. See them grow up.</p>	<p>R/I (Inf 4)</p>
<p><\$1> Why? Yeah but why is it good to see them grow up?</p>	<p>R/I (El 1b)</p>

<\$2> Well the same reason I enjoy going round to Helen's and playing with Libby and Daniel.	R (Rep)
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(CANCODE No. 90505001)

(6.42)

\$3 <\$09> exactly <\$\09> exactly so it is possible in fact it is certain in your view as in mine that one can be patriotic while accepting a very considerable amount of change in the definition of what one's country is?	R/I (EI 2)
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(Moral maze text 2)

(6.43)

<\$2>.....Just this mind thing. I'm sure there's there's something else. <\$E> laughs <\$E> I can't put my finger on it but it's not something you can clone.	I (Inf 1)
<\$1> And you don't think that there's a possibility that this is something that you're clinging to because you want it to be that way. <\$=> Cos you want <\$=> Because you think of yourself as an individual.	R/I (EI 3)
<\$2> No I'm not clinging to it.	R (Rep)

(CANCODE No. 90505001)

With Rhetorical (EI 4) elicits, the structure can change slightly, (from R/I or I→R, to R/I or I→R/I) because, being 'rhetorical', they often do not receive Reply acts as such, and often instead receive Response/Initiatory informatives, i.e. informatives which either do not attempt to 'answer' the rhetorical question but instead respond to the opinion inherent in it, (as with example (6.44) below) or which do much more

than answer the question. However, they retain the ‘attacking’ feel of an elicit which is one of the reasons why, for the purposes of the present study, this act remains classified as an elicit.

(6.44)

<p><\$2> If I introduced you to a catholic, a practising catholic, [BCH <\$1> Yeah] wouldn't you make all sorts of assumptions and <16> judgements about that person? <16></p> <p><\$1> <16> Because that that er that's the nature of <16> that's the nature of of who we are but I don't m- I make assumptions and judgements on them through my own personal beli- er er experiences not on something that I've read in a book somewhere that I know very little about, and I'm quite prepared to revise those judgements within the minute that I meet them <pause></p>	<p>I (E1 4)</p> <p>R/I (Inf 2)</p>
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(Extract from ‘religion’ text)

Speakers also use elicitation to force their interlocutor into stating their position, so that they have something to engage with and attack. Prior to the extract below, \$2 has been vacillating about his opinion on whether cloned people would be both physically and mentally identical, using ‘maybe’ and Temporisation Responses, and here \$1 resorts to directly eliciting his opinion, trying (not very successfully) to force him to take a stance either way:

(6.45)

<\$1> Do you think it's possible to have one twin who's fuck stupid and one twin who's really bright? Just knowing what we know of twins. People that we've known that are twins.

<\$E> pause <\\$E>

<\$2> <\$E> yawns <\\$E> <\$=> I mean I've never heard of like er like twins one well <\\$=>

<\$1> **What I'm <\$O67> saying <\\$O67> is why are our mental characteristics so different from our physical characteristics that you can accept that a guy who is cloned who is red-headed his g= his clone is also gonna be red headed but his intelligence not going to be red= er duplicated?**

<\$2> <\$O67> Er. <\\$O67> No. Don't think <\$O68> so. I don't <\\$O68> know.

(CANCODE No. 90505001)

Another persuasive technique involving elicitation takes the form of one interactant using elicits to attempt to 'lead' the other to conclusions which reinforce the speaker's standpoint. In the following extract \$2 is trying to lead \$1 to the conclusion that his belief in the atom is an act of faith, and she ends by drawing that conclusion for him, saying that he "has no personal proof that an atom exists":

(6.46)

<p><\$2> Do you believe that in the atom do you believe that the atom exists? <pause></p>	<p>R/I (E1 1)</p>
<p><\$1> Evidence exists to say that the atom exists yes.</p>	<p>R (Rep)</p>
<p><\$2> So you believe in the atom [BCH <\$1> Mmm] because you've heard say <02>that the atom exists? <\02></p>	<p>I (E1 2)</p>
<p><\$1> <02>And there er <\02>are there are repeatable experiments that I can do in</p>	<p>R (Rep)</p>

order to verify	
<\$2> But have you done them?	I (EI 4)
<\$1> No, but I can do them.	R/I (Inf 2)
<\$2> How d'you know you can?	R/I (EI 1b)
<\$1> Because I can. Because I've studied other laws that back up the theory behind+	R (Rep)
<\$2> But you've never actually seen an atom and you haven't got any personal proof that an atom exists.	I (Inf 6)
<\$1> I've had no <03> personal experience of <\03>an atom.	R (Acc)

(Extract from 'religion' text)

Interactants also use, as an 'attacking' persuasive tactic, acts which (either overtly or implicitly) evaluate their interactant's argument. If a speaker is evaluating the interactants argument, whether eliciting or informing, they retain the 'attacking' stance, because they are not expressing their own standpoint and thereby exposing it to attack.

One elicitation which performs this function is the Defining Elicit (EI 2):

(6.47)

<\$1> I mean are you suggesting that we start off blank pages?	I (EI 2)
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<p><\$E> pause <\\$E></p> <p><\$2> I'm not sure what I'm suggesting <\$E> laughs <\\$E> now.</p>	R (Rep)
--	---------

(CANCODE No. 90505001)

(6.48)

<p>S. Well can, maybe we should start structuring a world, where rather than, its dividing into a small group of winners and a big group of losers we could start to have a world where everybody has things about themselves that they can call <\$027> valuable <\\$027></p>	R/I (Inf 1)
<p>M. <\$027> But isn't that er, <\\$027> isn't that called Disneyland, er, Ed</p>	R/I (El 2)
<p>E. It sounds like an article in the Guardian, what I was going to say</p>	R/I (Inf 1b)

(Moral maze text 1)

The Rhetorical Elicit (El 4) can also be used in an evaluating attack:

(6.49)

<p><\$4> If a scientist says to you if you keep smoking you may catch cancer, he can prove that <33> but if someone says to you if you keep <\33></p>	I (Inf 4)
<p><\$2> <33> So if a scientist says to you its perfectly <\33> healthy to eat British beef, we should just believe them because they've obviously proved it?</p>	R/I (El 4)
<p>H, J & N <simultaneous grumbling></p>	

<\$3> That's not science	R/I (Inf 1)
<\$4>. That's not science, that's somebody issuing a statement without backing it up with evidence	R/I (Inf 1)

As we can see from the above example (6.48), the informative act Evaluate (Inf 1b) also functions as an evaluating attack on the 'opponent's' argument. See also examples (6.50 - 52) below, which are all Response/Initiatory Evaluate acts:

(6.50)

<\$1> <\$O19> <\$=> You're saying <|\$=> <|\$O19> Yeah but y= you're you're going through the thought process of a sheep as if you had any grasp of what a sheep might think.

(CANCODE No. 90505001)

(6.51)

<\$2> <\$O91> Well we don't <|\$O91> know this. This is all <\$O92> scientific shit <|\$O92>.

(CANCODE No. 90505001)

(6.52)

<\$1> <\$9> That er that's a that's a that's a <|\$9> huge huge generalisation, huge. I think <long pause.>

(Extract from 'religion' text)

Similarly the Summarise (Inf 6) informative can also be used in this way. In (6.53) \$1 produces a Summarising act which negatively evaluates \$2's line of reasoning, and \$2 uses the same act in retaliation. Interestingly, in (6.54) speaker M (the host, who acts like a chairperson) shows by his interjection that he feels speaker S is too

much ‘under attack’ at this point, what with R’s use of a Defining Elicit (see examples (6.47-8)) and J’s Evaluate act, so that he feels he needs to ‘step in’ and restore the balance. This is a recognition of the attacking nature of J’s move.

(6.53)

<p><\$2> Because you’re assuming that unless something can be proven then its not legitimate <17> and its not real <\17> and there’s no <18> truth in it<\18></p>	R (Rep)
<p><\$1> <17> No I don’t no <\17> <18> No I’m not saying <\18> that at all you’re inferring that</p>	R/I (Inf 6)
<p><\$2> But your whole argument is based on whether something can be proved or not.</p>	R/I (Inf 6)

(Extract from ‘religion’ text)

(6.54)

<p>R. But life, er, life is going to be tough, isn’t it?</p>	R/I (EI 3)
<p>S. Of course life is tough</p>	R/I (Inf 1)
<p>R. I, I, isn’t, <\$017>isn’t <\\$017></p>	(int)
<p>S. <\$017> But I tell you <\\$017>karate prepares you very nicely for the tough</p>	R/I cont’d
<p>J. But I, but I, <\$018> I thought you didn’t like aggression <\\$018></p>	R/I (Inf 6)
<p>M. <\$018> Janet, Janet, please, Janet <\\$018></p>	R/I (org)

(Moral maze text 1)

Turning the tables: Persuasive tactics in action.

In the following extract, we can see two interactants engaged in a discussion, using various different persuasive techniques against each other. First \$1 begins to negatively evaluate her opponent's argument by using a Summarising act (lines 6-7) to produce a summary of his argument which makes it look far-fetched, with the idea that the 'human body is engaged in a race with geneticists'. At this point \$2 tries to go on the offensive and take over the attacking stance by using an elicit (line 7) but \$1 retorts with a further negative evaluation by using an Evaluate act (line 8) which criticises his argument as 'spiritual'. \$2 tries again with another elicit (line 8) and this time he succeeds in forcing \$1 to state and defend *her* opinion (lines 9-13). He continues with this tactic, (lines 14-15) pushing \$1 to define her opinion more, and then uses an El 3 to state his opinion without losing the attacking stance. Finally he decides to express his view in lines 19-20, a view which, one could argue, is emergent as a result of the preceding talk, in that "the little thing in everyone that's just different" is some 'mental' characteristic. Hutchby (1996) comments that one facet of the asymmetrical power distribution in discussion on talk radio shows is that the "hosts, unlike callers, are able to select the point within the call at which they will set out their own view" (p94) and \$2 may have chosen this moment because now the discussion has narrowed to this issue of whether or not it is possible to clone mental characteristics.

(6.55)

1 <\$2> <\$H> You don't know that. <\\$H> I think there's just some little thing in	R/I (Inf 1)
2. everyone that's just different. And maybe there always will be. Maybe the the	

<p>3. human body will just advance just to keep that little thing out of reach <\$O1> of</p> <p>4. <\$G2> <\\$O1>.</p>	
<p>5 <\$1> <\$O1> Oh. As in <\$=> we're <\\$O1> racing <\\$=> the human body is</p> <p>6. racing the geneticists.</p>	R/I (Inf 6)
<p>7 <\$2> How do you know what's going on.</p>	C (L 5) (EI 4)
<p>8 <\$1> Well now you're starting to get spiritual.</p>	Re-I (Inf 1b)
<p>9 <\$2> What's wrong with that?</p>	R/I (EI 1)
<p>9 <\$1> Well nothing's wrong with that. I'd love to agree with you. I'd love for there</p> <p>10. to be some fundamental characteristic of us which was just us. But I think</p> <p>11. <\$=> if if you <\\$=> if I was cloned and taken somewhere else whatever else I</p> <p>12went through I wouldn't be capable of doing some mindless repetitive task. I'd</p> <p>13. <\$O2> go out of my mind <\\$O2>.</p>	R (Rep)
<p>14 <\$2> <\$O2> You yourself. <\\$O2> Yeah. You yourself. Or the person that's</p> <p>15 been cloned from you?</p>	C (KS 3) (EI 1)
<p>16 <\$1> No. They're a clone.</p>	R (Rep)
<p>17 <\$2> They're a clone physically.</p>	C (KS 3) (EI 3)
<p>18 <\$1> And mentally. They're exact copy <\$O3> and replica <\\$O3> of me.</p>	3)
<p>19 <\$2> <\$=> <\$O3> In men= <\\$O3> maybe in <\\$=> I don't know about</p> <p>20 mentally.</p>	R (Rep)
	I (Inf 1)

(CANCODE No. 90505001)

Conclusion

In discussive discourse, Initiation and Response together form 38% of moves, which reflects both persuasive sequences and moments of convergence in the discourse. There is also a relatively high proportion of Challenging moves which reflects the combative nature of discussion, and a similarly high proportion of Focussing moves, which reflects the way interactants in discussion feel a greater need to control and structure the discourse, summing it up and redirecting it where necessary. However, the Response/Initiation element is by far the most frequent (46%) of all the structural elements, which reflects the argumentative techniques and structures outlined above. In comparison with casual conversation, which, as Eggins and Slade (1997) argue, has a 'chunk and chat' structure, discussion is a sustained 'chunk' of talk, with large cohesive exchanges, involving recursive Response/Initiatory moves.

Table showing the distribution of structural elements in discussive discourse:

I	Re-I	C	R/I	R	F	Focus	Total
187 (17% of total)	35 (3% of total)	70 (6% of total)	495 (46% of total)	226 (21% of total)	23 (2% of total)	47 (4% of total)	=1083

6.2 The Structure of Discussion (other approaches)

Whilst many analysts have examined the structure of monologic argument (Perelman and Olbrechts-Tyteca (1958), Fisher (1988) van Eemeren et al (1997) to name a few), others have looked at the structure of individual turns in discussive discourse and the minutiae of their localised relationships with preceding and following turns (Pomerantz (1984) Myers (1998) Schiffrin (1985)). Maynard (1985) looks at the beginning of ‘disputes’, arguing that they start when one interactant’s utterance is treated as ‘arguable’ by another: “the idea of the ‘antecedent event refers to what I call an arguable utterance or action. It points to the fact that any move, claim, stance or position that one person takes explicitly or implicitly, verbally or non verbally can become part of an argument if it is opposed” (p23). Hutchby (1996) uses this view of ‘arguables’ to construct his ‘action-opposition’ sequences in which each turn at talk is only considered argumentative retrospectively, i.e. if it receives an appropriately oppositional response (see section 6.3.1). He sketches a structure for talk radio discussions in which initial turns take the form of Schiffrin’s (1985) ‘rhetorical arguments’ which are “multi-sentence monologues in which a speaker makes a case for a disputable position” (Hutchby p44). In subsequent turns Hutchby examines the way the host maintains the second turn position and the attacking stance, by questioning the caller, or by the use of specific tactics, such as the “you say X” construction in which the host summarises and simultaneously negatively evaluates, or point out the flaws inherent in, the caller’s standpoint (see 6.4.8 and 6.4.11). He also looks at closure, from the perspective that in talk radio the host is in a position to ‘cut off’ the caller by terminating the call, at which point he (the host in Hutchby’s data is always male) can give full expression to his own opinion without

fear of a counterattack from the caller. In this way Hutchby produces a ‘micro’ analytic localised turn-by-turn examination of discussion in the Conversation Analysis tradition.

However, not many analysts have looked at the structure of interactive discussive discourse from a more generalised ‘macro’ perspective. One of the few studies to do so is Horvath and Eggins (1995). Following in the systemic tradition, Horvath and Eggins produced a generic structure potential for ‘opinion texts’ which consisted of a series of sequentially ordered stages. Their view of ‘opinion texts’ included minimal texts featuring an assessment of a ‘simple’ referent (e.g. an inanimate object, rather than a complex referent or an ideological issue,) which was followed by immediate agreement:

(6.5)

Initiating Opinion: These biscuits are great.

Reaction: Yes, they are.

(Horvath and Eggins p33)

This type of exchange would not qualify under the precepts of the present study as a discussive text. However, they differentiate these ‘agreeing’ exchanges from exchanges where disagreement occurs and a more complex speech event results, and they give the schematic structure for disagreeing opinion texts as:

OPINION^ REACTION^EVIDENCE^RESOLUTION

(Horvath and Eggins p35)

They define the Opinion element as “an expression of attitude, not fact.... A judgement as to the rightness/wrongness, goodness/badness, desirability, or otherwise of a state of affairs in the real world”. (ibid, p31) This initial assessment determines the subject of the ensuing discussion: “the Initiating opinion lays the ground rules for the text which may develop subsequently” (ibid, p38). The Reaction element which follows consists of disagreeing assessments, or ‘counteropinions’ and any reaffirmation of the original opinion. This segment of the opinion text can involve ‘recycling’ as opinion and counteropinion are reiterated (ibid, p43). As Horvath and Eggins point out, this could lead to a stalemate in which the interactants repeatedly contradict each other, and “the means to avoid that is to ask for or offer some evidence. This Evidence element is “typically realised either through the elaboration (through exemplification or definition) of the attitudinal attribute” (ibid, p33) Like the Reaction stage, this element can also be recursive, or ‘repeatedly recycled’ (ibid, p43). Finally the Resolution stage (which Horvath and Eggins see as an obligatory element) is reached: “the text continues until there is agreement with either the initiating opinion or one of the counteropinions or until an impasse leads to an agreement to disagree” (ibid, p39).

McCarthy (1991, p132) offers a piece of data where a mother and daughter are trying to persuade the father of the family that a jacket bought for him to wear at a wedding looks nice; the father disagrees, and he and his wife develop a stubborn stand-off, where neither of them seems willing to shift their position. In line with Horvath and

Eggsins' model, 'evidence' is offered, mostly by the mother and daughter. In the extract, evidence is shaded and the entrenched utterances are in bold.

(6.6)

A = father, B = daughter, C = mother

B: That looks very nice, put it on and let's have a look at you.

A: **I don't like the two buttons,** I didn't know it had two buttons, I thought it had three.

C: **Well, it's the style of the coat, Ken.**

B: Nick's has only got two buttons.

C: It's a low cut.

A: All right?

B: Very nice.

C: [It's beautiful.

B: Lovely, lovely.

A: Does it look nice?

B: Yeah, it goes very well with those trousers, there's a colour in the jacket that picks up the colour in the trousers.

C: The others he wears are striped, but they clashed, too much alike.

A: Two different stripes

C: L But not matching each other if you understand what I mean.

B: Yeah, yeah . . . yeah.

A: It's all right then, eh?

B: It's very nice, Dad, it looks very, very good.

A: I don't like the, I like three buttons, you see . .

C: Ken, it's the style of the coat!

(From McCarthy 1991, p132)

Comparisons can be drawn with the system of analysis used by the present study, in that the recursive potential of both the Reaction and the Evidence stages would lead to 'argument' sequences consisting of a series of recursive Response/Initiatory moves (see 6.3.1, below). In the 'Reaction' stage these moves would typically be embodied by Assessing acts, in that an Assessment most closely resembles Horvath and Eggins 'opinions' and 'counteropinions'; and in the 'Evidence' stage the moves would be embodied by Personal statements, Exemplifications and Premises, because these acts provide reasons and are used as 'evidence' to 'back up' an opinion. However, these 'backing up' moves are also 'opinion carrying' in that they align the speaker with a particular standpoint by providing a defence for it. This allows the analyst to differentiate between types of evidence providing for a more detailed description of the discourse, and it also explains how the reaction and evidence stages can become intermingled (as with Horvath and Eggins' text 5, p39-41)). This might also explain why the same utterance is analysed as embodying both stages; the utterance "I wouldn't know a masterpiece from a..." is delineated in Horvath and Eggins' analysis as both "REACTION: disagree:counteropinion" and "EVIDENCE: provide counterevidence" (ibid, p40)

Horvath and Eggins also argue that the Reaction element can contain any utterances which respond to the initial opinion but which ‘defer’ the production of a counteropinion (utterances of the order of *why do you say/think that?*). These utterances are “neither agreeing nor disagreeing as yet, but ostensibly seeking evidence before taking a position, although deferment such as this hints strongly at eventual disagreement” (p38). As argued below, (section 6.3.5) this kind of move places the interlocutor on the defensive because it allows speakers to ‘question’ their interlocutor and the opinion which has been produced, without having to state their own view and expose themselves to attack. However, Horvath and Eggins argue that simply being the speaker who produces the initial Opinion achieves this result: “being the one who provides the initiating opinion entails responsibilities in terms of evidence” (ibid, p37). Strong evidence exists (Sacks 1992, Hutchby 1996, Clayman 1992, and see also Schiffrin 1985 p43) to show that, whilst producing the initial opinion does entail a certain ‘burden of proof’ on the speaker, it is the use of elicitation to maintain the second turn position which forces the interlocutor on the defensive. In this way it could be argued that examining an utterance from the perspective of its sequential placement, rather than the form of the utterance and the speech act it involves, may cause the analyst to ‘miss’ certain details: if Hutchby’s Conversation Analytic approach was too localised to provide a satisfactory prototypical ‘blueprint’ of the structure of discussion, Horvath and Eggins’ systemic approach could be seen to be too generalised.

6.1 The text type ‘Discussion’

As we have seen, the idea of a text type differs from the idea of a genre in that genres rely on situational factors (such as field, tenor and mode), and are often narrow in their application, referring to highly specific types of discourse, such as the research article, or the discourse of advertising. Genres are crucially concerned with particular, recurring types of social activity. In contrast, text typologies tend to attempt to broadly divide language into a few, wide categories, and their approach to classifying discourse leans away from contextual factors and towards the idea of a classification system which relies more on text-internal criteria, such as the structure and content of a text, and which places importance on the different cognitive processes which are involved in producing and processing different types of text. In this way De Beaugrande (1980) talks about an ‘argumentative’ text type being defined as a text whose control centres are “entire propositions which will be assigned values of truthfulness and reasons for belief as facts” and argues that its “most commonly applied global knowledge pattern will be the plan whose goal state is the inducement of shared beliefs” (p197-198). Similarly, Werlich (1976) assigns the cognitive process “judging (in answer to a problem)” to his text type ‘argumentation’. (p39-41) so that this text type, which I shall call ‘Discussion’, can be seen to be about the cognitive process of formulating and expressing opinions, moving from external real world referents to our subjective interpretation of them. However the language of a Discussion should not simply be evaluative; there are other types of discourse where the use of assessments is common, for example certain more relational aspects of casual conversation involve interpersonal assessment or ‘appraisal’ which usually has the affect of drawing conversationalists

together, constructing solidarity between them by negatively evaluating someone who is not present, or affirming the mutual social values or mutually held beliefs of the participants. (See Eggins and Slade, 1997). Similarly Horvath and Eggins' (1995) view of 'opinion texts' include exchanges where one interactant evaluates a referent and the other agrees with the evaluation such as:

(6.1)

Initiating Opinion: These biscuits are great.

Reaction: Yes, they are.

(Horvath and Eggins p33)

Therefore we need to differentiate the more complex and combative 'Discussion' from other types of discourse, and many analysts have turned to the Aristotelian notion of 'argument' or 'argumentation'. Aristotle explored concepts such as logic, rhetoric, and dialectic, so that a view of argumentative discourse based on his writings would have to include the argumentative techniques for providing proof which he identified by examining these concepts. Logic relies on statements which are already known to be true or which are taken as truth (premises) which in combination lead to an inevitable conclusion (a syllogism). Rhetoric relies on the audience being persuaded to agree that the speaker's statements are true, or accepting his/her premises, and therefore his/her conclusions (an enthymeme). With dialectic inquiry, the burden of 'proof' rests more with a second speaker than with the interactant who has expressed his/her views: "the protagonist puts forward a claim and then provides answers to a sceptical questioner (an antagonist)." (Van Eemeren et al, 1997 p214) Following this ancient tradition, then, Van Eemeren et al (1997)

describe 'argumentation' as a type of discourse which "uses language to justify or refute a standpoint, with the aim of securing agreement in views" (p208).

To summarise, it is necessary to stipulate that some important conditions must be fulfilled for a piece of discourse to qualify as Discussion; firstly, it has to involve interlocutors making assessments which form some kind of *standpoint*; an evaluation of what constitutes the truth about a given referent or issue, or a claim that the speaker is morally right. Secondly, Discussion must involve persuasive discourse, Aristotle's 'proof'; people 'backing up' their standpoint with some kind of logical reasoning, or by providing 'evidence' to support their stance, perhaps using narrative, or by locating themselves in the discourse, or by using other argumentative strategies. Additionally, the use of persuasive language indicates that there is, at least nominally, some element of disagreement between the interlocutors where speakers expect, even prospect, a challenge to their statement of opinion and a need to justify their opinion to the hearer. For discussion to develop, an assertion or set of assertions must be potentially contentious.

An interesting aspect of Discussion is that it is a type of discourse whose transactional (or ideational) goals in many ways takes precedence over its phatic or relational function, (see Jefferson 1974) in the sense that the nature of Discussion is 'intellectual', rather than 'emotional' or 'social'. As Van Eemeren and Grootendorst put it: "every difference of opinion has the potential to develop into a verbally externalised dispute about an expressed opinion...(it) is not just common disagreement to be avoided if possible, but an articulated form of disunity which may be able to make a (more or less modest) contribution to intellectual progress. (1984,

p1) In fact those aspects of Discussion which relate to the maintenance of interpersonal relations, such as they are, exist to mitigate the otherwise confrontational character of this text type. Hutchby (1996) argues that the classical approach, (which includes Van Eemeren et al 1984, 1987, 1997), “treats argument as a function of reason, as essentially an intellectual activity” whereas he sees it as an “interactional process” (Hutchby 1996, p21). However it is difficult to see why these two views of discussion are incompatible. Spoken argument's emergent nature means that people hone and refine their arguments through interaction with others, so that the role of opposition is important in the development of intellectual argument. In this way, although Discussion may not be a very affective genre it is certainly an interactive one.

Discussion is an unusual discourse event, in that a great deal of verbal interaction involves avoiding situations of conflict and disagreement. In general, all adult speakers wish to present themselves in a positive way, as someone to be respected and liked. This positive presentation is usually a cooperative activity, because, as Brown and Levinson (1987) put it, “everyone’s face depends on everyone else’s being maintained, and since people can be expected to defend their faces if threatened, and in defending their own to threaten others’ faces, it is in general in every participants best interests to maintain each other’s face.” (p61) Therefore in most interactions a great deal of conversational work goes into maintaining your own and your interlocutors ‘face’ needs. Brown and Levinson go on to identify some acts which, they argue, intrinsically threaten face, “acts that by their nature run contrary to the face wants of the addressee and/or of the speaker.” (ibid, p65) which they label as ‘Face Threatening Acts’ or ‘FTAs’. However, in their list of intrinsic FTAs they

include several items which together almost look like a definition of Discussion, and which are so apt that they are worth quoting in full here;

“(1) expressions of *disapproval, criticism*, contempt or ridicule, complaints and reprimands, accusations, insults (S indicates that he doesn’t like/want one or more of H’s wants, acts, personal characteristics, goods, *beliefs or values.*) (my italics)

(2) contradictions or disagreements, challenges (S indicates that he thinks H is wrong or misguided or unreasonable about some issue, such wrongness being associated with disapproval)

...

(3) raising of dangerously emotional or divisive topics, e.g. politics, race, religion, women’s liberation (S (speaker) raises the possibility or likelihood of face-threatening acts...occurring; i.e. S creates a dangerous-to-face atmosphere)”

(Brown and Levinson 1987 p67).

Clearly there are politeness issues involved with this speech genre; in Discussion, people are entering a linguistic arena where they continually have to produce dispreferred seconds, or FTAs. There can be a ‘dangerous-to-face atmosphere’ in Discussion which many people find uncomfortable; as Schiffrin (1987) writes, dialogic argument “share(s) features with disagreements, e.g. disputes, confrontations, and quarrels.” (p17). People typically prefer to agree, rather than disagree (see Pomerantz 1984) therefore Discussion is a type of discourse which some people only participate in reluctantly, or even try to avoid altogether, and this, I believe, is reflected in the relatively small amount of Discussive data available on the CANCODE corpus. Conversely some people really enjoy Discussion, which may be

because they are able to separate this type of discourse from Van Eemeren and Grootendorst's 'common disagreement' so that although the conversationalists disagree, and therefore think each other wrong, within this genre, the 'wrongness' is not necessarily associated with disapproval. This ability to downplay the face threatening aspect of Discussional disagreement can be seen to be a result of the interlocutors' recognition that they (and their conversation) have switched to the Discussive text type, so that the level of imposition which acts such as 'disagreement' or 'criticism' and so on create, is decreased by their being produced in the process of a Discussion. Brown and Levinson (1987) refer to the concept of a 'jousting arena' "in which risk to participants face is greatly lessened." (p247) Nonetheless, even within this text type, interactants do pay attention to Politeness rituals, and a certain amount of effort must be made to minimise the face threatening nature of the discourse.

As Pomerantz (1984) shows, producing a disagreement to a previous speaker's assessment means producing a 'dispreferred second' and interactants will place all kinds of hedges before a disagreement, leave long silences, even preface a disagreement with an agreement of some kind, where the speaker will agree with some part of the speaker's assessment at first and then disagree with some other part of it. (1984, p 70-77) In example (6.2), below, the speech in bold forms a concessionary preface to S3's disagreement.

(6.2)

<S?> <S045> Isn't it <S?> <S045> objective though?

<S?> <S045> It's good in <S045> principle though.

<\$2> <\$=> I= <\\$=> It is good enough <\$O46> <\$G?> <\\$O46>.

<\$3> <\$O46> **Oh yeah its decided <\\$O46> on its facts and it was a much needed**

improvement but basically they haven't improved the law <\$O47> they've just taken steps backwards <\\$O47> to nineteen eighty two and they haven't

<\$1> <\$O47> Well put that then. <\\$O47> Yeah so basically you're saying <\$O48> it is good <\$=> but <\\$=> but there are probs which is what we have to say. <\\$O48>

(CANCODE No.90063003)

An even more straightforward example of prefacing a disagreement with an agreement is also one of the most common constructions found in examples of Discussion in the CANCODE corpus, which is the tendency for interlocutors to preface their 'argumentative moves' with "Yeah, but" (see example (6.3), below, and section 6.3.1).

(6.3)

<\$1> I'd love to talk to someone who's had one and say Well why. Like Helen.

<\$2> **Yeah but** you look at people like erm Justine and erm+

<\$1> **Yeah but** <\$=> theirs <\\$=> neither of theirs was planned.

(CANCODE no. 90503002)

Interlocutors also preface their argumentative moves with some preamble, some non-controversial scene setting, which not only has the affect of delaying the argumentative part of their utterance and thereby mitigating its confrontational aspect, it may also arguably assist in the persuasive process, in that the hearer is taken along with (i.e. agrees with, or at least does not positively disagree with) the first part of the utterance, and therefore may be more inclined to accept the rest of the utterance as having some validity. For example:

(6.4)

E. we used to have a modest amount of compulsory sport, I mean, I remember it being about 4 hours, and for the most part we liked it.

And if to compulsory you add a tiny little amendum that allows 5% of real hatists to find a way of sidling out of it, I don't think that the Minister would really mind. The problem is, that there has been a great neglect of sport in schools over the last 30 years, especially in comprehensives. You made the point that it ws a public school ethos thing. Unless you put the compulsion in - 2 hours, er, you are going to get alot more 46 type results, and you're going to get alot of kids missing alot of pleasure they would have had. Its the teachers who have to do a bit of work.

(Moral maze text 1)

These 'mitigating devices' are part of a conversationalists Discussive style, and the extent to which this occurs in a given text may be reliant on the cultural backgrounds of the interactants. People sometimes feel that one another's style of arguing may be too confrontational; Brown and Levinson comment that "a Frenchman's style of argument may appear vituperative to an Englishman" (ibid, p247). However it is used, this type of activity must be recognised when attempting an analysis of the structure of Discussion.

Another essential aspect of Discussive discourse is that it is fundamentally dialogic. Discussion will always incorporate two conflicting viewpoints; as O’Keeffe says: “arguments polarise into two opposing positions, and provide for two opposing communicator roles; the protagonist who makes a claim to truth or morality, and the antagonist who attacks that claim, or otherwise withholds assent. (1977, p123). Schiffrin (1987) argues that even an argument in monologue is also dialogic, because there is still the feeling of having to provide a defence for the speakers standpoint to a sceptical hearer, so that the “question of hearer reception is raised” and “we are in the realm of dialogue” (p17). However, Schiffrin also argues that if we look at the way speakers provide ‘proof’ to backup their standpoints, this “attention to how speakers support a position...takes us back into the realm of monologue” so that for Schiffrin, “argument seems to be a mode of discourse which is neither purely monologic nor dialogic.” (p17)

In fact, the dialogic nature of Discussive discourse provides for an argumentative strategy involving second position advantage. As Sacks (1992) shows, those who speak first are in a weaker position because the second person can simply attack their standpoint “if you can put off going first, it’s not just a matter of your going second, it’s that you don’t have to state your position or argument; instead, you can criticize the prior party’s.” (p345). Therefore people will try to avoid speaking first, and try to manoeuvre others into taking first position. It is possible to identify some methods or techniques for doing this, such as using an interrogative formulation to hint at your viewpoint without positively asserting it (Sacks 1992), attacking the relevance of the previous speaker’s remark in order to secure second position (Hutchby 1999) or

“summarizing, glossing or developing the gist of an informant’s earlier statements” (Heritage 1985, p100) rather than stating your own views. As Hutchby (1999) points out, the latter can be done in a selective manner, to direct the talk the way the speaker wants it to go, or to “argumentatively define – and challenge – an underlying agenda in the (interlocutor’s) remarks.” (p582)

All these argumentative techniques and strategies form the essence of Discussive discourse, and create its structure. For example, the ‘second person advantage’ causes interlocutors to use formulations which are identifiably Discussive, using certain types of act (e.g. elicit:agree) to embody certain types of move (e.g. the R/I move). In identifying these acts and the move that they embody, and looking at how these moves and acts combine together we begin to see the structural pattern of Discussive discourse emerging.

5.5 The spoken text.

Another issue which must be examined when discussing genres or text types in spoken discourse is that of what constitutes a spoken text. With written language, it is normally fairly obvious how to define a text, in that each individual piece of writing forms the texts; letters, novels, advertisements etc all exist as separate physical entities, for example novels, public notices and signs, or shopping lists; papers in a journal or short stories in a collection are separated by title pages announcing a new author and/or subject, and so on. Because of this physical separateness, texts have tended to be seen as having a beginning and an end: an introductory section which commences with the first word, and a concluding section which ends with the last, so that texts could be seen as moving through a series of recognisable and ordered stages. For example Bhatia, in his (1993) examination of the 'sales promotion letter' showed that their typical structure is as follows;

1) Establish credentials → 2) Introduce the offer → 3) Offer incentives → 4) Enclose documents → 5) Solicit response → 6) Use pressure tactics → 7) End politely.

Following this logic, then, a spoken text would consist of 'everything that comes between an opening and a closing', between "Hello" and "Goodbye". Further, a text would have a progressive nature and its structure would reflect this. Many views of spoken text structure do seem to adhere to this view. . Mitchell (1957) in his study of buying and selling in a marketplace, identified stages in speech events in that elements like *salutation* → *enquiry as to the object of sale* → *investigation of the object of sale* → *bargaining* → *conclusion* recurred on a regular basis, and in this

sequential order. Similarly, Hasan's (1985) analysis of transactional discourse gives the generic structure potential of a text as a series of consecutive moves, some optional, some obligatory, but, according to Hasan, if a given move appears it will appear at a certain fixed stage (shown by the caret sign and the square brackets) in the discourse. (See below, and section 1.6.1)

[(Greeting) (Sale initiation)^][(Sale enquiry)]{Sale request^Sale compliance}^Sale^Purchase^ Purchase closure (^Finis)

Similarly, Ventola's (1979) view of the structure of Casual Conversation can be similarly represented as:

Greeting → Approach → Address → Identification → Centreing → Leave-taking → Goodbye

However, this approach to defining a spoken text is problematic, and raises a series of questions. Firstly, people in the midst of a conversation may get 'cut off' unexpectedly, perhaps distracted by other events happening around them. One participant may even find s/he has to dash off suddenly on some urgent errand, although both participants may still feel that the conversation has not 'finished'. Further, interactants may meet up another time or later at the same social event and 'pick up where they left off' (another interesting piece of metalanguage) i.e. resume the same conversation which they were having earlier. In these circumstances, should the analyst treat the two parts of this conversation as one whole text, or, since they took place on different occasions, should they be treated as separate texts?

Secondly, even with straightforward types of interaction such as Hasan's service encounters, where the communicative purpose is obvious, and the respective roles of the participants are clear, interactants can and do frequently digress from the matter of buying and selling goods, and therefore do not always follow the ordered stages which Hasan identified (see also Yläne-McEwan (1997)). Hasan (1985) discusses how social distance may vary in service encounters from maximal, where the customer only knows the vendor as a vendor, and both parties have never previously met, to more minimal social distance, where customer and vendor may belong to the same club, or be neighbours or relatives, and, she argues, this will affect the structure (p57). Lindenfeld's (1990) analysis of talk in French market places shows that a great deal of 'small talk' occurs in this transactional situation, the topic of which is often personal, especially from the customers, while the vendors concentrate predominantly on more utilitarian and transactional matters. Further, if someone goes into a shop where their friend or relative works, although the buying and selling of goods would take place between them, it is highly likely that some other type of interaction would also take place; some gossip, or general chat, which would introduce moves and elements of structure which do not conform to any of Hasan's elements of structure for service encounters. This is obviously because the text type has changed, in that it has switched from one text type to another; a piece of casual conversation of some kind has embedded itself into the service encounter. So, in cases like these, where there is no clear beginning, middle, or end, or where there is a beginning, a middle, and then a separate interaction, and finally an end, what constitutes the spoken text? Is it everything these interactants have said to each other on this particular occasion in time? Or, is it everything interactants say which conforms to the generic structure

potential of a given genre (perhaps that genre which would seem to be suggested by the contextual setting, in this case a shop) with the remaining utterances classified as digression? This latter question raises another issue. Can one text contain several different genres or text types? Written texts, no matter how long they may be, are usually considered as being 'in' the same genre (and also 'about' the same thing) from beginning to end. A research article remains a research article from start to finish. However, a conversation can begin with casual 'small talk', veer towards gossip, and then move into a discussion or argument. Should these three be considered part of the same text, despite the fact that they consist of different types of talk?

For the analyst working with spoken data it might be easier to think of the text as simply the data s/he is working with, in the same sense of 'text' as we use when referring to the 'text' of a given edition of Shakespeare. This obviates the need for a criterion with which to identify a complete, finished 'text' in that working from this viewpoint, it would be the analyst's task to separate 'generic patches' from the text. An examination of the structure of spoken discourse would therefore be synonymous with an examination of generic structure; i.e. the 'chunk' of language the analyst examines and creates a structural modal for would be the 'patch' of generic activity which it is possible to isolate from the rest of the text because it differs in generic identity from its immediate co-text.

Because casual conversation is constructed through the interaction between two different individuals, and is also spontaneous, i.e. 'made up on the spot', perhaps the attempt to apply a progressive, staged structure to it is always destined to be at odds

with the phenomenon it tries to describe. In that conversationalists themselves are usually fully engaged with each part of their conversation as it unfolds, (as opposed to planning their utterances several moves in advance) it may be useful for the analyst to begin by looking at how individual small ‘pieces’ of talk follow each other, at a kind of ‘micro’ level, and from this move on to look at larger patterns. Sinclair and Coulthard’s (1975) rank scale model of discourse is ideal for this purpose, because the search for structural elements in this model forces the analyst to examine each individual utterance closely, since sometimes one utterance contains more than one discourse act or move. Further, it allows the analyst to examine discourse at several levels of delicacy, from *act*, through *move*, to *exchange*. However, the Sinclair-Coulthard model of discourse was invented originally to describe a specific type of discourse, that of classroom discourse, and when, subsequently, various attempts were made to apply the model to other types of discourse this was found to be problematic. It was felt that there was a need to “formulate a substantially revised version of the model which... reflects accurately the nature of different types of talk while remaining true to the spirit of the original model” (Francis and Hunston, 1992, p123) and Burton (1980, 1981), was one of the first to do so. In trying to reapply the model to casual conversation she found that “feedback does not occur as an unmarked norm in the structure of ...casual conversations” (Burton 1981 p63) so she argued that the move ‘Follow up’ should be deleted. She also introduced other ideas, such as the move ‘Challenge’ which she felt was needed to cope with the “wide range of verbal activities available to anyone answering an opening.” (ibid p64). However, as I have argued elsewhere, the three part IRF structure does have validity; the fact that Follow up occurs very rarely in Burton’s ‘casual conversation’ is illustrative of the fact that it is a different text type to classroom discourse, or transactional discourse,

where the Follow up move occurs more frequently. Similarly, the element 'Challenge' occurs only very rarely in classroom discourse, though Burton clearly felt the need for it in her analysis of conversation. In this way, through looking at small pieces of a text, we begin to see the most obvious signs of larger patterns forming and helping to identify different text types, in that certain elements of structure will be much more frequent in some types of discourse than in others.

Also, a 'micro' approach means that the issue of a 'complete(d)' text becomes less crucial. Conversation can be seen to be an endless, continuous process, in that all conversation between two individuals builds on conversations they have had before, 'picking up where they left off' last time even though this fact may not always be obvious and overtly acknowledged; this is how relationships are constructed, and the reason why social distance between people changes. It can further be argued that all conversations a given individual has are built on each other, certain things about one social occasion reminding the interactant of another social occasion and affecting his/her behaviour accordingly etc: language is as constant and continual as thought, so that in a way, the only complete text possible is a text made up of everything a given individual has ever said in their entire life. But all of this interaction consists of different generic activities, and each 'patch' of a particular genre can be recognised as such, and as distinct from its co-text, because of its generic identity. In this way if we use the notion of genre or 'text type' to help us to define what constitutes a spoken text questions about how to classify material which seems to 'digress' from the previous genre, i.e. which interrupts the staged structure of the previous genre, do not arise, as the analyst simply has to identify each patch of generic activity as it occurs. Horvath and Eggins (1995) argue that "a given stretch of talk within a conversation

will be defined as a text if it... is cohesive... coherent and ...has a *characteristic internal structure*.” (p31, my italics). They go on to define this structure as generic structure. (p31)

Another problematic area when looking at the spoken text is that in face to face encounters it is impossible to transcribe all aspects of a given speech event. (For a discussion of the term *speech event* see Hymes (1972)). Aspects of the talk itself are often left out of the transcription, such as intonation, pause length, and overlap. Body language, such as eye contact, whether the interactants are leaning forward or backward, gesturing, and so on obviously has an impact on the speech event; similarly the surroundings, the thoughts and feelings of the interactants, their shared or differing cultural knowledge will also affect the interaction, yet hardly any of this information is ever available to the analyst. Therefore the ‘text’ under analysis can always be seen as an imperfect trace of the speech event itself. (see Cook, 1990)

This means that the analyst must make subjective decisions about how much of a speech event, aside from the actual words spoken, it is necessary and/or practical to include in the text under analysis for him/her to be able to describe and analyse the speech event. This diminishes the claims any analysis of language can make about possessing an entirely scientific or objective nature. However, it can be argued that analysts’ subjectivity, the choices they make about what to include, are informed choices made on the strength of their understanding of a speech event which they will probably have experience of, having participated in that type of event (or similar) at some point in their own lives. As Tannen says “to prohibit the use of our most basic tool, our personal experience as veterans of human interaction, as experienced practitioners of conversation, would be reckless.” (1984, p6-7)

5.5.1 Product and process.

Halliday's (1985) definition of a text is "language that is doing some job in some context" or "any living language that is playing some part in a context of situation" (p10) He goes on to say that a text is both a product and a process "a product in the sense that it is an output... having a certain construction that can be represented in systematic terms. It is a process in the sense of a continuous process of semantic choice...with each set of choices constituting the environment for a further set."(p10) This creates a problem, in that the analyst receives the transcribed text as a finished entity, yet the interactants perception of the event as it takes place is of an interactive process with the text as emergent, as opposed to a pre-existent and static product. In developing a model for the structure of discourse various attempts have been made to reflect this dynamic quality of spontaneous interaction.

Ventola's flow charts are based, like Hasan's Generic Structure Potential (GSP), on the idea that a text in a given genre is made up of an ordered sequence of linguistic actions, though the flowchart allows the analyst to show the choices interactants make, and how these choices affect subsequent elements. Further, the two central lines indicating each of the interactants role in the development of the speech event can reflect the way the discourse is negotiated between them. This eliminates one of the major problems with Hasan's model, which is that some elements, for example Sale Enquiry, is often the joint construct of both participants, sometimes consisting of more than one utterance from each of them (see Halliday and Hasan 1985, p61) a fact which would not be reflected in an account of the actual structure of the text

concerned. However, Ventola's model remains a 'staged' approach, with the interactants choices determining how one stage progresses to another, usually with a choice of two possible next stages.

Another approach might be simply to provide a blueprint of the structure of a given genre which would illustrate the available components of that genre without suggesting any fixed pattern into which these components need to be assembled. The kind of detailed examination and identification of individual elements of structure which the Sinclair-Coulthard model allows would permit the development of such a blueprint.

5.6 Text and context

Hasan tells us that a text's composition is greatly affected by its context, i.e. as the elements of field, tenor and mode alter, the text will alter accordingly. Indeed, Hasan writes that "it is the specific features of a CC (contextual configuration) – the values of the variables – that permit statements about the text's structure." (1985 p56) However, if all three elements, i.e. the entire, specific contextual configuration of a text must be considered when analysing a text's structure, how can we arrive at notions of genre and generic structure? Each text has its own unique contextual configuration, and this would mean that there would have to be a new, different genre (and generic structure) for every text. Unless one element remains the same, how does one isolate texts that belong to the genre 'service encounters' from any other texts? Ventola (1979) mentions that certain aspects of the text, such as social distance may vary without a genre switch, and in Hasan's examination of service encounters, she discusses how 'agent roles', status or hierarchy within the 'dyad', and

issues such as the ‘channel’ of the discourse may vary, that is, elements of tenor or mode can change. From this it is tempting to conclude that for systemicists it is the element ‘field’ which largely controls which genre a text is categorised as. However, a ‘text type’ describes a type of interaction which can exist across different contextual configurations (see 4.4 and figure 1) so that it becomes unnecessary to make choices about which situational element to foreground in generic classification and the identification of what constitutes a ‘text’. If for example, a third party joins a two-party discussion already in progress, as long as the participants continue to ‘discuss’, there is no need to separate the three-way part of the discussion from the preceding discourse. The notion of text type is dominated not by situational characteristics but by cognitive processes. For example the text type ‘discussion’ is about formulating and expressing opinions, moving from external real world referents to our subjective interpretation of them – De Beaugrande (1980) talks about an argumentative text type being defined as a text whose control centres are “entire propositions which will be assigned values of truthfulness and reasons for belief as facts” and argues that its “most commonly applied global knowledge pattern will be the plan whose goal state is the inducement of shared beliefs” (p197-198) and Werlich (1976) assigns the cognitive process “judging (in answer to a problem)” to his text type ‘argumentation’. (p39-41).

The criteria for identifying a text type can be seen to occupy a different dimension to those for identifying a genre on systemic terms, so that the different sets of criteria can be illustrated as occupying intersecting axes (see figure 1.). Text types reflect the cognitive processes involved in the production of a text, and can therefore exist across

different combinations of situational factors (in various different contextual configurations).

See figure 1.

Figure 1.

	Text type = What? (Parameters, conventions, techniques, structures)
Field = Why? (Goals, subject matter; the “Kind of acts being carried out, and their goals” Halliday and Hasan 1985)	
Tenor = Who? (the participants, their relationship, their speech roles)	
Mode = How? (Channel of discourse, “what part the language is playing” Halliday and Hasan 1985, p12) ¹	

¹This is to denude Mode of its rhetorical aspect; Halliday and Hasan include as an adjunct to their basic definition of mode the “rhetorical mode, what is being achieved by the text in terms of such categories as persuasive, expository, didactic, and the like.” (p12) This, however, seems at odds with their otherwise situational, text-external definitions of the three features of the context of situation.

In this way, the analysts ‘working definition’ of a spoken text which is separable from its co-text and context, and which may lend itself to structural analysis, can be each

'patch' of generic activity, or each text type, which is identifiable in the course of the data as it progresses.

Chapter summary.

In this chapter I have examined other approaches to the description of language variation, and a distinction has been drawn between predominantly text-internal and text-external methods. Where notions of 'genre' are concerned with a speech community's use of language, and the functions which the language performs for that community, notions of 'register' are concerned with contextual matters, which can be described using the concepts of *Field, Tenor and Mode*. (Halliday and Hasan, 1985). Text types, however, are concerned with the 'kind' of language used, and the cognitive processes needed to produce and interpret the language.

I have also outlined the view of the concept of a 'spoken text' which this study adopts for analytic purposes. Since language and interaction are a constant part of life, the idea of separating individual texts from this continual and ongoing process is extremely difficult. Because language can, however, be broken down into text types, for the purposes of the present study isolating these 'patches' of discourse was seen as a useful working definition of a spoken text.

In the next chapter I shall examine one such text type, 'discussion', identifying what makes a discussive text, and proceeding to outline an exchange structure for it.

Genre, text type, discourse type, register.

5.1. Introduction

The notion of genre can be an elusive and evasive one. In terms of both terminology and approach, the word 'genre' is often more closely related to written language, where the 'type' of text can be fairly self evident. As Biber (1986) tells us: "genres are the text categories readily distinguished by mature speakers of English (e.g. novels, newspaper articles, public speeches)" (p213). However, these are extremely wide categories, which can themselves be broken down into further types; for example the novel as a category contains many genres, such as magical realism, horror, or romance. Chambers English Dictionary defines genre in the following way: "kind: a literary or artistic type or style" but our understanding of this concept is more complex and far reaching, stretching across areas other than the purely 'literary' or 'artistic'. Whatever else it may be or mean, genre is a classificatory notion, about separating items into groups, in the hope, perhaps that by categorising something in this way we can 'place' it (in the world, in a tradition) and can therefore arrive at a better understanding of its nature.

5.2 Views of Genre in linguistics.

In linguistics, the word 'genre' is most often used with reference to text-external methods of identifying categories of discourse. Enkvist (1973, p20) defines genre as "a culturally definable traditional type of communication" and although 'culturally definable' seems a very loose description, we can take this to mean that it is through examination of our own metalanguage as inhabitants/members of our cultural context that we can arrive at some definition of any given genre.

Bakhtin (1986) developed an notion of genre which centres on the 'utterance', which shares features with Sacks et al's (1974) idea of a 'turn at talk' in that it begins at a point where the speaker starts to talk, and ends at a point where another interactant may respond. The utterance embodies an individual's transactional and relational aims concerning whatever activity s/he is involved in, so that the discourse involved with these different activities and aims "develops its own relatively stable types of these utterances" (Bakhtin 1986, p60). In this way, although each individual utterance is different, they show conformity through their interactional goals, and their orientation towards a given audience, or "typical conception of the addressee" (p95). This makes them identifiable as a particular type of utterance, and these types of utterances make up different speech genres. Similarly, Swales (1990) stresses the importance of 'discourse communities' to the idea of genre: "Discourse communities are socio-rhetorical networks that form in order to work towards sets of common goals. One of the characteristics that established members of these discourse communities possess is familiarity with the particular genres that are used in the communicative furtherance of these sets of goals. In consequence, genres are the properties of discourse communities." (p9) Again, importance is placed on metalanguage: "A discourse community's nomenclature for genres is an important source of insight....active members give genre names to classes of communicative events that they recognise as providing recurring rhetorical action." (p54-55) In this way, Swales views genre as 'classes of communicative events' which both arise from and are used by members of a discourse community to achieve their mutual 'communicative purposes'. These purposes provide a rationale which shapes the genre in the sense that it places limitations on what can constitute certain aspects of a text, such as its subject matter. Genres themselves are therefore both created to

achieve, and defined/identified by, their communicative purposes: Swales argues that texts in a genre may have all kinds of features which identify them as members of that genre, 'prototypical' texts having all or most of these features, but even atypical texts must embody the communicative purpose of the genre to qualify as members of it. (see 5.3.3, below.)

Similarly, the concept of 'register' uses text-external or 'situational' factors in order to differentiate categories of discourse. This idea was developed by Halliday, McIntosh and Stevens (1964), who argued that "Language varies as its function varies; it differs in different situations. The name given to a variety of a language distinguished according to its use is 'register'. (p87). Although Halliday et al felt that registers should differ in form, i.e. that, specifically, there should be "differences in grammar and lexis" (p89), as Esser (1993) pointed out: "The impossibility of describing registers from the formal side has led the authors to work out a descriptive system which is based on the classification of situation types." (p40) They turned ultimately to the relationship between a text and its context in order to identify different registers, using the three criteria of 'field' 'tenor' and 'mode'. (see section 2.5). One question which arises here is the difference, if any, between register and genre, and whether register subsumes genre or vice versa. Perhaps the most accurate answer is that neither is true: register focuses attention on situational features and the relationships between participants; genre additionally pays attention to the goals of the interaction and, crucially, the status of the textual artefact within the discourse community which produces it and sanctions it *qua* genre. Neither approach allows the detachment of the text from its context of utterance.

5.3 Text Types.

Hymes (1972) conceptualises genres as separate from speech events, arguing that although a speech event can consist of one type of genre, genres can also exist *within* a speech event, so that a given speech event can consist of several different types of genre. In this way genre is less dependant on context because different genres can exist in the same context. He further argues that the same genre may differ according to the speech event in which it takes place. This gives his view of genre a dynamic dimension, which Duranti (1983) shares; he argues that differences in contextual factors (e.g. the roles and identities of the interactants, and their interactional goals) affect the realisation of the genre. This means that, for Duranti, genre is separable from context, although variable across contexts and speech events.

The term ‘text types’ as opposed to ‘genres’, is often used to refer to classificatory systems which are less dependant on contextual factors for their identification. Many of these systems have evolved from the rhetorical tradition of language study. Where genres are more instance-specific, for example, the legal document (see Bhatia 1987), the research article (Swales 1990), or the precise set of circumstances, participants, etc that lead to a particular contextual configuration (Halliday and Hasan 1985), text types are a more over arching, conceptual technique of classification. Further, the notion of a ‘text type’ can be seen to refer to a kind of marriage of text-internal and text-external methods of classifying texts, in that there appears generally to be an acceptance that real world/cultural knowledge (Malinowski’s ‘context of culture’; see Halliday and Hasan 1985, p7) is important, especially when examining the development of a text type, or its typical usage.

However, there is a strong bias towards evolving some classificatory method which relies mainly or entirely on aspects of a text other than its context, although this will often focus on a more abstract notion of the ‘nature’ of the discourse rather than on any formal features. For example Kinneavy (1971) classifies texts according to their central perspective, so that “If the focus or aim is on the sender, the discourse will be expressive; if on the receiver, persuasive; if on the linguistic form or code, it will be literary; and if the aim is to represent the realities of the world, it will be referential” as Swales (1990, p42) succinctly puts it. Similarly Longacre (1983) in his discussion of monologues, divides discourse into narrative, procedural, behavioural and expository texts. These types of discourse, he says, are distinguishable through the use of two criteria, which he calls ‘agent orientation’ and ‘contingent temporal succession’. Agent orientation (A.O.) concerns the focus of a text towards an agent, i.e. the inclusion or exclusion of a specific human referent, whether this is the reader, the writer, or a third party. Contingent temporal succession (C.T.S.) concerns the issue of whether or not each successive described event or action within the monologue is (at least in the majority of cases) dependant on a previous one. Once we have established whether a text is ‘plus’ or ‘minus’ in respect to these criteria, it can be classified (see table below). Longacre also suggests that text can be further classified according to whether it focuses on the future or the past, which he calls ‘projection’.

	Narrative	Procedural	Behavioural	Expository
A.O.	+	-	+	-
C.T.S.	+	+	-	-
Projection,	Prophecy/history	How to do it/how	Promissory/	Budget proposal/

e.g.:		was it done	eulogy	scientific paper
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This method of text classification is attractive to the analyst in that we are provided with kind of ‘checklist’ of features, which can be used to identify texts and which will inevitably place them into categories which are both discrete and comprehensive. Swales (1990) says that this is largely what is wrong with this kind of method: “the propensity for *early* classification can lead to a failure to understand particular discourses in their own terms” (p42) and he argues that this kind of typology can lead to “facile classification based on stylistic features and inherited beliefs, such as typifying research articles as simple reports of experiments.” (p46). Also, in terms of the present study, the Longacre categories lack the ability to account for the frequent generic embedding that is typical of everyday conversational argumentation. Narrative segments, for example, are frequently brought into arguments, as this study will demonstrate. Nonetheless, argumentation as a text-typological label is still viable: the problem is, rather, that its viability remains at a level that is at best merely ‘stylistic’ if only analysed to the degree of delicacy immanent in a broad text-typological model. The actual occurrence of, for example, narrative segments consequently has to be assigned to a more ‘surface’ level of description while ‘argumentation’ is assigned to a deep-structural level (see below).

De Beaugrande (1980) and De Beaugrande and Dressler (1981) provide a more complex method of classifying texts, looking at the cognitive patterns we use to recognise and interpret texts, as well as looking at the ‘nature’ of a text, *and* examining contextual issues: “A text type is a distinctive configuration of relational dominances obtaining between or among elements of (1) the surface text (2) the

textual world (3) stored knowledge patterns, and (4) a situation of occurrence.” (De Beaugrande 1980, p197). In many ways, De Beaugrande’s text types and their definitional requirements do resemble the rhetoricians’ view of discourse taxonomy. He, like them, tries to identify the main conceptual focus of a text, (in the ‘textual world’) which he calls its ‘control centres’; where Kinneavy talks about the focus of persuasive discourse as being on the receiver, and Longacre identifies the semantic structure of behavioural discourse as being about “how people did or should behave” (1983, p3) De Beaugrande says that an argumentative text’s “control centres.... will be entire propositions which will be assigned values of truthfulness and reasons for belief as facts.” (De Beaugrande 1980, p197). While these three focuses emphasise very different aspects of the texts, we can see that they describe similar text types, and indeed, at first glance De Beaugrande’s list of text types looks very like the rhetoricians’; for example Virtanen (1992) has narrative, descriptive, argumentative, instructive, and expository, and De Beaugrande has Narrative, Descriptive, Argumentative, Didactic, Scientific. That Literary, Poetic, and Conversational also feature as text types in De Beaugrande’s taxonomy may be partly due to the fact that he is dealing with spoken as well as written discourse. For De Beaugrande, our understanding of, and capacity to process, texts depends on cognitive frameworks he calls ‘global patterns’ which we use to recognise texts and which are part of our real world/cultural knowledge. This means that the fictionality of the Poetic and Literary modes makes a distinction between these and Narrative (including spoken narrative). It also means that Conversational discourse, with its “diverse range of sources for admissible knowledge” (De Beaugrande 1980, p199) forms a separate text type with its own distinct global pattern, and textual world.

5.3.1 'Surface' structure and 'deep' structure.

De Beaugrande further draws a distinction between these two notions of the textual world and our stored knowledge patterns, and the 'surface text' (1980, p197). This distinction may remind us of another commonly held rhetorical position, the idea that texts have two levels of classification (See, for example Longacre 1976 & 1983, Virtanen 1992, Werlich 1976, Kinneavy 1971 and Kinneavy, Cope and Campbell 1976.) Virtanen (1992) proposes that there is a superordinate "discourse type" which reflects the discourse function, as well as a "text type", which will be " a parallel set of similar categories – but on a level closer to the actual texts." (p298). A given text type need not necessarily realise its corresponding discourse type; Longacre (1983) argues that choices of text types will be made according to the stylistic effect the text producer wishes to achieve, using, for example the narrative text type (or to use Longacre's terminology, 'surface structure type' (p11)) for increased vividness in behavioural or expository discourse. In a sense, this leads us back to Swales' notion that genres are primarily identified by their function, or communicative purpose; although surface structure types are identifiable through the use of text-internal criteria, for the 'deep' or "notional" (Longacre 1983) discourse types we have to look to the language users (Swales' discourse communities), and their purpose in creating and using the genre.

Similarly, De Beaugrande isolates a "dominant function" with which we identify the text: "the assignment of a text to a type clearly depends on the function of the text in communication not merely on the surface format." (p185) His view of 'surface text' identifies sets of linguistic features which are often associated with different text

types, so that Narrative has a density of subordinate dependencies, and Argumentative texts have a density of evaluative expressions (1980, p197-8).

Biber (1998) and Biber and Finegan (1986) similarly analyse distributions of morpho-syntactic linguistic features, though their approach is to move from the linguistic dimension to the functional dimension: “features do not randomly co-occur in texts. If certain features consistently co-occur, then it is reasonable to look for an underlying functional influence that encourages their use.” (Biber 1998, p13). Since they do not posit functions on an *a priori* basis, their text types have the advantage of an increased empiricism, and the ‘dimensions’ which Biber and his associates identify as a result of factor analysis often do not correspond with those genres/text types which we can identify through our cultural knowledge – the genres which, Biber says, are “readily distinguished by mature speakers of the language” (1989, p5). Biber’s methods are not designed to explain native speakers’ ability to break language up into ‘types’ of discourse. Furthermore, Biber and Finegan’s dependence on surface, morpho-syntactic features means that any larger structural features, which organise the discourse on a wider, more global level, are ignored: for example Sinclair and Coulthard’s exchange structure (see section 2.4), or Van Dijk’s (1977) concept of macrostructures. These are global organisations of discourse which have a semantic basis. Each macro structure is governed by a proposition which “hierarchically organises the conceptual (propositional) structure of the sequence”, (p133) and which forms the discourse topic. In this way, we can see that there are sequences of propositions within a given text which identify the genre to which it belongs. In narrative, for example, there is ‘setting’, which is a ‘state’ or ‘process’ description, ‘complication’ which is an ‘event description’, and ‘resolution’, which

consists of/contains an ‘action description’: “together with the macrostructures on which they are based, the narrative categories determine the overall structure of the discourse....we can see that the type of categories and rules determining the overall organisation of a discourse at the same time identify the type of discourse involved.” (p154-5)

Similarly Gardner’s view of discourse follows the line that talk is topically or logically organised (p134) i.e. that discourse can be viewed as a sequence of different topics. These topics develop, and replace each other as the discourse progresses, in a variety of different ways, which can tell us about the type of text. For example, in casual conversation topics change frequently, and can be introduced by any of the participants, whereas in an interview situation or in classroom interaction topic is usually controlled by the interviewer or the teacher. Also the way topics change alters from one genre to another – a teacher will usually announce a new topic, and in casual conversation topics usually ‘shade’ into one another (see Gardner p138-9). Gardner defines topic as a series of utterances bound together by propositional links, though he admits that “the identification of topic within an exchange remains a matter, to a large extent, of subjective interpretation.” (1987 p140).

5.3.2 ‘Tool box’ text types.

This view of a text having two levels of classification therefore means that texts can have a ‘deep’ text type or ‘discourse type’, which is what Swales would refer to as the genre, and a ‘surface’ text type, which realises that genre. De Beaugrande takes this a step further when he argues that within a given text (with one universal discourse function) several different surface text types can be manifested. He gives

as an example the *American Declaration of Independence* which “contains descriptions of the situation of the American colonies, and brief narrations of British actions; yet the dominant function is undeniably argumentative...” (p185).

In fact, some text types are found embedded in (or embodying) others on such a regular basis, used as a tool to achieve the overall discourse function of a text type, that they therefore may be considered a defining feature of the text type rather than a deviation from it. Narrative in particular embeds in other types of discourse freely, and is used for a wide variety of different purposes; to give an example which proves a point, reinforces an idea, echoes another persons experiences for interpersonal effect, anecdotally demonstrates something about the speaker’s personality and so on. As Ochs (1997) says, “Not only can narrative house other language activities, it can itself be incorporated into a larger genre or activity...it can ...be housed within an ongoing dispute, as when someone launches a story to prove a point he or she is advocating.” (p186-7). This aspect of the narrative text type is something which many analysts have noted: Virtanen (1992) pinpoints narrative as a “basic type of text” because it “shows maximal ease in realizing different types of discourse” (p304) and she further states that it is a “basic organising pattern of our experience of the world.” (p305) Similarly Swales (1990) argues that both narrative and ‘casual conversation’ form pre-genres, so that “casual conversation is too persuasive (he must mean pervasive) and too fundamental to be usefully considered as a genre... it is... a basis from which more specific types of interaction have presumably either evolved or broken away” (p59). In this way, he argues, casual conversation is a “pre-generic dialogic activity” and the obvious candidate for a “comparable pre-genre for monologue” would be narrative (Swales, p61). Furthermore, the present

study takes the line that although narrative is an omnipresent interactional tool, in spoken discourse it rarely manifests itself as an independent ‘discourse type’ to borrow a concept and a term from Virtanen: i.e. narrative does not often occur as an ‘end in itself’, except in written discourse and perhaps in jokes (although because jokes can only occur in specific situations and for specific social purposes they cannot be seen as occurring as an ‘end in themselves’. Also they do not really qualify as spontaneous spoken discourse because they are learned and repeated). In fact, to illustrate narrative’s distinctness from other text types, it is useful to look at communicative purpose or function, which as we have seen is the feature of a text which many analysts regard as crucial. Narrative as an end in itself has no purpose other than to entertain, yet if we examine spoken discourse, narrative’s ‘entertainment’ function is often secondary to whatever other function it is being used for within a given text type. Even in casual conversation, when people are telling amusing or interesting stories about themselves or others, the fact that the narrative may be entertaining is often less important to both teller and hearer than what the story may reveal about the teller, (his/her sense of humour, or sense of self) i.e. the interpersonal ‘meaning’ of the story. In Labov’s (1972) research on spoken narratives, it is clear that the social status of tellers within their peer groups and their skills and styles is an important factor in the overall generic activity of story-telling. In this way, if the main communicative purpose of casual conversation is interpersonal display (see Tannen 1986 p7) the narrative is subsumed into and used as a tool to achieve that genre/text type’s overarching function. As Rosen (cited in Tannen, 1989) says, “storytelling is at the heart of everyday life...an ‘explicit resource in all intellectual activity,’ (citing Eagleton)” and Tannen comments that

“storytelling, in other words, is a means by which humans organize and understand the world, and feel connected to each other.” (p103)

A further point about the relationship between embedding and genre characterisation is that, in a corpus-based methodology (as opposed to, say, a rhetorical or stylistic study), probabilities of occurrence are built into the descriptive and defining statement: if narrative is probabilistically of high frequency in conversational argumentation, then its level of probability becomes part of the definition of the genre itself. Narrative also alters as the genre in which it is embedded alters. Ochs (1997) argues that in casual conversation narratives can be constructed by several interactants, with an initial teller who introduces the story, and other tellers who contribute to its construction. In argumentation narratives are typically produced by one speaker, often within a turn whose head act is an assessment. They are used as ‘proof’ of that assessment’s validity, and are typically responded to by another assessing move. In this way narratives can be a defining feature of different genres, in that its level of probability of occurrence, the way it is used and the purposes it is used for help us identify the genre in which it is embedded.

5.3.3 Prototypes.

Another commonly held view of both genre and text types is that even within a given category, all texts are unlikely to be totally homogenous. This has led to the conclusion that it is impossible to delineate a detailed and accurate classification system without providing a separate category for every new text. Cook (1992) writes that “It is part of a person’s cultural competence to divide the discourse of their society into units, to give those units names, and to assign them to categories.... there

are hundreds of such categories...or discourse types, which merge into each other and defy exact definition.” (p4) and it is true that it is in the nature of language to be extremely diverse. Therefore the analyst needs some method of bringing order into the chaos; as De Beaugrande says: “people use text types as fuzzy classifications to decide what sorts of occurrences are probable among the totality of the possible.” It cannot be the case that all texts within a given genre or text type are supposed to conform entirely to Cook’s “exact definition”; texts are more or less typical of their text type, and an extremely typical (even stereotypical) text is a ‘prototype’. Swales (1990) argues that although there will be a ‘privileged’ feature of a text (which in Swales’ view would be its communicative purpose) which all texts in a given text type will have in common, and without which a text will not qualify as a member, all other features can and do vary: “other properties, such as form, structure and audience expectations operate to identify the extent to an exemplar is *prototypical* of a particular genre.” (p52) In this way, prototypes can be used to study variation within a text type, including issues of stylistic variation, or to identify subgenres (see Bhatia, (1993) p21). Further, as Biber and Finegan (1991) point out, “Not all genres are equally homogenous, of course, and a complete linguistic description of a genre should include both a characterisation of the central tendency (i.e. of the average or typical text) as well as a characterisation of the range of variation.” (p214)

5.4 Summary.

If notions of ‘genre’ depend on context, or on text-external features such as communicative purpose, for their identification, the notion of text type (following the rhetorical tradition) seems to be an attempt to delineate a ‘kind’ of language event

which is intuitively identifiable and distinguishable from other 'kinds' of language events by mature native speakers, but which can be identified through text-internal, empirical linguistic analysis. Text types can take place in different contexts, or, more specifically, because even the term 'context' can have a wide range of meanings, different contexts of situation (Halliday and Hasan, 1985). A 'discussion' for example, can take place in a wide range of 'contextual configurations': in a professional, business setting, between colleagues who may be discussing the nature of the market either as part of a staff meeting or as conversation over lunch, or in a social setting, between friends who may be discussing their views on issues such as child-rearing or the price of petrol. Under these circumstances, a fairly similar (in terms of linguistic features) discussion text could be produced, but the context, and even the goal or 'communicative purpose' of the interaction may be different. In this way, we have a two-part system for creating a text typology for discourse; using an *a priori* classification system which is purely subjective and which depends on the analyst's own cultural knowledge systems, and working from this initial standpoint to a more empirically verifiable taxonomy.

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APPENDIX 1

(a) Labov's preconditions for hearing an utterance as a valid directive, with Burton's preconditions for informatives and elicitions. A response which implies that any of these preconditions did not apply to the previous utterance constitutes a challenge.

DIRECT

1. X should be done for purpose Y.
2. B has the ability to do X.
3. B has obligation to do X.

INFORM

5. A is in a position to inform B of P.
6. P is a reasonable piece of information.
7. B does not already know P.
8. B is interested in P.
9. B is not offended/insulted by P.

ELICIT

10. B hears M as a sensible question.
11. A does not know M.
12. It is the case that B might know M.
13. It is the case that A can be told M.
14. It is the case that B has no objection to telling M to A

(b) Burton's adaption of Keenan and Schieffelin's four essential steps in communicating a "discourse notion". If the addressee does any of the following, this constitutes a challenge;

1. He may refuse to give his attention.
2. He may ask for repetition of an utterance.
3. He may ask for clarification of information about the identification of objects, persons, ideas in the discourse topic.
4. He may ask for more information concerning the semantic relations between referents in the discourse topic.

(c) Discourse Framework:

In the list below, where the first discourse act occurs, the second must follow, otherwise (according to Burton) a challenge occurs.

1. Marker.....Acknowledge
2. Summons.....Accept
3. Metastatement.....Accept
4. Informative.....Acknowledge
5. Elicitation.....Reply
6. Directive.....React
7. Accuse.....Excuse

(d) Grice's maxims. Accusing your interlocutor of flouting a maxim constitutes a challenge.

1. RELATION Make what you say relevant.
2. QUALITY. Do not say something for which you lack adequate evidence. Do not say something which you believe to be false.
3. QUANTITY. Make your contribution as informative as required, but don't include too much information/unnecessary detail.
4. MANNER. a) Avoid obscurity of expression
 b) Avoid ambiguity.
 c) Be brief
 d) Be orderly.