READING AND RETHINKING: THE CULTURAL PRODUCTION OF READING AND READERS IN RESEARCH INTERVIEWS WITH PARENTS AND TEACHERS

by

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DISSERTATION SUBMITTED IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF
THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE OF

DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY
in

THE FACULTY OF GRADUATE STUDIES
(Language and Literacy Education)

UNIVERSITY OF BRITISH COLUMBIA

(Vancouver)

ABSTRACT

Recent research suggests the need to study how literacy and social in/equality are produced in social interaction. This dissertation focuses on the cultural production of "reading" and "readers" as one aspect of the cultural production of literacy. Using theories of cultural production, socio-cultural and socio-linguistic theories of literacy and ethnomethodological analyses of talk, this study examines the ways that parents, teachers and a teacher-librarian-researcher produce the construct "reading", the category "readers" and social in/equality in the context of "research interviews" for a "university study on literacy". The analysis presented here suggests that the participants co-constructed reading in a variety of ways. The most common method for producing or constructing reading was to "gloss" reading or to treat it as self-explanatory. A small portion of the data produced reading via alternative constructions including treating reading as a "puzzle". Analysis suggests this data can tell us more about the institutions of schooling, research and "the interview" than it can about participants' literacy practices. In addition, this analysis suggests that participants produced social relations and values in and through their talk of reading. The production of un-equal social relations and un-egalitarian values could be seen most clearly in the ways that the teacher-librarian-researcher was consistently positioned as an arbiter of reading/readers. However, some interactions revealed the production of more equal social relations and more egalitarian values. Implications and directions for educators, teacher-educators, teacher-librarians, policy writers, researchers, parents and other stakeholders interested in qualitative research methods, reading/literacy education, social in/equality are discussed.

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This dissertation would not have been possible without the care and dedication of a great number of people. First, I am grateful to the teachers and parents who gave up their time to allow me to interview them. Thank you for trusting me with your stories and memories. I am honoured by your willingness to engage with me in this research project. This dissertation would not have been possible without your generosity and goodwill.

Second, I am deeply thankful for the kindness and commitment of my committee: Dr. Jim Anderson, Dr. Don Fisher, Dr. Theresa Rogers and Dr. Steven Talmy. Each one of you contributed to the making of this study in diverse and unique ways. You are all consummate teachers and I feel immense gratitude for the care and attention you have given me as a person and as a student over the past few years. I have learned so much from all of you about teaching and learning, reading and writing, caring and staying focussed. This study represents only a small fraction of what I have learned from our work together. Thank you for taking me on and supporting me in the multiple ways that you did.

Third, I am sincerely grateful to my colleagues and friends at UBC who have nurtured my intellect through long talks, thoughtful questions and insightful editing. Particular thanks goes out to Martin Guardado, Ena Lee, Kim Lenters, Marianne McTavish, Mia Perry, Diane Potts, Jeremie Seror, Suzanne Smythe, Vetta Vratulis, and Kari Winters. Thank you for sharing drafts of your own work and for allowing me to share drafts of mine. Further thanks goes to the wider community of the Department of

Language and Literacy Education at UBC. I have had the pleasure of working with a great number of people in various capacities and I have always felt proud to be part of our department. My thanks to Anne Eastham, Laura Selander, Teresa O'Shea and Anne White for looking after so many "behind the scenes" details that made my life as a graduate student and as an instructor so much easier. Many thanks also to Margot Filipinko, Maureen Kendrick, Bonny Norton and Geoff Williams for your encouragement and support. Thank you for the bits of conversation, for inviting me to work with you on small projects and for keeping me in mind when something needs doing.

Beyond these very personal thanks, I am also very grateful for the financial support and awards that I have received from the following institutions: the International Reading Association, Killam Trusts, the Language and Literacy Researchers of Canada, the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada and the University of British Columbia. Many thanks to the anonymous adjudicators who saw fit to support my research. This dissertation would not have been possible without your support.

Last, but definitely not least, I am deeply grateful for the love and support of my family and friends. Thank you to my families East (Lesley Mang, David Lang, Chris Lang, Amy Lang, Clea Lang) and West (David Everest, Judy Wapp, Bessie Wapp, Josh Wapp) for your years and years of love and encouragement. Thank you for understanding my need to do this work even if it meant I had to live far away from you and that I couldn't visit as often as I would have liked. Thank you to my friends who have continued to be my friends even when we have been separated by geography and "busy-ness". Special thanks to Meryn Cadell, Jen Currin, Rachel Giese, Graham Giles, Shannon Greene, Charlotte Jackson, Loree Lawrence, Christine Leclerc, Diane Michaud, Rosanna

Nardi, Adam Segal, Angelina Vaz, Rick Wahl, and Terezia Zoric for all the meals shared, walks walked and talks talked. I feel lucky to have you.

DEDICATION

This dissertation is dedicated to my family and to my teachers and students, past, present and future.

CHAPTER ONE
INTRODUCTION

One of the dilemmas we all face in social interactions is how to establish our identities as valuable people. In the current age, "reading" has become identified as a sign of being a particular kind of person ("a reader") and being "a reader", in many cases, has been identified with having a high social value. As noted by Brandt (2001) and Collins and Blot (2003), the idea that reading is a moral activity and that being a reader is a sign of virtue has had a long history in North America and elsewhere. At various times in history, "reading" and being "a reader" have been constructed as duty to God, to democracy or to economic productivity. Through this kind of valuation of "reading" and "readers", a further dilemma presents itself: how do we establish our identities as "readers" in social interactions? Recently, this dilemma has become more pointed as definitions of "reading" have expanded dramatically. In the wake of innovations in communications technologies and theories of reading/literacy (Cope & Kalantzis, 2000; Kress, 2003; Lankshear & Knobel, 2006), people who have long considered themselves to be "readers"/ "literate" are now often forced to question this aspect of their identities. As Brandt (2001) has noted, changes in literacy practices over the past hundred years, such as the introduction of digital forms of communication, have made "staying literate" rather than "becoming literate" a key task for people in most socio-cultural and socio-economic contexts.

The dilemma of how to present oneself as a "reader" while engaging in some interactional business closely associated with institutions, such as a "research interview" conducted for a "university study of literacy" may be fraught with further dilemmas still. As argued by Heritage (2005), institutions such as courts, schools, hospitals, and universities, as well as "research" and "the interview", often bring with them institutional practices, actions, stances, ideologies and identities that can both encourage and constrain various kinds of utterances. In this way, if you are involved in an interaction associated with certain institutions, such as a "research interview" for a "university study of literacy" and the researcher happens to be a teacher-librarian, then claiming an identity as a "reader" may become even more of an issue, as "reading" and "evaluating reading" are activities that are commonly associated with "researchers", "teachers" and "teacher-librarians".

This study examines these kinds of dilemmas in detail via an analysis of how parents, teachers and myself, a teacher-librarian-researcher produce "reading" and "readers" in the context of a "research interview for a university study on literacy". In the following pages, I examine how a group of participants and I deal with these dilemmas in research interviews and what our strategies for dealing with them may mean for those of us who are concerned with literacy education, literacy research, research interviews and social in/equality. The central research questions for this study are:

1) How are "reading" and "readers" produced in research interviews between parents, teachers and a teacher-librarian-researcher?

2) What kinds of social relations and values are produced in and through this talk of reading and readers? The analysis here is meant to shed light on questions about the production of reading/readers/literacy/literates the production of social in/equality.

While much of the current research on what was once called "reading" now addresses "literacy" and "literacies", for the purpose of this study, I am focussing on the cultural production of "reading" as a part of the cultural production of literacy/literacies. I focus specifically on "reading" and "readers" in this study for two reasons: First, reading and readers were two of the most common words that I used in my interviews with the participants. Second, in examining the data for this study, I found that even when I asked participants questions about "literacy", they often responded with talk of "reading" and "readers". The data generated for this study could be used to examine the cultural production of "reading", "writing" or "literacy" amongst many other things. However, in the data set, there are many more references to "reading" than there are to "literacy" or "writing". In this way, I chose to focus my analysis on the cultural production of reading and readers instead of the cultural production of literacy/literacies/literates or writing/writers. Recognizing a growing body of research (e.g., Bialostock, 2002; 2004; Brandt, 2001; Compton-Lilly, 2003; Prendergrast , 2003; Rogers, 2003;) that suggests the cultural production of reading/literacy is related to the cultural production of social in/equality, this dissertation also considers how social in/equality is produced in and through talk of reading .

In the next chapter, I begin by outlining some of the current research on reading/literacy, learning and social in/equality that suggests a need for this study. In Chapters Three, Four and Five, I provide an overview of the theoretical frameworks that

have informed my research. Chapter Three is dedicated to outlining some of the origins and tenets of socio-cultural and socio-linguistic theories of literacy and socio-cultural theories of learning. Chapter Four is an examination of some of the origins and tenets of theories of cultural production. Chapter Five is an examination of some of the ways that an analyst could approach interview data and some of the benefits of approaching interview talk as social interaction in a study of cultural production and social in/equality. In Chapter Six, I detail my method of data generation and analysis. In Chapter Seven, I examine some of the ways that the participants and I produce "reading" and "readers" via an examination of eleven excerpts from the data set. These excerpts were chosen as representatives of typical interactions in the data. In Chapter Seven, I also consider how looking at the data as "Institutional Talk" and paying attention to "recipient design" or how specific utterances are designed for specific interlocutors, audiences and settings, opens up new ways of seeing the production of reading and readers. In that chapter, I take time to examine some of the social relations and values that are produced in and through our talk of reading by looking at the ways that the participants and I position each other and ourselves (Davies & Harré, 1990), as well as how we evaluate "readers" and "non-readers". In Chapter Eight, I contrast the extracts presented in Chapter Seven, with examples that are atypical in the data set . In both chapters Seven and Eight, I consider the relationship between productions of "reading"/ "readers" and the production of social in/equality. In the final chapter, I provide a summary of this study and discuss the implications of this analysis for educators, parents, policy writers, literacy researchers, teacher-educators, teacher-librarians and other stakeholders who are interested in reading, literacy education, research interviews and social in/equality.

Given that reading and creating readers are often considered to be some of the most central aims of schooling, this study will be of interest to educators, educational policy writers, teacher-educators, teacher-librarians, researchers and school administrators. However, given that parents are included in this study, and given that they are often considered to be instrumental in their children's literacy learning (Smythe, 2006) this study may also be of interest to parents. In addition, while the primary focus of this study is the cultural production of reading, readers and social in/equality, a secondary aim is to investigate how approaching interview data as social interaction may be useful to researchers interested in cultural production and social in/equality. This study joins a growing body of research (e.g., Baker, 2000; Durrheim & Dixon, 2000; Kitzinger, 2000; 2005; Ohara & Saft, 2003; Stokoe, 2003; Stokoe & Smithson, 2001; and Talmy, in press a; in press b;) that is interested in diversifying critical researchers' repertoire of analytic tools and in expanding the application of microanalyses to critical social issues. This aspect of the study may prove interesting to fellow researchers working on similar problems

CHAPTER TWO
LITERATURE REVIEW

Recent research suggests the need to examine the cultural production of reading and readers in social interaction. In particular, the work of Brandt (2001), Prendergrast (2003) and Rogers (2003) suggests that an examination of the cultural production of reading, writing, and literacy could be a key move towards understanding the cultural production of social in/equality. A further body of research suggests that it is important to examine these productions in social interaction, as doing so may shed light on the subtle ways that particular accounts of reading/literacy are created, sustained or challenged. In this chapter, I examine some of the literature that suggests the need to study the cultural production of reading, writing and literacy and the need to examine these productions in social interaction.

Recent Shifts in Theories of Literacy and Literacy Education

The last forty years have witnessed a significant shift in theories of reading, writing and literacy. This shift can be traced to both historical and ethnographic studies of literacy and literacy education. While scholars such as Goody and Watt (1963), Ong (1967) and Olson (1977) have argued that literacy, usually described as the ability to read and write, is essential for the development of "modern" ways of thinking and democratic social forms, scholars such as Gough (1968), Graff (1979), Heath (1983), Scribner and Cole (1981) and Street (1984) have raised questions about the nature and power of

literacy. The work of this second group of scholars suggests that the role of literacy in people's lives is often less clear-cut or direct than is commonly held. For example, after examining the role of literacy in nineteenth century working people's lives, Graff (1979) argued that the possession of literacy, (or being literate), alone did not guarantee occupational and economic gains. In sharp contrast to popular understandings, he asserted that the benefits of literacy for nineteenth century Canadians were few in these areas and that "Sex, ethnicity and race were far more important than literacy or education" (p.114).

Similar, challenges to what has been called the "literacy myth" or the "literacy hypothesis" have been provided by the ethnographic studies of scholars such as Heath (1983), Scribner and Cole (1981) and Street (1984). The work of these scholars, and the work of others since, have challenged the idea that literacy is "a communicative technology endowed with transformative powers" in and of itself (Collins & Blot, 2003). These scholars have documented how literacy is often used and viewed differently in different socio-cultural and socio-linguistic communities. In doing so, they have helped to raise questions about what "counts" as literacy in particular contexts and why. This body of research has led many scholars to suggest that "literacies" is a more apt term than "literacy" as it helps to capture the diversity of human meaning making systems and the importance of social context in determining which activities are deemed "literacy"(Cope & Kalantzis, 2000).

Historical and ethnographic studies of literacy have also presented new ways of thinking and talking about literacy learning. In particular, ethnographic studies of literacy have lent themselves to the development of an important theory concerning "gaps" in

children's literacy achievement in schools. This theory, often called the "home-school mis-match hypothesis" suggests that marginalized /"non-mainstream" children's "depressed literacy scores" may be the result of gulfs between "home" and "school" literacy practices(Purcell-Gates, 1995; Valdes, 1996; Williams, 2005). Dovetailing with socio-cultural theories of learning, the "home-school mismatch theory" has garnered a wide range of support in and outside school settings. This theory has led to a range of interventions designed to narrow the gap between home and school literacy practices. Such interventions include family literacy programs designed to bring school literacies to families and assorted attempts to encourage the use of "out of school literacies" in school.

However, as noted by Collins and Blot (2003), throughout this period few scholars have worked to examine how literacy has been used or viewed in *similar* ways across diverse communities and/or across different historical periods. In other words, while recent studies of literacy and literacy learning have asserted dramatic differences in home and school literacy practices, few have considered how some conceptions of literacy/literacy learning may be found both at home and at school. Few scholars have considered the ways that some conceptions of literacy or literacy learning may actually be *shared* by diverse groups of parents, students and teachers.

What "common sense" conceptions of literacy, or literacy ideologies, are shared amongst diverse groups becomes a significant question for educators when we consider how students' conceptions of particular practices/skills/subjects and themselves can affect participation in, and success with, such practices/skills/subjects etc. As argued by Lave and Wenger (1991) amongst others, unless people see themselves as potentially legitimate practitioners (e.g., as *potential* readers, writers or literate people), it is unlikely

that they will take up such skills or participate in such practices in school settings or elsewhere. In this way, an understanding of popular constructions of "reading", "writing" and "literacy" may be a vital move for educators, educational policy writers, and teacher-educators, as this knowledge may help us create effective literacy education policies and practices. For example, if we find that there are common beliefs about literacy as "belonging" to specific groups of people and not others, then we will know that we need to address issues of identity in order to facilitate literacy learning. Following the work of Lave and Wenger (1991), we can surmise that if students do not see themselves as legitimate "practioners of literacy" then they will be unlikely to take the time to invest in activities regarded as "literacy".

The Cultural Production of Reading/Literacy and Social In/equality

A review of current research also suggests another reason to study the cultural production of reading/literacy. The work of scholars such as Betts (2003), Prendergrast (2003) and Rogers (2003) suggests that literacy ideologies can work both to reproduce and to challenge social inequality based on such things as ethnicity, gender, language and socio-economic class. For example, Prendergrast's (2003) *Literacy and Racial Justice* offers an incisive examination of how some narratives of literacy may be linked to the re/production of racist social structures. Through an examination of landmark court cases in the United States, including *Brown v. Board of Education* and other documents such as Shirley Brice Heath's correspondence while writing *Ways with Words*, Prendergrast (2003) argues that dominant constructions of literacy as "white property" have worked to stall the African American civil rights movement and to narrow understandings of literacy learning. Prendergrast's (2003) analysis suggests that keeping African Americans

from learning particular literacies, and devaluing the literacies that they do acquire, has been a consistent thread throughout American history. She reminds us that in the nineteenth century, several states instituted restrictions on teaching slaves to read and write and that well into the twentieth century, literacy tests were used as a tool to disenfranchise African American voters and to exclude immigrants who were seen as "racially undesirable". In this way, Prendergrast (2003) highlights how conceptions of literacy, including what "counts" as literacy and who is a legitimate practitioner of literacy have been intimately tied to struggles concerning race and power.

Similar arguments could likely be made about ideologies of literacy in Canada and the United Kingdom. Although each region has had a different historical relationship with school segregation and slavery, people of colour and linguistic minorities in these places have experienced the impact of racist language and literacy policies while whites and monolingual Anglophones have generally enjoyed the "benefits" of dominant policies and practices (Blackledge, 2001). Following Prendergrast's analysis, parallel arguments could also likely be made about the construction of literacy as middle class property or as elite property. In thinking about constructions of literacy as middle class property, it bears noting that, until recently, one of the ways that researchers have attempted to "assess" socio-economic class has been through counting the number of books in a person's home (Lubienski, 2000). Although literacy is certainly more than just owning books, for the last few centuries, books have been seen as emblematic of literacy. In this way, the practice of counting "books in the home" as a measure of socio-economic class suggests literacy, or at least the paraphernalia of literacy, have long been linked to socio-economic class identity. Given that researchers who spent time counting books in

people's homes were likely attempting to locate their participants in relation to middle class/elite families, this practice could be read as evidence that "literacy" has historically been construed as a "property" of middle class/elite people regardless of evidence of a long history of working class writers and readers.[1] Further research in this area is needed to help flesh out our understanding of the social constructions of relationships between literacy and social class. However, Prendergrast provides an important template for considering the relationship between literacy, social identity and social inequality.

Rogers' (2003) *A Critical Discourse Analysis of Family Literacy Practices* also focuses on how popular understandings of literacy can play into the reproduction of racist social structures. However, unlike Prendergrast (2003), Rogers (2003) examines literacy learning in relationship to formal schooling. In addition, Rogers (2003), unlike Prendergrast (2003), includes an attention to social class in her analysis. In examining a range of data, including the transcripts of two "special education placement meetings", Rogers (2003) argues that popular ideas about literacy learning, such as the idea that literacy can be accurately evaluated by school personnel with a standardized "reading test", undermine marginalized parents' and students' abilities to resist deficit subjectivities. Rogers (2003) asserts that although June, the working class Black mother in her study, was initially against her daughter Vicky's placement in a basic skills/special education classroom, June's belief in dominant literacy ideologies and her desire to be a "good mother" made it difficult, if not impossible, for her to resist this recommendation from Vicky's "school team". In addition, Rogers' (2003) suggests that constructions of literacy as a quantifiable skill often make it difficult for parents, students, teachers and

[1] See for example the creation of reading rooms, the precursors to the modern public library, in the 19th century by working class men, or the existence of "dame schools" in working class neighbourhoods before the institution of mass public schooling (Grigg, 2005; Rose, 2002).

other school personnel to see the capabilities and strengths of working class Black students who frequently "fail" tests meant to "measure" their "literacy".

In contrast to the studies of Prendergrast (2003) and Rogers (2003), Betts (2003) helps to document how constructions of literacy can be used to *resist* social inequality. Betts' (2003) ethnographic study of an adult literacy program in El Salvador suggests that low participation rates in the program were part of a complex narrative of resistance and co-option, rather than just a reflection of the participants' lack of motivation or the social and economic barriers they faced in coming to class. In her study, she notes that many of her participants actively rejected the discourse of "literacy as power" as accepting it would mean accepting an image of themselves as powerless or as the "bottom rung of society". Echoing the work of Graff (1979), Betts (2003) also suggests that in the context of her study, literacy could not advance a person's social standing on its own. For example, in her observations, she found that young men would often act as scribes for their elders when these elders needed to compose a letter to the local Non-Governmental Organization (NGO) or to the mayor. However, such scribes were not allowed to officially contribute to the substance of the text they were writing. Instead, existing social power and lines of communication took precedence over these scribes' ability to read/write.

Betts' (2003) analysis highlights her participants' careful decision making concerning the kinds of literacies that they engaged or refused to engage with. For example, many of the women in her study who did come to literacy classes often openly dismissed written addition and subtraction as irrelevant. These women asserted that such forms of writing and reading were useless as they could do complex calculations in their

heads. In addition, Betts (2003) notes that participants who rarely attended literacy classes were often careful to use the language of popular education when they approached a local NGO for access to resources. Betts (2003) argues that her participants' use of this specific way of talking suggests they were well aware of the power of **talking** about literacy as empowerment, regardless of whether they experienced literacy in this way, or held literacy in such esteem. Recognizing the way that local power holders often dominated and dismissed her participants, Betts (2003) suggests that at times silence, and not showing up for a meeting, or a class, were her participants' most accessible methods for expressing dissent. In this way, Betts (2003) posits that her participants' resistance to literacy classes and to discourses of "literacy as power" needs to be seen as part of a broader narrative of "livelihood strategies" and as a response to local power holders. In recognition of the complexity of her participants' lives and of their active decision making, Betts (2003) argues against seeing "skipping class" merely as evidence of her participants' oppression and argues for seeing such absences as evidence of resistance to unequal social structures.

The Cultural Production of Reading/Literacy and Social In/Equality in Social Interaction

In examining these studies, it bears noting that while all of these scholars work to forefront a relationship between constructions of reading/writing/literacy and the production of social in/equality, only Rogers (2003) attempts to examine this production through an analysis of talk-in-interaction. Prendergrast (2003) focuses mainly on an analysis of written texts and Betts (2000) makes her argument using ethnographic field notes.

Similar patterns can be seen in other studies that focus on literacy, learning and social in/equality such as Bialostock (2002; 2004), Blackledge (2001), Brandt (2001) and Compton-Lily (2003). While all of these studies provide important analyses that raise questions about literacy, learning and social in/equality, none but Rogers (2003) attempts to outline how these ideologies are actually produced, maintained or challenged in social interaction. This absence is particularly apparent in the interview studies of Bialostock (2004), Blackledge (2001), Brandt (2001) and Compton-Lily (2003). While all of these scholars provide clear content analyses of their participants' descriptions of literacy, none of them consider their own roles in the co-constructing "literacy" during their interviews.[2] In neglecting this aspect of their data, these studies pass by an opportunity to see how constructions of literacy are forged in interaction. In other words, these studies leave us with a portrait of what the world looks like without an understanding of how we got here or how we might shift into a different direction.

Baker (2000) and Hester and Elgin (1997), argue that an examination of talk is one way to provide an in-depth understanding of the processes through which culture is produced. Baker (2000) asserts that such an analysis can lend insight into how culture could be produced **differently**. In the light of the research above that links constructions of literacy to the production of social in/equality, the issue of how "reading"/ "literacy" and "readers"/ "literate people" are produced and how they could be produced differently becomes more and more important. If we can understand how social inequality is produced with these constructs and categories, then we will be much closer to knowing how to challenge these processes and how to shift them into producing more equal social

[2] It should be noted that Brandt (2001) acknowledges this limitation of her study in Note 9 on page 212-213.

relations and more egalitarian values. In this dissertation, I examine the cultural production of "reading" and "readers" in relationship to the cultural production of social in/equality. My interest in doing so stems from an interest in learning how to produce reading/readers in ways that encourage egalitarian social relations. In the next three chapters, I examine the origins and tenets of the theoretical frameworks that have informed this study. In Chapters Three and Four I outline some of the contributions of socio-cultural and socio-linguistic theories of literacy, socio-cultural theories of learning and theories of cultural production. In Chapter Five, I outline some of the contributions of theories of interview talk as social interaction.

CHAPTER THREE
THEORIES OF LITERACY AND LEARNING

This study is informed by a number of theoretical frameworks including: socio-cultural and socio-linguistic theories of literacy, socio-cultural theories of learning, theories of cultural production and theories of interview talk as social interaction. Used in tandem with each other, these theories recommend an examination of how reading, writing, literacy and learning are produced in social interaction and how the production of these phenomena may be related to the production of social in/equality. In this chapter, I outline some of the origins and tenets of socio-cultural and socio-linguistic theories of literacy and socio-cultural theories of learning.

Socio-cultural and Socio-linguistic theories of literacy

Socio-cultural and socio-linguistic theories of literacy assert that the terms reading/writing/literacy/illiteracy, as well as reader/writer/literate/illiterate, mean different things to different people in different contexts (Cook-Gumperz, 2006; Woolard & Schieffelin, 1994). Socio-cultural and socio-linguistic theories of literacy recognize that descriptions of various means of communication, like reading/writing/literacy, are rooted in cultural history. For example, Cook-Gumperz (2006) stated that:

> From a socio-linguistic view oral and written literacy are different but supporting facets of language use. Literate and oral practice cannot be considered as opposites, rather it is our definitions of literacy that have at their center conflict

between oral and written disciplinary traditions, which are directly traceable to our own cultural history (p.3).

According to Kress (2000), a similar distinction between alphabetic print literacy and other modes of communication can also be seen as a legacy of a particular cultural history. From this perspective, socio-cultural and socio-linguistic theorists have argued that becoming "literate" in any culture is a complex process, intimately entwined with issues of socio-cultural context, learners' ideas of themselves, learners' desires for affiliation and learners' conceptions of "literacy" and "learning". This strand of research draws our attention to the importance of understanding children's and adults' "communities of practice" (the communities that they are a part of) and their "imagined communities" (the communities that they wish to be a part of) in order to understand how and why they engage or do not engage in particular language or literacy practices (Anderson, 1983; Lave & Wenger, 1991; Norton, 2000; Wenger, 1998).

In contrast to other theories of literacy, socio-cultural theories stress the need to view literacy ideologies and literacy practices, in larger historical and political contexts (Brandt, 2001; Luke, 1997a; Rogers, 2003). These scholars direct our attention to the ways that literacy practices including literacy pedagogies and ideas about literacy have changed over time and how they continue to change. This perspective also raises questions about the role that literacy assessment, curricula, instruction, policies and research have played and continue to play in the production of social in/equality. Critical socio-cultural examinations of literacy, such as Brandt (2001), Prendergrast (2003), and Rogers (2003), have raised questions about how current literacy programs and policies

work to challenge or reinforce social hierarchies based on such things as gender, race and socio-economic class.

Recently, scholars such as Barton and Hamilton (2000), Collins and Blot (2003), Gee (2001), and Street (1984; 2000a) have challenged literacy researchers to think about the assumptions or theories of literacy that underpin specific literacy policies/programs. These scholars argue that many contemporary literacy policies are built on an 'autonomous model' of literacy. As defined by Street (1984, 2000a), an autonomous model of literacy sees literacy as something that is **autonomous** from social context. In contrast, these scholars have begun to describe literacy as **socially situated**. Building on anthropological, historical and sociological research that has documented the ways that "what counts" as literacy varies greatly depending on cultural, historical, political and social settings, this alternative model, often called a 'situated model' or an 'ideological model' of literacy, suggests that literacy practices are "patterned by social institutions and power relationships"(Barton & Hamilton, 2000, p.8). This perspective argues that literacy practices cannot be truly understood in isolation from such institutions and relations.

A situated model of literacy asserts that there is not only one "Literacy" but that there are many forms of literacy or many literac**ies**.[3] This model reminds us that the dominance of particular forms of literacy, for example, the relative importance of alphabetic print literacy or fictional narratives in school curricula, often depends on who uses such forms of literacy and for what purpose. A situated model of literacy draws our attention to the ways that some forms of literacy are often thought of as "naturally"

[3] Mc Houl (1991) has made a similar argument regarding "reading(s)". As the majority of the literature approaching reading/writing from this perspective speaks more of "literacies" than "readings" or "writings" I have adopted this term. However, as noted in the previous chapter the focus of this dissertation is on the cultural production of the construct "reading".

superior to others, particularly because they are practiced by people who hold status (Kelly, 1997). In this way, a situated/ideological model draws our attention to how literacy practices are connected to issues of social identity and power. From this perspective, choosing to engage in any particular literacy practice can be seen as a "social act" (Lewis, 2001).

The research collected into the two volumes "Situated Literacies" edited by Barton, Hamilton and Ivanic (2000) and "Literacy and Development" edited by Street (2000b) as well as the work of Brandt (2001), Compton-Lilly (2003), Dressman (1997), Lewis (2001), Manyak (2004) and Rogers (2003) has begun to flesh out claims concerning the ideological, social and political nature of particular literacy practices, including literacy curricula/pedagogy. This body of research makes a significant break from traditional literacy research, which continues to assume that "Literacy" is a unitary, apolitical, ahistorical skill. A similar break has also been made by scholars interested in theories of learning. In the next section I examine some of the central tenets of these theories.

Socio-cultural Theories of Learning

Scholars such as Lave and Wenger (1991), Mc Dermott (1987;1993), Mehan (1996), Rogoff (2003) and Wertsch (1991) have drawn attention to the ways in which "learning", like "literacy", is socially constructed. Following close examinations of learning in post-industrial classrooms and other places of apprenticeship around the world, anthropologists of education have argued that although learning is usually spoken of in Western post-industrial cultures as if it is something that takes place, or does not

take place, inside individual heads, there are other ways that we could think about learning.

These scholars remind us that every understanding or skill takes place or is learned in a particular social space and at a particular historical time. They assert that knowledge is best understood as something that is **distributed** amongst members of specific communities. Their work forefronts the ways that social and historical context, social identity and power are related to what gets recognized as learning, who learns what, and how they learn it. These scholars remind us that our definitions of learning (and ignorance) are always tied to particular social, historical and political moments. What is considered to be intelligent/ignorant and educated/uneducated both reflect and create specific social relations and values.

The work of anthropologists and sociologists of education conducted over the last thirty years has raised questions about how constructs like "literacy" and "literate" may be related to the production of a society in which a select few experience great wealth and security, while the majority do not. This research asks us to think about how current ideas of "learning capacity" or "intelligence", and current talk of "literacy" and "illiteracy" may reinforce or further social inequality. These theories suggest some constructions or conceptions of literacy or literacy learning may help to challenge the production of social inequality while others may create or reproduce it.

Given recent demographic changes world wide, including the increase in trans-national migration and the proliferation of diverse language and literacy practices, given the birth of new literacies associated with technological change, scholars working with situated models of literacy and learning have suggested that "autonomous models" of

literacy, and literacy learning, like static models of "intelligence", may work to justify social inequality as they obscure the complex ways that various literacies are taken up, discarded, valued and dismissed. From this perspective, autonomous models of literacy and learning can be seen to obscure the ways that dominant groups reproduce their own advantage by failing to/refusing to recognize the situated nature of literacy and literacy learning. Recognizing the situatedness of literacies/readers can help to raise questions about why some literacies/readers are more valued than are others and whether this valuation is connected to traditional power imbalances rather than to any "natural" or inherent benefits/deficits in these forms of communicating/these communicators. In this light, it becomes important for those of us concerned with social justice to examine the ways that literacy and learning are conceptualized in and out of schools so that we may recognize and address those common sense ideologies that perpetuate unequal social relations and values.

As Barton and Hamilton (2000), Street (2000a) and Tusting (2000) have argued, an understanding of the ways that an autonomous model of literacy has become **naturalized** over time and how it is maintained will enable us to envision new ways of critiquing and challenging this process. Similarly, a close examination of some of the ways that an autonomous model of literacy can be challenged may give us the tools to argue for more nuanced understandings in the years to come.

Socio-cultural and socio-linguistic theories of literacy and socio-cultural theories of learning suggest that an examination of the cultural production of literacy is necessary for the creation of effective literacy pedagogies and can lead to the creation of more egalitarian ways of organizing society. These theories assert that the social construction

of particular phenomena/practices play into the ways that people choose to use specific tools or participate in specific activities. In addition, these perspectives suggest that the cultural production of the concept "literacy" reflects and creates specific social relations and values (Baker & Luke, 1991; Barton & Hamilton, 2000; Collins & Blot, 2003; Cook-Gumperz, 2006; Luke, 1997a; Woolard & Schieffelin, 1994). This dissertation focuses on one small part of the cultural production of literacy – the cultural production of the construct "reading" and the category "readers". In the next chapter, I examine some of the origins and tenets of theories of cultural production. In Chapter Five, I examine two approaches to analyzing talk that have been important to my data analysis.

CHAPTER FOUR
CULTURAL PRODUCTION AND LITERACY EDUCATION RESEARCH

Baker, Luke and others (e.g. Baker & Luke, 1991; Carrington & Luke, 1997; Freebody & Baker, 2003; Heap, 1985; Luke, 2003, 2004) have repeatedly asserted the need for a more sociological approach to literacy education research. As Luke (2003) argues, if we are interested in understanding how to facilitate literacy learning most effectively, then we need to begin with a multi-disciplinary orientation to research that includes sociological approaches to data collection/generation and analysis. In particular, Luke (2003) asserts that researchers intending to inform literacy education in 'new times' or in the current era of multi-lingualism, post-colonialism and globalization, and those who hope to contribute to policies, curricula and pedagogies for social justice, need to have a familiarity with sociological theory. In this chapter, I examine what sociological theories of cultural production might offer researchers interested in literacy education. I begin by outlining some of the origins and tenets of these theories and then discuss what these theories could offer literacy education researchers.

Cultural Production and Literacy Learning

Theories of cultural production can be seen as part of a tradition of critical analyses of education. Theorists and researchers who engage in critical analyses share an interest in explaining the root causes of social and educational in/equalities. Through such analyses, they assert that current educational systems have generally failed in their

promises to create more egalitarian societies. These analyses also suggest that this failure is not an accidental by-product of a generally healthy system. Instead, they assert that the causes of social and educational inequality are infused throughout much of school content and processes (Wotherspoon, 2004).

Critical analyses can be seen as a reaction to liberal and structural functionalist theories that depict schools as conflict-free, or as unproblematic tools for creating meritocracies. Critical understandings of schooling suggest that liberal and structural functionalist visions of schooling may be better understood as ideologies that serve the interests of dominant social groups, rather than as empirical facts about schools in society.

In the last forty years or more, various strands of critical analysis have developed in order to help explain the persistence of social inequality or why some groups of people appear to have easy access to social and material goods while others do not. Traditional Marxist, feminist and anti-racist theories of education have generally focussed on the ways that educational policies and practices work to underwrite capitalism, patriarchy and/or white supremacy. These theories have generally held that social inequality persists because schools function as mechanisms that socialize young people into their respective class, gender or "racial" roles. From these perspectives, oppression is often seen as something that schools do **to** students. Power is often described as a "one way" street, rooted in social systems or held by a select few. Theories of cultural production have worked to build on and to challenge these ideas of oppression and power (Levinson & Holland, 1996).

Theories of cultural production share with traditional Marxist, feminist and anti-racist analyses of schooling a concern with social in/equality. However, these theories focus specifically on the cultural, or day-to-day, ways that social in/equality is created, maintained and/or challenged. Scholars working with theories of cultural production suggest that a focus on how social structures are built up, held in place or undermined through everyday social interactions can be extremely fruitful. Working with this perspective, a wide range of places such as special education placement meetings, parent-teacher discussions of "homework", teachers' choices of curricula, evaluation and pedagogy, students' hallway banter and schoolyard games can all be studied as sites of the production of social in/equality.

Gordon (1984), Levinson and Holland (1996) and Willis (1981) argue that theories of cultural production can be seen as related to theories of social reproduction and cultural reproduction with some significant differences. In their review of the history of these theories, Levinson and Holland (1996) suggest that social reproduction and cultural reproduction can be seen as early phases in the development of theories of cultural production. Levinson and Holland (1996) argue that theories of cultural production were developed through a dissatisfaction with earlier understandings of how social inequality was created, maintained and conceptualized. Some of these dissatisfactions could be seen as dissatisfactions with the ways that the processes of cultural production were described.

As noted by Wotherspoon (2004), and Levinson and Holland (1996), theories of social reproduction argued that schools were not "innocent" sites of cultural transmission. These theories began to question the idea that schools were neutral tools for creating

meritocracies. However, scholars working with these theories tended to make generalized statements about the role that schools played in the perpetuation of capitalism and economic inequality. In other words, they tended to describe how schools worked to reproduce social inequality in fairly distant and generalized terms and they focused on economic inequality to the neglect of other forms of inequality. Originating in the early-mid 1970s, theories of cultural reproduction developed particularly by scholars such as Bourdieu (1976; 1997) and Bernstein (1977; 1997) began to sketch out in more detail how culture, including style of dress, speech and conduct, were caught up with education in the process of recreating capitalist labour relations and economic inequality. Some of Bourdieu's most significant contributions were the development of the concepts **cultural** and **social** capital (Bourdieu, 1997). These concepts helped scholars to talk about the complex ways that inequality was reproduced "symbolically" through the recognition and valuation of particular dispositions, objects, institutional roles and identities. Throughout the 1970s and early 1980s, a range of studies began to draw on these theories to help explain how social class was reproduced in schools.

However, as noted by Levinson and Holland (1996), Bourdieu's early work, along with the work of other cultural reproduction scholars, tended to emphasize the ways that social inequality was maintained or reproduced without acknowledging the possibility that students, teachers or parents, could resist this reproduction or could initiate/support more egalitarian ways of organizing society and material production. As Levinson and Holland (1996) argue, by the mid 1980s theories of cultural reproduction:

had come to rely on highly schematic and deterministic models of structure and culture, as well as simplistic models of the state and its supposed use of schools as instruments of social control (p.7).

In this way, a new body of research began to examine whether, and how, people actively supported or resisted social structures. From various accounts, it was the introduction of ethnographic research into studies of schools and schooling that helped scholars to move beyond deterministic understandings of cultural reproduction towards seeing cultural production as a dynamic process fraught with struggle and negotiation. The study most frequently cited as a watershed in this direction is Willis' (1977) *Learning to Labour: How Working Class Kids get Working Class Jobs.* In his ethnographic study of 12 working class "lads" attending a comprehensive secondary school in England, Willis described the ways that the lads were active participants in creating their identities and life trajectories as working class men. As argued by Levinson and Holland (1996), *Learning to Labour* "forever shattered the image of the passive, malleable student implicit in reproductive theory" (p.9).

Critiques of *Learning to Labour* can also be seen as important in the development of theories of cultural production. According to Gordon (1984), a major critique of Willis' *Learning to Labour* was the lack of attention he paid to issues of inequality based on gender and race. These critiques helped to open up questions about whether, or how, theories of cultural production could be used to investigate issues of gender, race, sexuality and other social structures.

In addition, these critiques raised questions about how to conceptualize these aspects of social identity, in relation to each other, on their own, and in relation to socio-

economic class. As argued by Levinson and Holland (1996), developments in anthropology of education and the advent of "cultural studies" as a field also deepened these questions about traditional understandings of social identity.

In their review of the history of theories of cultural production, Levinson and Holland (1996) note that during the 1960s through the mid 1980s, anthropologists of education devoted most of their energy to documenting differences between classroom and community patterns of communication. While these studies have been seen as important for countering racist and classist ideas of "genetic inferiority" and "cultural deprivation", they did little to recognize the social, political and historical forces that helped to produce "cultural differences". In other words, these studies of "cultural mis-match" often lent themselves to an essentialized view of culture and an obfuscation of deep, structural inequalities. The recognition of these problems with anthropological studies of schooling, and the inception of cultural studies as an area of research, lent themselves to the creation of more nuanced understandings of "culture" in theories of cultural production.

The impact of the creation of the *Centre for Contemporary Cultural Studies* (CCCS) in Birmingham in the mid 1960s cannot be underestimated in the development of theories of cultural production (Levinson & Holland, 1996). Scholars located at the CCCS including Willis, Stuart Hall, Dick Hebdige, Angela McRobbie and Raymond Williams, applied themselves to the study of "the social forms through which human beings 'live', become conscious, [and] sustain themselves subjectively" (Johnson 1986 in Levinson and Holland p.12). In this way, "culture" in theories of cultural production became seen as a "continual process of creating meaning in social and material contexts"

(Levinson and Holland 1996 p. 13). This conceptualization of culture helped to place focus on the processes through which social relations and values were created, maintained and challenged.

What Can Theories of Cultural Production Offer Literacy Education Research?

One of the most significant contributions that theories of cultural production can offer literacy education research is a focussed attention on issues of social in/equality. For literacy researchers, such theories suggest the need to ask questions about how the production of constructs like "literacy"/ "reading" / "writing" may be related to the production of social in/equality. In the light of theories of cultural production, we can now ask how current ways of producing these constructs may work to create, maintain or challenge inequalities based on gender/race/sexuality/socio-economic class etcetera.

In addition, these theories raise questions about how we conceptualize "culture" and social identity in current literacy and literacy education research. These theories raise questions about the generally latent theories of culture and identity that exist in traditional literacy education research. From the perspective of theories of cultural production, we need to examine whether, and how, we are working with or promoting essentialized ideas of culture and social identity when we generate/analyze data and when we report on our analyses. Similarly, these theories force us to examine whether we are attending to, or obscuring, deep structural inequalities as we work. Theories of cultural production suggest we need to examine how literate/reader/writer identities are produced, reproduced and resisted in various sites.

In the past few years, a small group of researchers have begun to experiment with a few tools that may be helpful in pursuit of some these questions. In the next chapter, I examine the work of scholars who have been analyzing talk as social interaction and what this research may offer those of us interested in cultural production and "research interviews".

CHAPTER FIVE
ANALYZING RESEARCH INTERVIEWS AS SOCIAL INTERACTION AND THE CULTURAL PRODUCTION OF READING, READERS AND SOCIAL IN/EQUALITY

As noted in Chapter Four, theories of cultural production offer literacy education researchers a wide range of questions about the relationship between the production of "reading"/ "readers" and social in/equality. In this chapter, I examine how an approach to interview data as social interaction may be useful for a study of the cultural production of "reading", "readers" and social in/equality in research interviews. I begin with an examination of how approaching interview data as social interaction differs from traditional social science research. I then offer a brief outline of two methods of analysis that maybe helpful to researchers interested in analyzing interview data as social interaction: membership categorization analysis and conversation analysis. Recognizing a traditional split between research that considers questions of social in/equality and research that uses these methods of analysis, I note some studies that are attempting to use these tools to answer critical questions. I conclude with an outline of some of the key terms that have influenced my analysis and a description of how an analyst might approach his/her interview data with these tools.

Analyzing Interview Data as Social Interaction

While researchers like Bialostock (2002;2004), Brandt (2001) and Compton-Lilly (2003) have provided significant content analyses of interview data concerning

literacy/reading/writing, few, if any researchers, have analyzed interviews concerning literacy/reading/writing as social interaction. Recent research suggests this kind of approach to interview data may be important for studies of cultural production.

As argued by Baker (2002), Holstein and Gubrium (2004), Silverman (2001a) and Talmy (2008), there are numerous ways that social scientists could approach interview data. While traditionally, interviewing has been depicted as a method for "collecting" participants' thoughts, or ideas, about a particular issue, these scholars have asserted the usefulness of examining interviews "as instances of settings – like other interactional events that are not interviews – in which members use interactional and interpretive resources to build versions of social reality and create and sustain a sense of social order" (Baker, 2002; p.778).

Rather than depict interviews as a method for "collecting" data, as if such data pre-existed the moment of the interview (e.g. in the participant's head), scholars interested in approaching interview data as social interaction have begun to describe interviewing as a method for "generating" data. This perspective focuses explicitly on how the interviewer and interviewee make sense of each other and how they make sense of the interview itself as a social interaction.

This perspective differs from traditional social science analyses of interview data in several ways. For example, as argued by Baker (2002; 2004), Holstein and Gubrium (2004), Silverman (2001a) and Talmy (2008) while traditional analyses of interview data tend to focus on the **content of what the participants say**, analysing interviews as social interactions suggests it is equally important to pay attention to what **the interviewer** says

and to **how** researchers and participants **construct meaning together** in interview situations.

This kind of approach brings with it a very different orientation to identity and culture than is generally found in traditional social science research. In traditional social science research, identity and culture are often viewed as "factors" that can be used to explain why particular people behave in particular ways. Approaching interview data as social interaction suggests that identities and cultures are topics that require investigation. In other words, while identity is conventionally used either to explain particular social phenomena (e.g., she reads that text in such and such a way because she is a white middle class woman) or as a way of classifying subjects (e.g., participants were working class boys), approaching interview data as social interaction asks us to look at identity as something that can be "worked up, played down or otherwise used as part of the discursive business at hand" (Edwards, 1998;, p.24).

Similarly, while "culture" is often written of as a static element or as a "factor" that works to explain why people behave in particular ways, approaching interview data as social interaction asserts that "that culture is constituted in, and only exists in, action" (Hester & Elgin, 1997, p.20). In other words, in approaching interview data as social interaction, culture is not a unitary thing that a group **has**, but it is something that people **do**. This approach to culture and identity can be seen as closely aligned with that of feminist post-structural theorists and discursive psychologists such as Bronwyn Davies (1993, 2000), Wendy Hollway (2001), Mary Horton-Salway (2001), and Valerie Walkerdine (1985; 1987; 1990).

From this perspective interviews can be studied in terms of how various versions of the world are talked into being, or as moments in which people do the work of "moral accounting" for why things are as they are, or how they should be. Baker (2000), argues that approaching interview data as social interaction provides a means to investigate the arrangement of "power, privilege and advantage", or how social relations and values are produced in social interaction.

This shift in focus from "uncovering what participants think" to examining how versions of social reality are "built", how identities are worked up/down, how culture is performed, how meaning is constructed, and how a sense of social order is "created", or "sustained", suggests an optimal fit for investigations of cultural production as this shift places emphasis on **processes** rather than "end products".

This perspective highlights the connection between what happens in "research interviews" and (what is often thought of as) "the outside world". Rather than see research interviews as moments "out of time", or as somehow separated from the production of social relations and values, this approach recognizes that researchers and participants are actively producing culture and identities even while they discuss the apparent "research topic". This recognition is particularly important for those of us who identify ourselves as interested in cultural production, as to ignore this aspect of our data contradicts our theoretical orientation and our stated research interests. In other words, if we believe that social relations and values are produced in everyday interactions like parent-child discussions of homework, or teacher-student conversations about literature, then it would be reasonable to assume that social relations and values are also being

produced in research interviews. Similarly, if we assert that we are interested in cultural production, then it makes sense to actually examine the processes of cultural production.

Approaching interview data as social interaction may also be important for those of us who have named ourselves as committed to creating more egalitarian social relations and values. Examining interview data as social interaction suggests that interviewees are not "vessels of answers" (Holstein & Gubrium, 2004; p.144), but are active, complete and capable meaning makers. As such, their accounts can be treated as equal in all ways to those of interviewers (e.g.,just as constructed, just as contestable, just as contradictory, etc.). To elevate or degrade interviewees' accounts as more or less constructed than interviewers' accounts is to suggest a view of these participants as inherently different from one another, as either more or less honest or more or less naive.

In addition, approaching interview data as social interaction allows us an avenue to evaluate whether we are truly producing equal or unequal social relations through our research. If we refuse to examine interview data as social interaction, we may provide clear content analyses of our data and we may, for example, illustrate our participants' commitments to un-egalitarian or egalitarian values. These reports may help galvanize fellow educators and researchers to work for social justice. However, taking the time to examine what we actually **do** in our day to day "research activities" allows us to critically evaluate the impact of our work in a much more immediate way. Examining interview data as social interaction allows for a deeper form of reflexivity than is present in much social science research. For these reasons, it becomes important to consider new ways of approaching interview data as social interaction. Two possible tools for doing so are presented in the next section.

Possible Tools for Approaching Interview Data as Social Interaction: Membership Categorization Analysis and Conversation Analysis

In thinking about how to approach interview data as social interaction it may be useful to consider some of the tools found in two forms of discourse analysis known as membership categorization analysis and conversation analysis. These forms of analysis provide a means to analyze talk as social interaction. In this section, I provide an examination of the origins and tenets of these approaches. I include a discussion of why, at first glance, these tools may seem like an unlikely fit for a study of the cultural production of social in/equality. However, I then go on to describe some of the key concepts in these forms of analysis and how a researcher might begin to analyze his/her interview data as social interaction.

Membership categorization analysis and conversation analysis are forms of inquiry that have their roots in the lectures of Harvey Sacks, the early ethnomethodology of Harold Garfinkel and the studies of interaction of Erving Goffman. In the mid 1960s and early 1970s, Sacks worked to illustrate how some classic sociological questions concerning social order and social structure could be addressed by studying the organization of talk-in-interaction[4] (Antaki & Widdicombe, 1998; Baker, 2000). As noted by Lepper (2000), Sacks developed his approach following his studies with Goffman and through his studies and collaboration with Garfinkel. Sacks was deeply influenced by developments in linguistics and philosophy and worked to combine the two disciplines: the study of ordinary language and the study of everyday interaction, into a new area of research, the study of naturally occurring conversation (Heritage, 2001; Lepper, 2000).

[4] "Talk-in-interaction" is the term used most commonly by Conversation Analysts. As noted by Antaki and Widdicombe (1998), this term was coined by Emanuel Schegloff as a way to highlight that talk is "thick" with interactional business.

In their discussion of Sack's work, Antaki and Widdicombe (1998), assert that Sacks was struck by the usefulness of examining the sequential organization of talk-in-interaction in order to understand the production of social order. Sacks also asserted the importance of examining how people use language to arrange the world into collections of things or "categories" and how they use these categories to conduct their daily affairs. Baker (2002), argues that this approach can be seen as an alternative to sociologies that assume a social scientist's knowledge is of an inherently different order than that of an ordinary person. Instead, this approach suggests that all members of society are lay social analysts who use, invoke and organize "presumed commonsense knowledge of social structures" in order to accomplish ordinary activities (Hester, 1998 p.134).

While Sacks published very little in his lifetime, and while much of his work was only published after his premature death by a car accident in 1975, inquiries into the relationship between talk-in-interaction and social order have continued to flourish through the attentions of his closest collaborators Emanuel Schegloff and Gail Jefferson (Housley & Fitzgerald, 2002; Kitzinger, 2000; Lepper, 2000). A significant move towards popularizing Sacks' ideas came with the publication of his *Lectures in Conversation* in 1992. This collection was assembled from the notes and recordings of former students, as so little of Sacks' ideas had been committed to paper as formal publications.

A wide range of activities has been studied using membership categorization analysis and conversation analysis. For example, Hester (1998) has used membership categorization analysis and conversation analysis to examine how "deviance" is recognized in elementary schools. Baker (1984; 2004) has used membership

categorization analysis to examine how adults and adolescents locate themselves and each other along a continuum of "stages of life". Wingard (2006) has used conversation analysis to examine how parents initiate talk of homework with their children after school and Butler and Weatherall (2006) have used membership categorization analysis to examine how children organize their social actions during play activities.

However, in thinking about using membership categorization analysis or conversation analysis to examine the cultural production of social in/equality it bears noting that these tools have not been widely used by scholars interested in critical issues. As noted by Zimmerman (2005), a perusal of studies that use conversation analysis, for example, could suggest a lack of interest in "social problems" and a deep interest in "the mundane and the trivial". In the next section, I discuss this divide between studies that use membership categorization analysis/conversation analysis and studies that are concerned with issues of social in/equality. I then note some studies that are working to bridge this divide and why these tools might actually be profoundly useful to scholars interested in the cultural production of social in/equality in talk-in-interaction and most specifically in "interview talk".

Theories of cultural production and membership categorization analysis and conversation analysis as strange or not so strange bedfellows

Kitzinger (2000; 2005), Ohara and Saft (2003), Stokoe (2003), Stokoe and Smithson (2001) Talmy (in press a; in press b;) and Zimmerman (2005), note that there are reasons to see theories of cultural production, membership categorization analysis and conversation analysis as strange bedfellows. These scholars contend that one of the reasons why these theoretical frameworks are rarely used together can be traced to a

twenty-five year or more history of tension between those who study talk-in-interaction and those who engage in critical research. A review of some of the literature suggests that many scholars who use membership categorization analysis or conversation analysis avoid and mistrust research that is openly critical or that engages in the examination of issues of social in/equality. Similarly, a review of critical research suggests that scholars who identify as criticalists are equally suspect of membership categorization analysis and conversation analysis.

As evidenced in the debates published in Volume 10, Number 4 of *Discourse and Society*, much of this struggle centers on arguments concerning how an analyst should approach his/her data. Schegloff (1999a; 1999b), as a representative of conversation analysts who are wary of critical research, asserts that analysts must approach their data with a "clean gaze" and that their analysis should not contain anything "extra-textual". His advice to analysts is that they focus only on issues that are "oriented to" by the interlocutors in their data. In other words, analysts should under no circumstances import their own political sympathies into their analyses. This assertion has sparked heated debate concerning whether analysts can ever be truly impartial, neutral or "unmotivated" in the ways that they analyze or represent their data. Billig (1999a; 1999b), a researcher who is interested in critical questions, has asserted that the assumption that an analyst can remain "neutral" suggests a kind of "naïve epistemology" and "scientism" that mars the usefulness of conversation analysis. However, this debate has also led a small number of researchers to investigate how the tools of membership categorization analysis and conversation analysis might actually be used to investigate critical questions.

Rather than engage in the traditional arguments about whether, or how, a researcher can approach analysis with a "clean" gaze, these researchers have begun to look at the ways that their own understandings of social in/equality can be seen as a *resource* rather than as an *impediment* to trustworthy analysis. As Stokoe and Smithson (2001) assert, just as cultural and "common sense" knowledge are resources to people in social interactions, so are these understandings *resources* for analysts as they attempt to make sense of their data. In their example, Stokoe and Smithson (2001), note that it is their own extra-textual knowledge of the different rights, obligations and activities commonly associated with "girls", "women", "middle class people" and "working class people" that helped them to see the production of unequal gender and class relations in their data.

Similarly, Kitzinger (2005) draws on her own knowledge of the existence of non-heterosexual, non-nuclear families in order to understand the production of heteronormativity in a series of after hours phone calls to a medical centre. In her study, Kitzinger (2005) suggests heterosexual nuclear families are assumed to be, and are made "normative" via subtle conversational moves by both the doctors who answered these calls and by the people who placed these calls. Kitzinger (2005) uses some of the concepts developed in conversation analysis, such as the importance of looking at talk-in-interaction sequentially, and some of the approaches developed in membership categorization analysis, such as looking at how various actions are linked to various kinds of people, to make her argument. In Kitzinger's (2005) study, it is interesting to note that even though sexuality is never referenced directly in her data and even though there is a marked absence of "conversational trouble", or struggle, the interactions can still be

analyzed in terms of how they reproduce heteronormative definitions of family and oppressive social structures. In other words, these moments can still be heard as moments in the cultural production of social in/equality.

The work of scholars such as Kitzinger (2000), Ohara and Saft (2003), Stokoe (2003), Stokoe and Smithson (2001) and Talmy (in press a; in press b;) has to begun illustrate how microanalytic tools such as membership categorization analysis and conversation analysis could be useful for examining critical issues such as how unequal gender relations, racism and linguicism are reproduced and resisted in everyday interactions. Through their examinations of university classroom conversations, young adult focus groups, a phone-in consultation television program, neighbour mediation sessions and televised neighbour disputes, Kitzinger (2000), Ohara and Saft (2003), Stokoe (2003), and Stokoe and Smithson (2001), have asserted that conversation analysis and membership categorization analysis may provide new means for analyzing the production of unequal gender relations and heterosexism. Similarly, in his study of "long term ESL" students in a Hawaiian high school, Talmy (in press a; in press b;), has illustrated how such tools could help researchers explicate the production of racism and linguicism in secondary school settings.

In this dissertation, I look to extend the work of these scholars and to raise questions about the relationship between the cultural production of "reading", "readers" and social in/equality in research interviews by analyzing interview data with some of the tools of membership categorization analysis and conversation analysis. In the next section, I outline some of the key concepts used in these forms of analysis.

Key Concepts Used for Analysis

While membership categorization analysis and conversation analysis share a common origin in the work of Sacks, and share a general ethnomethodological influence, these forms of analysis have in many ways developed in isolation from one another. In this way, each form of analysis has developed its own unique set of terms and ways of approaching data. In the following sections, I outline some of the terms that a reader might encounter in a membership categorization analysis or in a conversation analysis. I begin with a discussion of terms found in membership categorization analysis such as: "Membership Categorization Device", "Category Bound Activity", "Rules of Application", "Standard Relational Pair", "Contrast Pair", "Category Contrast" and "Extreme Case Formulation". I then examine some of the concepts central to conversation analysis including: "Turn", "Repair", "Recipient Design" and "Institutional Talk". I conclude this chapter with a description of how an analyst might approach his/her interview data with some of these tools.

Membership Categorization Analysis

Some of the terms a reader might encounter in a membership categorization analysis include: "Membership Categorization Device", "Standard Relational Pair", "Contrast Pair", "Category Bound Activities", "Category Contrast" and "Extreme Case Formulation". Sacks argued that locating these phenomena and recognizing the use of two "rules of application" (an economy rule and a consistency rule), are central to how people make meaning in everyday interactions and how analysts can conduct membership categorization analyses.

Membership Categorization Device (MCD)

The term Membership Categorization Device (MCD) refers to a "collection of categories". Sacks asserted that talk-in-interaction generally invokes different "collections of categories". In other words, when a person is heard to be a particular kind of person, s/he will generally be heard to be a member of a larger category of people. For example, if during a conversation a person is described as, or behaves in a way that suggests she is a "mother", this description, or her actions/words, may invoke a collection of other categories that includes fathers, daughters, sons, etc. This larger "collection of categories" could be named "family". Similarly, if a person is described as, acts like, or speaks like, a "doctor" this description, behaviour or speech might well invoke a collection of other categories that we could name "professionals" (lawyers, teachers, accountants, etc.) or "health care practioners" (nurses, midwives, dentists, etc.). Sacks used the term "Membership Categorization Device" (MCD) as a kind of shorthand for "collection of categories". The use of this term reminds us that when we observe talk-in-interaction, we can hear how people are described, as well as how they describe/position themselves, as part of (or separate from) groups or pairs of people.

Category Bound Activities

Category Bound Activities (CBA) refer to activities that are typically associated with members of a particular category. Silverman (2001b) states that "categories can usually be read off the activities in which people engage" (p.123). In this way, in everyday interactions we often infer what kind of person someone is or who s/he is, by paying attention to what s/he does. Looking at what people do in various interactions or

at the verbs they use in their descriptions is one way to begin a membership categorization analysis.

Sacks stressed that the ways that a person or thing is described, or oriented to, and how that description is heard, or recognized, has important consequences for ensuing social interaction. In thinking about membership categorization analysis, the fact that any one person or thing could likely be described by a wide range of terms at any given moment may initially seem like an insurmountable problem. Plainly, given the moment, we all could be described using a range of terms, and it may at first seem impossible to assert that any one term is more appropriate or more relevant than another. However, Sacks suggested that in conducting a membership categorization analysis, deciding which term or collection of terms is relevant in an interaction is a matter of focusing on how the participants in the interaction orient to each other. For example, while a person might be a parent, a teacher, a film buff and a gambler all at the same time, for the analyst, the identity that is most important is the one that the participants in the social interaction appear to "orient to" or "make relevant".

As Baker (2000) puts it, determining which Membership Categorization Device (MCD) is in play at any particular time in an interaction is "a local matter". In trying to name which categories seem to be in use in an interaction, people in social interactions (and analysts of these interactions) pay attention to how interlocutors are located and how they respond to each other. Examining where utterances occur in an interaction, or the sequence in which they occur, can be very useful for understanding how interlocutors are making sense of an interaction, or what categories they think are relevant.

Rules of Application: Economy Rule and Consistency Rule

In looking at talk-in-interaction, Sacks suggested that people use specific rules of application in their everyday exchanges, and that recognizing these rules could be useful to analysts. The first rule of application is the "economy rule". As noted by Butler and Weatherall (2006), this rule states that "the application of one category is sufficient in making a description" (p.444). In other words, just as it is usually considered to be unnecessary to describe or introduce one friend to another using a long list of attributes or roles (e.g., Dave, Kate's brother, a skateboarder, New Zealander, jazz fan, who has a part in a local theatre production), people often treat a single membership category as "referentially adequate" during an interaction. In other words, people often orient to one identity at a time. The economy rule can help analysts, just as it helps interlocutors, to make sense of an interaction. In this way, as analysts we don't need to fear that we will lose sight of one of the interlocutors' various identities. Instead we need to focus on how the interlocutors are responding to, or "positioning", each other and build our analyses on the displays of such orientations.[5]

The second rule of application is the "consistency rule". This rule states that when a category (e.g., teacher) has been used and then another category (e.g. ,lawyer) is used that can be heard as a category from the same "collection" as the first category (e.g. teachers and lawyers could be collected into a larger category of "professionals"), then people tend to hear both of these categories as part of that larger collection (Hester, 1998; Butler & Weatherall, 2006;). Sacks called this a "hearer's maxim". This maxim helps explain how people deal with ambiguous categories that come up in interaction.

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[5] For more about positioning please see: Davies, B., & Harré, R. (1990). Positioning: The discursive production of selves. *Journal for the Theory of Social Behavior, 20* (1), 43-63.

Generally speaking, if a category is brought into an interaction, interlocutors will sort that category into a larger category as soon as they have more information to work with. This is not to say that once a person has been sorted, s/he will stay in that category for very long. Members' categories can and do shift from moment to moment during everyday interactions.

Standardized Relational Pair (SRP) and Contrast Pair

Standardized Relational Pair (SRP) refers to the ways that people are often "heard" to be, or may position themselves to be, part of a readily recognized pair. A Standardized Relational Pair is a pair of terms that are typically related to each other and that bring with them a "locus of rights and obligations" (Lepper, 2000, p.17). Some examples include pairs like parent-child or counsellor-client. In each of these pairs, there are certain rights and obligations that are generally accorded to each member. While details of these rights and obligations may vary, it is generally held that there are some rights/obligations that accompany these roles. For example, it is generally held that children have the right to be fed and clothed or to be looked after by their parents and that parents have an obligation to look after their children. Similarly, it is generally understood that counsellors have the right to expect payment for their services and clients have the right to confidentiality. Counsellors also have an obligation to listen to their clients and to offer counsel. Clients also have an obligation to listen to, or at least appear to be listening to, their counsellors, and to provide details about their needs. When these rights or obligations are not fulfilled then members are held accountable, or are asked to provide an account of, or an explanation for, their breach in expected behaviour. For example, if a client could not pay his counsellor after a counselling session he would

generally need to provide an explanation. Similarly, if a counsellor broke confidentiality, she would generally need to account for her decision to do so. While the "standard-ness" of a specific pair might be argued, the idea here is that there are pairs and relationships that bring with them a range of common assumptions. If a pair seems more unique than "standard", this pair is sometimes referred to as a "contrast pair" instead of a "standard relational pair" (Baker, 2004).

Category Contrasts

Hester (1998) notes that category contrasts consist of (at least) two parts, elements or items that are contrastive in some way. There were numerous category contrasts in the data generated for this study. By way of illustration, consider the following extract in which I asked Penny, a parent interviewed for this study, about whether she reads aloud to her pre-teen daughter Aileen:

Extract 1 Penny (17:33) (li 263-272)

L: and you were saying, of course, Aileen is reading away on her own, but do you ever do anything with reading aloud with her, even though she can read on her own? does she get into that at all?

P: um, no, since she's started reading on her own

L: umhm

P: we virtually never read to her

In this extract, Penny and I create a great number of category contrasts in a very short time. In our first few turns (lines 263-283) we assemble the category contrast "people who read aloud" vs. "people who do not read aloud" as well as "people who read

on their own" and "people who do not read on their own". I initiate these contrasts through my question concerning whether Penny "reads aloud" to Aileen "even though" she can read "on her own". In doing so, I also create a contingent category contrast between Aileen "before she could read on her own" and Aileen "now that she can read on her own". In her reply, Penny aligns herself with my construction of reading as an activity that can be divided into these phases/versions and of readers who can be divided into these categories, by using the exact phrase I have just used ("reading on her own") and by adding "started to" to our description of Aileen's reading. In doing so, Penny indicates another agreement with my suggestion that there was a time when Aileen did not read on her own, or when she was in the category "people who do not read on their own", even if she does so now. In this way, we both work to create a number of category contrasts for our discussion.

Conversation Analysis

Some of the concepts a reader might encounter in conversation analysis are "turn", "repair" and "recipient design". Sacks asserted the importance of examining how utterances are "sequenced" in an interaction, and how "turns" and "repairs" are organized. In addition, he suggested that analysts needed to pay attention to "recipient design" or to how turns are specifically designed for particular interlocutors, audiences and settings. In the following section, I outline these concepts and discuss another concept that is relevant to conversation analysis and to this study, "Institutional Talk".

Turn Taking

As noted by ten Have (1999), the idea that conversations are organized in terms of "turns" is a core aspect of conversation analysis. The term "turn" reminds us that as a rule, conversations are conducted in such a way that one person and only one person speaks at a time, there is generally only a minimal gap between speakers and generally only a minimal amount of overlapping talk. From a conversation analysis perspective, these aspects of conversation can be seen as the **accomplishments** of those involved in the conversation. These rules of conversation suggest that interlocutors generally pay attention to the small cues that mark "transition relevant places" where one speaker or another might begin to talk, or where one speaker or another signals s/he is finished or expects another interlocutor to step in. ten Have (1999), argues that recognizing how turns are organized can be a first step towards understanding what in going on in a stretch of talk-in-interaction. Some interactions will be organized in such a way that all of the turns seem to be evenly allocated amongst the interlocutors. Others may appear to be organized in an unpredictable way. Some interactions, such as debates, ceremonies and meetings may be organized very differently (e.g., there may be formalized patterns dictating who speaks when and for how long). Recognizing the patterns of turn allocation can help an analyst decide whether some data should be seen as a casual conversation or as part of "Institutional Talk" (as discussed below). Casual conversations are generally much less structured in terms of their turn organization than are interactions that are closely associated with institutions.

Repair

The term "repair" refers to one of the ways that interlocutors work to create meaning in talk-in-interaction. Repairs can be seen as the signs of perceived "trouble sources" in an interaction. For example, if speakers accidentally use a term that they think may cause a misunderstanding, they will often stop themselves in mid-sentence and initiate "self-repairs" before finishing their utterances. Such self-repairs might take the form of explaining their use of the term in question, or of using an alternate term. Similarly, if after speaking a recipient shows in some way that s/he has misunderstood what was said, then a speaker may work to clarify his/her original meaning. Both of these activities can be seen as "self-initiated self-repairs". At times, repairs are also initiated by others. For example, if you say something and your interlocutor replies with "hunh?" or "sorry, I have no idea what you are talking about" then you are given an opportunity to repair your initial utterance. As noted by ten Have (1999) the "possibility of repair is omni-relevant" (p. 117). In other words, repairs can happen at anytime, and when repairs **don't** happen it is as relevant to the talk-in-interaction as when they do. Plainly, assuming there is no need for a repair, or choosing not to provide a "repair" can be just as important to what happens next in a conversation as actually initiating a repair.

Recipient Design

Recipient design refers to the ways that turns are constructed, organized or designed for particular interlocutors, audiences and settings. As ten Have (1999) asserts, speakers build utterances in such a way that they "fit" their recipients. Since conversational actions can be performed in various ways, how a turn is constructed, or

designed, is matter of choosing from available versions. Such choices generally reflect what speakers know about their interlocutors and how they understand their current interaction. For example, adults will generally speak differently to children and teenagers concerning matters of personal safety. Similarly, children and teenagers will generally speak differently to their parents when they are requesting assistance with their schoolwork than when they are asking to attend a friend's party. Recognizing the importance of recipient design provides analysts with another way to understand what is happening in a moment of talk-in-interaction. The traces of interlocutors' understandings of their conversation partners, and their assumptions about their current interaction, will be seen in the ways that they design their utterances. Recipient design reminds us to view utterances as constructed from a range of possibilities and as the result of meaningful choices that may or may not be conscious to the speaker.

Institutional Talk

Heritage (2005) and ten Have (1999) note that conversation analysis (CA) can be divided into two main areas. The first investigates "conversation as an institution". This area of research is dedicated to mapping out the general rules of talk-in-interaction, such as the rules of turn taking mentioned above. The second area of research investigates the "operation of social institutions *in talk*" (Heritage, 2005 p.104). ten Have (1999) refers to the first form of CA as "pure" CA and the second form as "applied" CA. Heritage (2005) notes that the second form of CA, what he calls "Institutional CA" builds on work from the first form of CA. In other words, "Institutional CA" uses the insights of "pure CA" to investigate the work of social institutions such as law, "the family", medicine etc.

Heritage (2005) notes the difficulty of delineating "Institutional Talk" from "non-Institutional Talk" as definitions of "institutions" can be very broad and Institutional Talk is not in any way confined to particular physical settings such as courts, hospitals, churches or schools. In attempting to distinguish "Institutional Talk" from ordinary conversation, Heritage (2005) suggests it is useful to look for the signs of the following three basic elements of Institutional Talk. These elements are:

1) The interaction normally involves the participants in specific goal orientations that are tied to their institution-relevant identities (e.g., doctor and patient, teacher and student, lawyer and client).

2) The interaction involves special constraints on what will be treated as allowable contributions to the business at hand.

3) The interaction is associated with inferential frameworks and procedures that are particular to specific interactional contexts (p.106).

Identifying whether some data should be seen as part of "Institutional Talk" can be seen as a step towards understanding the data in hand, as well as the institution that the data are a part of. Heritage (2005) and Wooffitt (2001) argue that the analysis of a piece of data as Institutional Talk can reveal the "fingerprint" of specific social institutions. As noted by Heritage (2005), recognizing some extract of data as Institutional Talk allows us to ask:

1) What kinds of institutional practices, actions, stances, ideologies and identities are being enacted in the talk and to what ends?

2) How does the use of particular interactional practices matter for issues that are beyond the talk? Are there connections between the use of particular kinds of practices and actions in a given institutional area and substantive outcomes of the interaction, for example, decision making, persuasion, satisfaction and so on?

In this way, the study of institutional talk **as** institutional talk can provide further insight into the cultural production of various institutions or how institutions are created and maintained in social interaction. While there is no lock-step method for conducting a membership categorization analysis or a conversation analysis, the terms and concepts defined above can help to provide some guidance. In the next section, I examine some of the steps an analyst could take in conducting a membership categorization analysis or a conversation analysis.

Using Tools from Membership Categorization Analysis and/or Conversation Analysis to Analyze Interview Data as Talk-in-Interaction

Baker (2002; 2004), Holstein and Gubrium (2004) and Silverman (2001a) suggested a number of ways that an analyst could approach interview data as talk-in-interaction. Baker (2002) proposes that an analyst begin with an attempt to look at the data as a conversational interaction by "tracing the work that is done turn by turn by each speaker in relation to previous turns and in orientation to next turns" (p.779). Baker

(2002) also recommends creating a kind of "actional sketch" or a description of the actions that can be heard in the data in order to begin to see how the interviewer and the interviewee are orienting to each other and how they are treating this interaction as an interaction (p.779).

After creating this kind of an "actional" description, Baker (2002) suggests looking at the interview data for the kind of "accounts" that are evident. Instead of viewing the data as "factual reports" about how things are, the analyst can start to see the questions and answers in an interview as examples of "sense-making work through which participants engage in explaining, attributing, justifying, describing and otherwise finding sense or orderliness in the events, people, places and course of action they talk about" (p. 781). After considering the "accounts" presented in an interview, Baker (2002) asserts the usefulness of examining the kinds of membership categorization work happening in the interaction and within the accounts. Baker (2004) suggests that it may be useful to try to locate the central categories (of people, places or things) that "underpin" the talk in interaction and to pay attention to whether there are any "standard relational pairs" (e.g., student/teacher) or any "contrast pairs" or less standard pairs (e.g., hard worker/slacker) that are being called on to help interlocutors make sense of the interaction.

As Baker (2004) reminds us, these categories are sometimes named but are often only implied through references to the activities they engage in, or through actually engaging in those activities. Following an examination of categories and activities, Baker (2004) suggests the next step is to look at the connections that members produce between categories and attributions. In other words, to look at "the descriptions of how categories of actors do, could or should behave". She) asserts:

> When people do 'describing' they assemble a social world in which their categories have a central place. These categories are in a sense the speakers' 'puppets', which they can dress up in different ways and make behave in various ways. These are powerful statements about what could be the case, how the social order might be arranged, whether or not it really is" (p.175).

As argued by Baker (2000), membership categorization analysis provides a means to analyze the ways that discourses are "locked into place" and in turn can help us to "open talk to critical examination" (p.99). As noted earlier in this chapter, similar arguments have been made by scholars such as Kitzinger (2000) and Stokoe and Smithson (2001) concerning the possibilities of using conversation analysis to examine critical questions such as how unequal gender relations are produced in everyday talk-in-interaction.

Finding the production of identities and versions of the world are the last steps in Baker's (2002) suggestions for "ethnomethodological analyses of interviews". However, as ten Have (1999) suggests, analysts can also work to consider how speakers' "packaging of actions", including their choices of reference terms, provide for certain understandings of various actions and matters. ten Have (1999) suggests the importance of examining the options that such packaging, or "recipient design", can set up for recipients. At times, analyzing interviews may also mean trying to decide whether, and/or how, some data should be regarded as "Institutional Talk". Following Heritage (2005), analysts may want to ask whether their data bear the marks of Institutional Talk by asking whether there is evidence of specific goal orientations or institution relevant identities. If so, it may be important to ask what kinds of constraints and contingencies may be placed

on the interaction. In addition, if this data appear to be part of Institutional Talk, analysts may want to ask what inferential frameworks and procedures may be associated with this interaction, or how the use of particular interactional practices may matter for issues beyond the talk. In other words, we may want to ask how the data are relevant to our understanding of social relations, values or the institution(s) linked to this talk.

In this chapter, I examined how an approach to interview data as social interaction differs from traditional analyses of interview data and why this approach may be useful for a study of cultural production and social in/equality in research interviews. In addition, I provided a brief outline of two methods of analysis that maybe helpful to researchers interested in analyzing interview data as social interaction. Recognizing a traditional split between research that considers questions of social in/equality and research that uses these methods of analysis, I reviewed studies that are attempting to use these tools to answer critical questions. I concluded with an outline of some of the key terms used in membership categorization analysis and conversation analysis and a description how an analyst might approach his/her interview data with these tools.

In the following chapters, I take up the suggestions of Kitzinger (2000; 2005), Ohara and Saft (2003), Stokoe (2003), Stokoe and Smithson (2001) and Talmy (in press a; in press b;) that membership categorization analysis and conversation analysis could be used to study the production of social in/equality via an examination of the ways reading and readers are produced in "research interviews" between parents, teachers and myself, a teacher-librarian-researcher. In the next chapter, I outline how I generated the data for this study and I introduce the participants. I also provide details on how I analyzed the data. In Chapters Seven and Eight, I discuss some of the ways that the participants and I

produced the construct "reading", the category "readers" and social in/equality. Following Baker (1991; 2000; 2004) and Freebody and Baker (2003), I argue that beyond creating a shared understanding of reading and readers the participants and I also produced particular social relations and values in our talk-in-interaction and that some of these relations and values were more egalitarian than were others.

CHAPTER SIX
METHOD

In this chapter, I outline how the participants and I generated the data for this study and I introduce the participants. I include a discussion of my relationship to the participants and provide details of my method of analysis. I begin with a description of the data generation including a discussion of the interview protocol and the field notes that I used. I then describe my method of analysis beginning with my initial transcription and coding of the data, and concluding with a discussion of my subsequent transcriptions and the ways that I worked to deepen my analysis. In the final section of this chapter, I discuss some of the ways that I attempted to insure the trustworthiness of my analysis, including peer debriefing sessions and the use of member checking.

Generation of the Data

Data for this project were generated via semi-structured individual interviews between me, a teacher-librarian-researcher, and eighteen parents and teachers living and working in downtown Toronto. The parents and teachers in the study were all in some way related to a single school known as "Stony Creek"[6]. Participants were teachers and staff at the school or parents who had their children at the school. One of the participants was a former parent at the school as she had recently moved to the suburbs. I became acquainted with the participants as I worked at Stony Creek as a teacher-librarian for four

[6] All of the names in this study are pseudonyms. The majority of the participants' names were chosen in consultation with the participants themselves.

years before beginning graduate studies. In this way, I was known to the participants as a former colleague or as a former teacher at their children's school.

I chose to generate interview data for this study because there is a long tradition of using interview data in social science research. Choosing to generate interview data allowed me to tap into a wide range of previous scholarship and its attendant tools. This choice greatly facilitated my analysis. I chose to generate data with these participants because I felt my former relationship with them would provide a level of intimacy and trust that I could not expect from parents or teachers at another school. The participants in the study were very willing to take time to talk to me. My feeling is that this willingness was a result of seeing me as an extended part of the community. In choosing to interview these parents and teachers, I was given the opportunity to generate a large amount of data that retained some flavour of conversations among people who were familiar with each other. While some participants were more forthcoming than others, throughout the process of data generation I was repeatedly impressed by the level of detail all of the participants provided about their lives and by the amount of time that many were willing to share with me.

In addition, I chose to generate data with these participants because my experiences as an elementary teacher-librarian and as a researcher have led me to believe that parents and teachers play a key role in the cultural production of reading and readers. Talk about reading is pervasive in and out of schools. However, it is particularly ubiquitous amongst parents and teachers. In this way, choosing to generate data with these participants was a way of insuring an abundance of data relevant to my research questions for analysis. Although I have had interesting discussions about reading and

readers with people who are not parents or teachers, in general I find these groups of people have a wealth of opinions and ideas on these topics. In this way, I was able to generate a large amount of data in a fairly short amount of time that spoke to the cultural production of the construct "reading" and the category "readers".

Phases and Locations of Data Generation

Data generation for this study took place in two phases and in a few different locations. In October of 2004, I interviewed five participants (four parents and one teacher) over the telephone. In April/May of 2005, I returned to Toronto and completed thirteen more interviews with parents and teachers living and working in the same school community. Over the period of a month, I spent time at the school recruiting parents and teachers who were willing to be interviewed. By the end of that month, I had interviewed thirteen more participants (nine more parents and four more teachers). The majority of these interviews took place in a quiet seminar room at the back of the school library. However, a few of the interviews were conducted in other places such as in empty classrooms, on the school playground and in the principal's office. These interviews lasted from forty minutes to two hours and were conducted in one, two or three sittings.

In reviewing the transcripts of the interviews, I noticed that there were no substantive differences in the content of the phone and "in person" interviews. Differences in the length of the interviews can be attributed to the amount of time the participants had to spend with me. The telephone interviews were conducted in the late afternoons and evenings when the participants were at home. The in-person interviews

were conducted after school and during school lunch periods. In this way they tended to be much shorter because there was less time available for the participants.

The participants in the first phase of data generation were chosen based on my ability to locate them by phone from Vancouver, as I was away from Toronto attending graduate classes. These participants were also chosen based on their willingness to participate in the study and on their ability to fax me their consent forms. These interviews each lasted from two to four hours, were conducted in one or two sittings and were recorded using a digital audio recorder and a telephone adapter.

The participants in the second phase of data generation were chosen based on their willingness to participate and with an eye to diversifying the original sample in terms of ethnicity/race, immigration history and socio-economic class. In the first phase of data generation, three of the five participants were white, Anglophone professionals who had lived their entire lives in Canada. One participant of the five had immigrated to Canada from Vietnam as a young child and grew up speaking both Chinese and English. Another participant was born in Canada but grew up speaking Dutch until she began school at age five. My interest in diversifying the sample stemmed from my desire to include members from the wider school community. Having worked in the school for several years before I began graduate studies, I felt that I had a responsibility to include participants from a diverse range of the local communities. While my own ideas about social identity have grown ever more complicated since that time, during the initial phases of data generation I was influenced by a curiosity concerning what narratives of reading might look like across a "diverse sample". In the next section, I introduce the focal participants and outline some of the ways that the sample could be seen as "diverse"

and hence "ordinary", in order to give the reader of this dissertation a general snapshot of the group and myself.

Participants

The participants in this study included myself, a teacher-librarian-researcher and a group of eighteen parents and teachers living/working in a community in downtown Toronto. In this section, I introduce the group as a whole and then provide a more detailed sketch of nine of the participants who specifically feature in the interview excerpts analyzed in Chapters Seven and Eight. The details below concerning the participants are provided as evidence of the ordinariness, rather than extra-ordinariness, of the group. These details are not provided to imply that the participants were in way "representative" of any specific cultural/ethnic, gender, linguistic, professional or socio-economic community.

The Group as a Whole

While the terms "culture", "ethnicity", "language group", "diversity" and "socio-economic class" are often difficult to define, I believe the range of experiences that the participants and I brought to our conversations would qualify us as a diverse and hence ordinary group. We were a diverse group in terms of age, educational background, languages spoken, number of languages spoken, and length of time spent in Canada. We were also diverse in terms of our marital status, occupations, and parenting status.

The participants ranged in their ages from late 20s to late 50s. Some of the participants had not completed high school, some had secondary education and some had graduate degrees. At the time of our interviews, some of the participants had worked at a

wide variety of jobs while others had held a smaller number. Some worked at jobs that required several years of formal schooling and institutional certification (e.g. psychiatrist, teacher), while others worked at jobs that required fewer years of formal schooling or at jobs that did not necessarily require certification (e.g. educational assistant, nanny, secretary). One of the participants was not paid for her work (homemaker). Some of the participants were identified as "learning disabled" during their early years in formal schooling, while others had not experienced this "identification".

At the time of our interviews, I was in my mid 30s, I had finished my MA in literacy education and I had worked in a range of jobs most of which were connected to education, childcare or books. I had worked in a day-care, at a bookstore, as a secondary English teacher and as an elementary teacher-librarian. I had also worked most recently as a research assistant in a language and literacy education department and as a teacher-educator in a faculty of education. As an undergraduate, I had also worked as a "student custodian" for the Toronto Public Library, as a hostess in a restaurant and as a part-time baker for that same restaurant. I was never identified as "learning disabled" during my early years of schooling. However, at one point in elementary school I was selected for "Saturday Morning Enrichment classes". These classes were designed to provide "enrichment" by way of cooking and art classes for academically successful students.

Some of the participants were recent immigrants to Canada, some were first or second generation Canadians and some of the participants had families who had lived in Canada for many generations. Some of the participants were monolingual, some were bi-lingual and some were multi-lingual. Some of the languages other than English spoken by the participants included: Arabic, Dinka, Dutch, French, Italian, Macedonian, Mandarin,

Portuguese, Swiss-German, Tagalog, Tamil and Vietnamese. Some of the participants had immigrated across national boundaries several times in their lives, while others rarely if ever left Canada. One participant was born and grew up in the same Toronto neighbourhood as she currently lived.

At the time of our interview, I had been living in Vancouver for a year. Prior to that year, I had lived in Toronto for my entire life with the exception of another year in Vancouver when I was doing course work for my MA. While my maternal grandmother immigrated to Canada in the 1940s, the rest of my family had been in Canada for a number of generations. I was at the time, and continue to be, very "under-travelled". I have only ever left North America once and that was for a week-long summer school experience and a conference the year before conducting these interviews. Despite some extended French in middle school, I continue to be monolingual.

At the time of our interviews, some of the participants were parents of young children and some of the participants were the parents of teenagers, young adults or adults. Some of the participants did not have children. At the time of our interview, I was not a parent, was not married and had no plans of joining either of these social institutions.

Participants Featured in the Analysis

In this section I provide more details about the nine participants who are featured in extracts analyzed in Chapters Seven and Eight. As discussed below, the interviews with these nine participants were chosen for detailed analysis as they provided clear examples of typical and atypical interactions in the data. Given the level of detail of my analysis, it became impractical to examine all 18 interviews this closely. Similarly, once a

few patterns began to emerge narrowing the data seemed a useful move in order to maintaining the interest of future readers of this report. Furthermore, it was felt that no further insights or knowledge would be gained by analyzing the conversations of all of the original participants as opposed to the nine that I selected to report on here. The participants are presented in alphabetical order.

Abby

Abby (all names are pseudonyms) was interviewed as a parent in the study. I knew Abby through her work as an Educational Assistant at Stony Creek. Abby assisted one of the kindergarten teachers in the school. One of Abby's jobs was to walk the kindergarten class to the library and stay with the class while I conducted a read-aloud. Abby was a black woman. During our interview, I learned that Abby had grown up in Khartoum, Sudan and had spent some time in France as pre-schooler while father attended graduate school. Abby then moved back to Khartoum when she was a young child. Abby grew up speaking Arabic, Dinka, English and French. When she graduated from high school she moved to Egypt to attend university. Abby studied education at university and worked as a teacher until she had her children. Abby moved to Canada in the mid-1990s with her husband and children. At the time of our interview Abby was in her mid 30s and had been working as an Educational Assistant for the Toronto District School Board (TDSB) for several years. She had two elementary aged children and was married. Abby was interviewed in person.

Anna

Anna was a teacher at Stony Creek School. Anna was a veteran teacher by the time I met her. At the time of our interview we had known each other for four and half years and she

had been teaching for twenty-five years. Anna identified as Chinese-Canadian. Anna began her teaching life as a heritage language teacher while she completed her undergraduate degree. At the time of our interview Anna had been working as a public elementary teacher for fifteen years. Anna had completed her M.Ed several years before our interview. As a new teacher-librarian, I found Anna to be supportive and interested in my work with her students. At times, we co-taught social studies projects to her grade three classes. At other times, we conferred about how best to support students who were deemed "learning disabled" or "English language learners". Anna was multi-lingual. As she revealed in our interview, she spoke Chinese, English, French and Vietnamese fluently and on a regular basis. Anna was born in Cambodia, lived in Vietnam until she was a teenager and then initially moved to France before immigrating to Canada at seventeen. At the time of our interview, Anna was in her mid 40s, she was married and had no children. Anna was interviewed in person.

Barbara

Barbara was interviewed as a parent in this study. I knew Barbara first as a library assistant. When I first came to Stony Creek School, Barbara had been working as an assistant to the teacher-librarian for fifteen years. When I began working at the school, her hours in the library were being replaced with time in the school office. By the time of our interview, Barbara was working full time in the school office as an administrative assistant. Barbara was a white woman. She was born in Macedonia and immigrated to Canada when she was thirteen. Barbara lived in the same neighbourhood as Stony Creek school and had lived there since she arrived from Macedonia. Barbara attended a secretarial school when she finished high school to learn how to be an administrative

assistant. At the time of our interview, Barbara was in her late 50s, she had two adult children and was married. Barbara was interviewed in person.

Jill

Jill was a teacher at Stony Creek School. Jill was a white woman who had been born in Toronto to Scottish immigrants. Jill spoke English and French fluently and had completed her undergraduate degree in French. Jill had completed a B.Ed.When I first met Jill, she was a grade two/three teacher. She then became the teacher in what was known as the MID (Mild Intellectual Disability) Program, a special program that was housed at Stony Creek. This program was created for students who were between the ages of nine and twelve and who had been identified as having "a General Learning Disability". These children did not live in the immediate neighbourhood but were bussed to the school from the surrounding areas. At the time of our interview, Jill had left this position and had become the teacher in the "Learning Centre", a classroom dedicated to supporting Stony Creek students who had been identified as having "learning disabilities". Throughout the day, Jill would work with small groups of students who came to the "Learning Centre" for support. Jill was also responsible for monitoring these students identified as "learning disabled" and for writing their "IEP"s ("Individual Educational Plans"). At times, throughout the year, through consultation with a school board psychologist, new students would be identified as needing the services of the Learning Centre and others would be designated as no longer needing these services. I knew Jill as a kind and patient educator. During my time at the school we worked together on a variety of projects including creating a "Environment Day" at Stony Creek. This day was filled with activities to help students appreciate the need for

environmentalism. At the time of our interview, Jill was in her early 50s, she had two young adult children and was married. Jill was interviewed in person.

Jolene

Jolene was a parent at Stony Creek School. I knew Jolene first as the mother of one of my "library helpers" when I first started working at Stony Creek. I had a positive connection with all of her three children. A year after I met her, Jolene began working as an Educational Assistant (EA) at Stony Creek. When she began to work at the school, I was drawn to her thoughtful and sympathetic understanding of the students and her recognition of the challenges of teaching. When I was struggling with how to respond to an issue of classroom management as a new teacher, it was Jolene that I often sought out to confer with during recess duty. Her advice was always considered and helpful. Jolene was the first person I interviewed for this study. Jolene was a white woman. During our interview, I learned that Jolene had grown up on a dairy farm in Eastern Canada and that she had spoken Dutch until she started school at age six. Jolene attended university as a young woman but began working as an arts administrator before completing her degree. At the time of our interview, Jolene was in her late thirties and lived with her three children in a house near Stony Creek School. Jolene had separated from the father of her children shortly before she began working at the school as an EA and the children lived with her full time. Jolene was interviewed over the telephone.

June

June was the principal at Stony Creek School. June came to our school during a year that I was away on educational leave. I had the good fortune to work with June when I returned. June was one of the most supportive and forward thinking administrators that I

have ever had the pleasure of working with. When I met June, she remembered me from my previous work in a bookstore that specialized in progressive children's literature. I later realized that June and I had also been classmates several years before, in a week long intensive workshop on equity education conducted by the TDSB and a local university. June was a white woman and had been born and raised in Toronto. At the time of our interview, June was in her early 50s. June had two young adult children and was divorced. June was interviewed in person.

Mark

Mark was a parent at Stony Creek who had been instrumental in preventing the school's closure.[7] I had particularly strong relationship with Mark's daughter, Aileen who often visited the school library on a daily basis. At the time of our interview, Mark had just finished working as the editor-in-chief of a national newsmagazine. During our interview, I learned that Mark had grown up in several Canadian cities while, as he put it, his father "climbed the corporate ladder". Mark attended school in English and French and had been enrolled in both public and private schools. Mark was also a particularly socially conscious parent. At one point during our interview, we discussed the fact that his daughter Aileen had been considered for the process of being designated as "gifted". This process, like the identification of "learning disabled", would have allowed Aileen to travel out of district to a special "gifted" program. When I asked Mark about his and his wife's decision not to have Aileen tested, he told me that one of their concerns was about

[7] During the first few years of my work at Stony Creek, the school was threatened with closure following the provincial government's initiation of a pupil per square foot funding formula. Our school consisted of two buildings and one of these was deemed "too large" as it had been built at the turn of the century when wide hallways were in vogue. Mark was instrumental in negotiating with the local board of education to save the school from being closed entirely. In the end, one of our buildings was renovated and the other was boarded up.

"Aileen as a citizen". He asserted that he felt it was important for her to be part of the local community and that he didn't like what Aileen would be learning from the process of being identified or being chosen to attend school out of district if this should come to pass. Mark was a white man. At the time of our interview Mark was in his mid 40s, he had one elementary aged child and one child in middle school. Mark was interviewed over the telephone.

Michelle

Michelle was a former parent at Stony Creek School. I had known Michelle as parent and as a volunteer when I was the teacher-librarian at Stony Creek School. I had a very positive relationship with Michelle and her two children who attended Stony Creek. Michelle identified as Chinese-Canadian. From our interview I learned that Michelle had attended Stony Creek herself as a child and that she had grown up in the neighbourhood. I also learned that she had come to Canada from Vietnam as a pre-schooler during the 1970s. Michelle began school at four years old and spoke Chinese at the time of her arrival. She was identified as needing to attend the "reading centre" at Stony Creek School at age seven. She had recently moved to the suburbs with her parents and her children. She had also recently started a new job at a general contracting company downtown working as a liaison between architects, builders and product suppliers. At the time of our interview, Michelle was in her late twenties, she had one elementary aged child and one child in middle school. Michelle was interviewed over the telephone.

Penny

Penny was a parent at Stony Creek School. She was also the wife of Mark, described above. During our interview, I learned that Penny had grown up in Toronto and that her

father had been a newspaper reporter and her mother was a secretary. Penny was a white, monolingual, Anglophone woman. At the time of our interview, Penny worked as a psychiatrist with a special team designated for Toronto's "hard to house" or homeless mentally ill. In talking with Penny I learned that she had completed a Masters' degree in Dublin in Irish literature before she took her medical training. My connection to Penny was mainly through her daughter Aileen. As mentioned earlier, Aileen was a regular visitor to the school library. However, I also knew Penny as a supportive parent in the school. On one occasion Penny came to the school library to give a short talk to some of the grade fives and sixes about her work. At the time of our interview, Penny was in her mid 40s, she had one elementary aged child and one child in middle school. Penny was interviewed over the telephone.

The Interview Protocol

The interview protocol used for this study was based on a protocol created by Dr. Victoria Purcell Gates (2003) for **The Cultural Practices of Literacy Study** (See Appendix I). This protocol was designed for adult participants and focuses primarily on participants' current and historical literacy practices via questions about reading and writing. The protocol used for the study reported here expanded on Dr. Purcell-Gates' protocol by asking participants to reflect on their theories of literacy learning via questions such as "Do you think some people have difficulty learning to read/write?" and "If yes, why do you think some people have difficulty learning to read/write?". In addition, the revised protocol asked participants to reflect on their memories of "reading difficulties", why/if reading/writing are important and why/if teachers are particularly

concerned with students' reading/writing performances in relation to "grade levels". All of the participants in this study completed consent forms prior to being interviewed.

Field Notes

During the two phases of data generation, I took regular field notes concerning the content and tenor of my interactions with my participants. At times, I made note of the kinds of things the parents and teachers in the study were reading or mentioned reading as children, and at times I made notes about the anxieties or excitements they expressed concerning various texts. These notes also included some reflections I had during data generation about administrating the interview protocol and notes to myself about questions that presented themselves after the interviews. During the second phase of data collection, in Toronto, my field notes included reflections on some of the every day interactions I had with former students in the school who remembered me from when I worked there. At times, I included information about how I gained access to particular participants. For example, one parent approached me, offering herself for an interview. Another parent offered to ask a parent that I did not know if she was interested in being interviewed. Throughout both periods of data generation, I made notes about what I was hearing in the interviews and any possible connections between the accumulating data and what I had read during my course work. I continued to make these kinds of notes as moved into more focused phases of analysis.

Analysis

Analysis for this study focused primarily on the transcripts of the audio data of the interviews with my participants. I referred to my field notes occasionally in order to cross check some aspects of the data generation, such as the locations of the interviews or my initial reflections but for the most part my analysis was focused on the transcripts of the interviews themselves.

In order to understand how the participants and I produced "reading" and "readers" in and through our talk, I conducted my analysis in a recursive manner, beginning with a focus on the content of our talk and then shifting to a consideration of how that content worked in interaction (Holstein & Gubrium, 2004; Silverman, 2001a). The first step in my analysis was to listen to and transcribe all of the interviews with an attention to what my participants and I said. In this phase of analysis, I gained a general sense of the data and was able to gain an initial understanding of the content of our interactions. In the next section, I discuss some of the ways I worked to insure the quality of my transcription.

Transcription

According to Poland (2002) and Ochs (1999), transcription itself is a form of analysis as every transcription is a selective version of an interaction, regardless of the presence of an audio recorder. Poland (2002) outlines several potential challenges to transcription quality including initial tape quality, the use of notation systems/ conventions for transcription and the use of transcribers. Fortunately, for this study, there was only one transcriber (myself) and this choice avoided the need to train anyone else to

use notation systems for consistency. This choice also made it unnecessary to include ways to check that another transcriber had not in any way "tidied up" the data. Poland (2002) reports several cases where transcribers who are not the primary analysts of the data have changed some of the material that they were working with because they felt it would "read better". As the only transcriber of the data, I worked to insure accuracy by avoiding "transcriber fatigue" through limiting my hours for transcription to two or three hours a day. In addition, when I wanted to conduct any in-depth analysis, I generally returned to the original audio versions of the data to insure the accuracy of my transcription.

In terms of tape quality, for both phases of data generation, I used a digital audio recorder that enabled me to transfer the interviews onto a computer and to increase volume, slow down sections of specific interviews and replay sections repeatedly if need be to capture as much of the interaction as possible. In terms of notation systems and conventions for transcription, in my first phase of analysis, I roughly transcribed the participants' utterances omitting any notation of pauses, intonations, overlaps, partial words, interjections or my own back channels such as "umhm" or "yeah".

In this phase, I often transcribed my own utterances as simple questions in order to gain a general sense of the trajectory of the interview. These transcripts were mainly dedicated to representing the content of my participants' replies. Following this initial transcription of the interviews, I worked to locate all of the direct references to "reading" in the transcripts. I then returned to individual transcripts and began to look at particular moments of interaction in more detail.

During this phase of analysis, I would locate specific moments in the interview and listen to them again. At this point, I re-transcribed many of these moments using a simplified version of the notation system developed by Gail Jefferson (See Appendix II). This system is used extensively in analysis of talk-in-interaction (Wooffitt, 2001). During this phase of analysis, I began to take more notice of my own interjections and back channelling ("umhm", "yeah", "aha", etc.) and to transcribe the **actual,** rather than the **planned** delivery of my questions. In addition, I began to make note of the false starts or partial words in my own and the participants' utterances. At first, I made note of many of the pauses in our speech and I thought I might time these pauses as is done in traditional conversation analyses. However, I soon abandoned this detail of our talk as I found it too time consuming. I then deleted the majority of the pauses in the extracts I was analyzing as I felt the readers of this dissertation would find them distracting. In neglecting this aspect of the data I lost some of the fine-grained nuances of the talk-in-interaction of the interviews. For example, potentially much could be made about the ways that the participants and I used pauses to signal "transition relevant places" in our talk or how we signalled to each other that we were finished speaking or expected a response to our utterance. Potentially, much could also be made of the length of pauses between some of my questions and some of the participants' answers. In future analysis, I may return to the data with an attention to the ways that the participants and I use such pauses in our productions of reading and readers.

As I began to deepen my analysis, I began to focus specifically on an examination of initial references to "reading" in the transcripts for what they could reveal about how reading is produced in and through talk-in-interaction. Initial interactions concerning

reading were chosen for this analysis as these moments are often important sites of negotiation. In reflecting on children's play, Sacks (1992) asserted that important "mapping" often happens when children begin a game, change games, re-start a game or integrate a new player. Much the same could be said about adults in conversation. Initial exchanges, changes of topic and the introduction of a new interlocutor are often rich sites of negotiation. Similarly, the openings of interviews "proper" and shifts in interview focus can be seen as moments that are rife with negotiation, re-negotiation and description. In this way, these moments were ideal sites for a first look at the participants' and my own use of various categories and our production of reading and readers.

After examining several initial exchanges, I re-read the transcripts looking for descriptions of reading and readers that occurred later in the transcripts of individual interviews. During this phase of analysis, I worked to understand the patterns of interaction in individual transcripts and to examine how particular interactions were similar to, or different from, other interactions found across the data set. I also sought to keep in mind how interactions in a single interview were related to each other chronologically.

At this point in my analysis, I returned to the work of other analysts such as Baker (2002; 2004), Forrester and Reason (2006), Hester (1998), Kitzinger (2005), Ryen and Silverman (2000), Stokoe and Smithson (2001), Talmy (in press ; in press b;) and Walton, Wetherall and Jackson (2002) in order to remind myself what membership categorization analyses and conversation analyses actually look like. In doing so, I began to focus on the kinds of organizational features, categories and activities that were evident in the data. Following Baker (2002), I worked to create "actional" sketches of

different sequences and then looked at the kinds of accounts and categories that were available in the talk-in-interaction. Throughout this phase of analysis I repeatedly asked myself what function a specific feature of talk might serve, what accounts of reading were being mobilized and what kinds of reader identities or categories were being produced. As will be discussed in Chapter Eight, at a certain point in my analysis I also began to examine the data as "Institutional Talk" and to pay particular attention to recipient design.

Trustworthiness

Throughout my analysis, I sought to check and cross check my assumptions via peer and mentor debriefing sessions with a range of other analysts interested in language and literacy education, microanalysis and social in/equality. At numerous times, I was forced to return to the data and reconceptualize my analysis in order to accommodate new understandings that came out of these discussions. It was one of these mentor-debriefing sessions that led me to re-analyze a considerable portion of the data as "Institutional Talk". These sessions were invaluable to me as an analyst as they provided new insights and new layers of rigor and care to the analysis.

During the final stages of my analysis, I selected a range of excerpts from nine of the interviews to help me report on the study. As noted earlier, these interviews and excerpts were chosen because they represented typical or atypical aspects of the data. In addition, the excerpts in Chapter Seven were chosen because they exemplified typical ways of producing reading amongst participants in interviews with people who had a variety of roles at Stony Creek. As will be discussed in Chapter Seven, these excerpts

were marked by an ease of communication, an absence of requests for clarification and an absence of repairs. These aspects of the data were taken to represent a shared understanding of reading. In choosing these excerpts, I was conscious of wanting to include extracts from both parents and teachers as I did not want to mis-represent these methods of production as limited to either group of participants. The excerpts in Chapter Eight were chosen because they represented alternative examples of the production of reading and readers. As discussed in Chapter Eight, these excerpts were chosen because they spoke specifically to the variety of ways that the construct, reading and the category, readers could be produced. In these extracts, definitions of "reading" and "reader" appeared to be being openly negotiated as the participants and I spoke.

As I assembled the final drafts of this dissertation, I contacted participants who are featured in the analysis and I asked for feedback. While I was unable to locate some of the participants, the member checks that I did conduct elicited interest in the work but did not create any requests for revisions of my representations or analyses.

CHAPTER SEVEN
THE CULTURAL PRODUCTION OF READING AND READERS: NO TROUBLE AT ALL

In this chapter, I provide examples of interactions where "reading", "readers" and my interests as a "reading researcher" were produced with a minimum number of conversational turns. These examples represent typical interactions in the data. In the majority of the data, "reading" was glossed as a self-evident activity, "readers" was a category that needed no definition, and my interests as a "reading researcher" were taken for granted. After providing some illustrations of the most common methods for producing "reading" and "readers" I then consider how looking at these data as "Institutional Talk" and paying attention to recipient design can illuminate the cultural production of reading, readers and social in/equality.

Research Interviews as Social Interaction

During the initial phases of my analysis, when I attended most specifically to the content of my interviews with the participants, I found that we talked about a range of phenomena when we talked about reading. These phenomena included: the kinds of artefacts that are read (e.g., books, newspapers, bus schedules), the ways in which people engage in reading (e.g., avidly, reluctantly), how people feel about reading (e.g. love/like, don't love/don't like), how people perform "reading" (e.g., with difficulty, proficiently), the relationship between reading and other activities, (e.g., reading and watching TV), the qualities of readers, reading and reading materials ("good"/ "real" and "less good"/ "less

real" readers, reading and reading materials), why people read (for entertainment, for school, for work, etcetera), the relationship between reading and literacy (e.g., reading as an equivalent or basic term for literacy or as only a part of literacy) and discreet levels of reading/literacy (e.g. "level thirty-six" or "high levels of literacy").

However, when I returned to the data and began to focus more attention on the ways that content and interaction worked together in our talk, I began to notice a range of methods that the participants and I used to produce reading, readers and my interests as a "reading researcher". In the next section, I provide examples of some of the ways that the participants and I produced reading and readers in the majority of our interviews.

No Trouble at All: The Production of Readers and Reading

In the majority of the data,"reading", "readers" and my interests as a "reading researcher" were generally produced with very few conversational turns. Fifteen of the eighteen interviews were marked by an ease of communication, by an absence of requests for clarification and by an absence of repairs. For example, during my interview with Jill, a teacher at Stony Creek School, I found the terms "reading" and "readers" as well as my interests as a "reading researcher", were treated as self-explanatory. When I invited Jill to tell me about her early childhood experiences with reading and writing, she responded quickly and easily to my question, suggesting she did not need a definition of the term "reading" in order to answer.

Extract 2 Jill Interview (2:20)(li 22-55)

```
22  L: I don't know how many memories you have before starting
23  school at age five, but can you remember at any point
```

seeing people doing, ah, anything with reading or writing around the house?

J: My dad always, um, shaved in the morning, with an electric shaver, with a book in one hand, and uh, his razor in the other, or shaver in the other hand

L:umhm umhm

J: um, my grandmother always read to us

L:umhm

J: I don't really remember clearly my mum or dad reading to us, I'm not saying they didn't

L: yeah

J: I don't really clearly remember that, but I do remember very clearly my grandmother

L: umhm

J: reading to us

L: umhm

As can be seen in the data, neither Jill nor I devote any of our turns in this exchange to specifically defining reading. We show no signs that we need clarification from each other or that we fear we are being misunderstood. Jill responds to my question about whether she saw anyone reading when she was a child without hesitation, and I just as easily accept her answer that her father read while he shaved and that her grandmother read to her (and her siblings). While Jill describes her father as reading "books", neither of us appear to need any more elaboration about reading in order to conduct this interaction.

Similar kinds of exchanges occurred in all of my interviews. As will be discussed in Chapter Eight, only three interviews stood out in their use of alternative methods for

producing reading and readers. The following examples can be seen as further representations of typical productions of reading and readers in the data. The first example comes from an interview with Abby, a parent who worked as an Educational Assistant at Stony Creek School. When I asked Abby about her pre-school memories of seeing reading and writing "around the house", she told me that she remembered her dad and perhaps her uncles reading books, magazines and newspapers, and that she didn't remember seeing her mum reading but that her mum was "busy in the house".

Extract 3 Abby (3:03) (li 16-32)

L: Before you started school do you remember seeing anyone reading or writing around the house?

A: What I remember is my dad, because he is usually, he used to work in the (.) oh where was he working at that time, i-in the government office somewhere there, so he would-used to read a lot of magazines and all this (.) my mum at that time, I think she she was busy in the house, she left her-she used to teach before, but when she got married and she had us she left her job, she was a stay home mom yeah? taking care of the family yeah? but I remember my father, my uncles around, yeah, those

L: So you would see those?

A: yeah, reading newspapers, books, that's what I remember

As can be seen in the transcript, like Jill, Abby showed no signs that the term "reading" might be a source of "conversational trouble". All three of these exchanges are marked by an absence of "repairs". Neither the participants nor I appear to be concerned that we might be being misunderstood or signal that we need clarification. A similar exchange could be seen in my interview with June, the principal of Stony Creek School. When I asked June about what she read on a typical day she began by telling me that she

read "the paper". Just as I did not appear to need any clarification concerning what June meant by "the paper", June did not appear to need any clarification from me concerning what I meant by "reading".

Extract 4 June Interview 1 (0:41) (li 9-18)

```
 9  L: first thing I would like you to do, is sort of, start at
10  the beginning of your day, and go all the way through and
11  anytime you would be reading or writing anything, so first
12  thing when you wake up on a typical kind of weekday, and
13  then we'll do the weekend after
14
15  J: okay, um, wake up, read the paper, skim the paper, skim
16  the first section of the paper
17
18  L: ((laughs)) yup
```

Within the data set, there were countless other examples of this kind of easy exchange. As noted in Chapter Five, these excerpts have been chosen because they exemplify this way of producing reading amongst participants who had a variety of roles at Stony Creek. The lack of obvious negotiations concerning the meaning of the word "reading" or "readers" in these interactions initially made me question whether reading/readers were actually being produced in the majority of the data. The lack of apparent struggle made it difficult for me to see these interactions as **producing** or **constructing** anything at all. However, after reviewing Kitzinger (2005), and noting that her data was also marked by an absence of struggle, I began to feel that there might be more to this data than first met my eye. I found myself asking *if* reading and readers were being produced in these interactions, how might I see these productions more clearly. Following a particularly intense peer debriefing session, I became convinced of the need to return to the data with an understanding of it as "Institutional Talk".

In reviewing the data and Heritage's (2005) definitions of Institutional Talk, I began to see how these interviews exemplified this particular kind of talk and how I could start to see the production of reading/readers more clearly by analyzing the data ***as*** Institutional Talk. In addition, I began to see the usefulness of paying attention to issues of "recipient design". In the next section, I outline how these interviews can be understood as examples of Institutional Talk. I then examine what an attention to recipient design can tell us about the production of reading/readers and social in/equality in this data.

Viewing the Data as Institutional Talk

These interviews can be seen as examples of Institutional Talk, first because they involve the participants and myself in "specific goal orientations that are tied to our institution-relevant identities"(Heritage, 2005). As "research interviews", the data were generated with the goal of learning about reading/writing/literacy. As such, these interviews differed dramatically from casual conversations amongst friends or acquaintances. Regardless of my feelings of respect and warmth for the participants, my institutional role(s) as a teacher-librarian and as an interviewer/researcher were omni-present during our interviews. As noted in Chapter Six, with the exception of the first five interviews conducted over the phone, the majority of these interviews were conducted within Stony Creek School or on the school grounds. Many of these interviews were conducted in a small seminar room at the back of the school library; others were conducted in empty classrooms. One interview was conducted in the principal's office.

While the first five telephone interviews were conducted in the evenings, when the participants and I were at our respective homes, the farthest the remaining thirteen participants and I strayed from Stony Creek School was the school playground. (One of the interviews was conducted with a parent who worked as a nanny for another family at the school. This participant and I talked while one of her young charges slept in his stroller and another played in the sandbox). In addition, all of the participants knew me as a teacher-librarian-researcher. While at times in the early stages of the project I positioned myself as conducting research "for my professor" and "for myself", as I was working with Dr. Purcell Gates' **Cultural Practices of Literacy Study** (Purcell-Gates; 2003), my role as a co-investigator was well established within the first few moments of contact with all of the participants. My name was on the initial recruitment letter and the consent form for the study. Similarly, I spoke of myself as a co-researcher in the initial moments of every interview and the initial recruitment letter and consent form asserted that I wanted to "interview" these participants.

In addition, my access to all of these participants was facilitated through my position as a former teacher-librarian at Stony Creek School. While I was never called on to account for why I had asked to interview any of the participants, I generally began each interview by explaining that I was interested in learning about people's "ideas of literacy and learning" for a research project that was part of my graduate studies and so that I could "be a better teacher". While I rarely prefaced my individual questions in such a way that highlighted my institutional identities, as will be discussed in detail below, there was ample evidence in the data that the participants and I were well aware of who we were to each other within the institutions of "schooling", "interviews" and "research".

These interviews could also be seen as Institutional Talk as there was ample evidence of "special constraints on what would be allowable contributions to the business at hand" (Heritage, 2005). While some of the participants and I sometimes veered "off topic" and while I sometimes divulged information about my own reading/writing/ literacy practices, for the most part, I offered questions and the participants provided answers concerning their reading/writing/literacy practices, their memories of learning to read/write or their thoughts on why some people learn to read/write easily or with more difficulty. In this way, our turn allocation reflected the constraints of "the interview" as an institution.

In addition, as will be discussed below, the similarities seen across the interviews suggest that there were significant constraints on what the participants and I considered to be "allowable contributions" to our talk. For example, none of the participants ever suggested that they didn't like reading or that they felt reading was an over-rated activity. Similarly, none of the participants ever asked me any questions about my own history with reading and they would only ask me questions about my theories of reading acquisition in the very final turns of our interviews when I specifically asked them if they had any questions for me.

However, the most convincing rationale that this data should be treated as Institutional Talk came when I began to see how deeply our talk-in-interaction was infused with "inferential frameworks and procedures" that are particular to specific institutional contexts (Heritage, 2005). When I began to notice how the participants and I designed our utterances in ways that revealed our institutional relationships as parent and teacher, as teacher and teacher-librarian, and as interviewee and interviewer, or

researched and researcher, I began to see how deeply our conversations were enmeshed in the institutions of "schooling", "interviews", and "research". In recognizing our talk as Institutional Talk, and noting the recipient design in my own and the participants' utterances, I began to see some of the "fingerprint" of these institutions on our talk. In addition, I began to see some of the ways that our productions of reading and readers were related to the production of social in/equality.

Recognizing Recipient Design

As noted in Chapter Five, recipient design refers to the ways that interlocutors construct their utterances for particular audiences and settings. When I began to look at excerpts where reading was treated as "self-evident" **as utterances that had been designed, or packaged, for the particular audience and setting of this specific research interview,** I began to see how the participants and I used our institutional identities to do some of the work of producing reading and readers. I also began to see some of the ways that we were producing social in/equality in and through our talk of "reading". For example, consider again my exchange with Jill concerning her pre-school memories of reading and writing.

Extract 5 Jill Interview (2:20)(li 22-49)

L: I don't know how many memories you have before starting school at age five, but can you remember at any point seeing people doing, ah, anything with reading or writing around the house?

J: My dad always, um, shaved in the morning, with an electric shaver, with a book in one hand, and uh, his razor in the other, or shaver in the other hand

L:umhm umhm

J: um, my grandmother always read to us

L:umhm

J: I don't really remember clearly my mum or dad reading to us, I'm not saying they didn't

L: yeah

J: I don't really clearly remember that, but I do remember very clearly my grandmother

L: umhm

J: reading to us

L: umhm

One of the ways that we can look at how reading is produced in an exchange like this, where reading is "glossed", is to look at my own and Jill's utterances as designed specifically for each other and for this setting. In other words, we can look at this exchange as a moment where Jill and I are effectively defining reading and readers **in the context of our interaction as a research interview between a teacher-librarian-researcher and a fellow teacher.** That we appear to spend so little energy negotiating reading in this exchange, could be attributed to the fact that during our conversation Jill and I were well aware that as a teacher and as a teacher-librarian-researcher, we were *supposed to know* what reading was and what readers did to make them readers.

Teachers, teacher-librarians and researchers who are attached to faculties of education as I was at the time of this interview, can be seen as members of a larger collection of categories known as "education professionals". The fact that I identified myself as being particularly interested in reading/writing/literacy/learning made reading/writing/literacy education relevant to my interactions with the participants. It also

made my identity as a reading/literacy education professional and that of the teachers in the study relevant. Being members of this Membership Categorization Device brings with it a range of rights, responsibilities and obligations. For example, a "category predicate" of teachers, teacher-librarians and (reading) researchers is that we know what reading is and what it is not. In addition, "reading" can be seen as a "category bound activity" as it is an activity strongly tied to the categories "teacher", "teacher-librarian", "researcher" and "reading researcher". In this way, members of these categories are assumed to know what reading is and to be members of the category "readers". The strength of this association can be seen in the fact that it would generally be considered a breach of expected behaviour if one of the participants (parents or teachers) were to attempt to explicitly teach me (a teacher-librarian-researcher) what reading is, and what it is not, during our interview. For example, if a parent or teacher began a reply to one of my questions with an explicit definition of reading such as "by reading, I mean constructing meaning from these alphabetic marks on a page", I could easily hear their remark as an insult as it would imply an assumption that I had no understanding of the boundaries of reading and that I needed to be "taught" what "reading" meant.

Similarly, it would be considered a breach of expected behaviour if one of the participants were to query my own status as a reader. For example, it would be surprising if, before answering a question, one of the participants turned to me and asked me directly whether I was a reader or not. As noted in Chapter Five, when the rights, responsibilities or obligations of a particular category are not fulfilled then generally someone or something must be produced as accountable. In the case of this example with Jill, no one and nothing are being held accountable because both of us are acting within

our rights, responsibilities and obligations as "teachers" (or as a teacher and a teacher-librarian-researcher) to be treated and to treat each other as people who know what "reading" is and what "readers" do.

In their examination of conversations between a young child and her parents, Forrester and Reason (2006) assert that recognizing and producing "glosses" is one of the ways that members signal to each other that they are in fact members. In other words, that "in displaying a mastery of language, speakers display membership" (p. 464). In this light, my interaction with Jill could be described as follows: In my first turn, I produce a request for Jill to tell me about herself as a reader. However, I do so by avoiding any concrete description of "reading". In effect, I produce my own identity as a reader via a gloss of reading and then ask Jill whether she too is a reader. In Jill's reply, she signals that my gloss of reading is not a problem for her and in doing so, that she is indeed a reader, as she can recognize and similarly produce a "gloss" of reading.

In terms of the production of reading, this interaction can be seen one that affirms the rights of teachers, teacher-librarians, and reading researchers to be treated as authorities on reading. In addition, we affirm our rights/obligations to treat reading as a self-evident activity. In terms of the production of social in/equality this interaction can be seen as one that affirms our specific rights/obligations to be treated and to treat each other **as authorities** on reading. In this interaction Jill and I maintain our rights to be the arbiters of what counts as "reading" and who is a "reader". In effect, we produce an account of teachers/teacher-librarians as authorities on reading and of reading as self-evident.

However, what is particularly interesting to me in this interaction is that neither of us abandons our **obligations** to act as authorities about reading or our obligations to treat reading as self-evident. At the time of this interaction, I had spent two academic years considering the multiplicity of the term "reading" through my coursework. I had read at least half a dozen books or articles that specifically suggested a connection between static, unitary definitions of reading/literacy and the reproduction of social inequality. I had begun to see my work as an educator as dedicated to expanding notions of reading/literacy and to asking questions about what "counts" as reading and why some things are made to "count" more than others. However, in this interaction without any apparent hesitation, I fulfil my obligation to act like an authority on reading and to treat reading as a self-evident activity.

When looked at from this perspective, my interactions with Abby and June can be seen as almost identical to this exchange with Jill. In each exchange, I offer a gloss of reading, produce my own identity as a reader and then request a display of the participants' identities as readers. In response, the participants answer back with their own glosses of reading and thus also produce themselves as readers. It is as though the participants and I are using "reading" as a kind of shibboleth or as a secret password. In all of these excerpts the participants and I maintain our rights/obligations to treat reading as a self-evident activity. In all of these excerpts I am treated as, and I behave as, "an authority on reading".

In approaching the data with an understanding of recipient design and the data's status as "Institutional Talk", these kinds of patterns across the data set became more and more clear. I repeatedly saw evidence that the participants and I were working off our

institutional identities and the institutional event of our "interview" in order to produce reading and readers. In recognizing this talk as institutional talk and in examining issues of recipient design, I also began to see how the data could tell me more about the institutional relationships between teachers and teacher-librarian-researchers, between parents and teacher-librarian-researchers, between interviewees and interviewers and between researched and researchers than it could about the reading/writing/literacy practices of individual parents or teachers. In the next section, I examine some of the things we can learn from this data about these institutional relationships and the production of reading, readers and social in/equality in these "research interviews".

What Can we Learn from this Data?

In paying attention to the status of this data as Institutional Talk and in keeping issues of recipient design in mind, I found ample evidence that reading was considered to be a social good and that I was being constructed as an arbiter of reading/readers. For example, on numerous occasions, I found myself presented with very similar accounts of "parent-reader" identities that stressed how much a parent appreciated books, or loved reading or how much s/he read to his/her children. Similarly, I was presented with countless accounts of children who loved reading and books. The consistency of these accounts forced me to consider how these descriptions of parent and child reader identities often positioned me as an evaluator of reading and readers.

Many of these accounts contained "extreme case formulations". Pomerantz (1986) describes extreme case formulations as a tool to do describing that emphasize how a particular case stands out amongst all others as a **maximum** (or **minimum**) case. For

example, when I asked Jill about whether her literacy practices changed much when she became a mother, she told me that she "always" read and "always read to her children". In addition, she told me that her daughter was "an absolute genius" and that she read to her daughter "every single night".

Extract 6 Jill (31:35)(li 249-285)

L: Throughout all this, like for instance when you became a mum, did it change, um, your literacy practices at all?

J: personally?

L: umhm

J: I always read

L: umhm

J: I mean, as I say, from Nancy Drew on

L: umhm

J: I always read I read to my children, like

L: umhm

J: book after boo- my daughter, and this is without a word of a lie

L: umhm

J: at two

L: umhm

J:I mean she is absolutely a genius, at two, was reading Berenstein Bears, so my daughter would-was able to read to herself

L: umhm

J: but I read to her every single night

L: umhm

In this extract, Jill works to construct her reading practices as maximally consistent and her daughter as having a maximal capacity for learning. This exchange could be glossed as follows: In my first turn, I invite Jill to tell me about the history of her "literacy practices" or whether they changed at any point in her life and I offer that "becoming a mum" might change such practices. In Jill's first turn, she requests confirmation that I am interested in her "personal" literacy practices or if I want her to respond "personally". I offer an affirmation and Jill offers an account of herself as someone who "always" read. I offer a minimal affirmation and Jill then modifies her account of herself as a consistent reading to being a consistent reader "from Nancy Drew on", meaning her reading was constant from the time she started reading "Nancy Drew" mysteries through to the present. (Earlier in our interview, Jill remarked that it was discovering Nancy Drew that transformed her from being a "struggling reader" to, presumably, being a non-struggling or "average" reader). I again offer a minimal affirmation and Jill repeats that she "always read" and that she read to her children. In this way, she offers an account of herself as a reader and as a parent-reader. Following another minimal affirmation from me, Jill begins to offer an account of her reading to her children ("book after boo-") that presents her reading as a constant (and maybe onerous) activity. However, instead of finishing this utterance, as can be seen in line 268-269, Jill begins an account of her daughter who could read to herself at two years old. Jill marks her daughter's ability to read as significant by interjecting "this is without a word of a lie", by emphasizing that her daughter's reading began "at two" and by naming her daughter as "an absolute genius". In doing so, Jill presents her daughter's learning to

reading as an extreme case, as well as her daughter as an extreme case. Jill then goes on to assert that she read to her daughter "every single night". In other words, that her reading to her daughter was another maximum case as it was not "most nights" or "some nights" but it was "every single night". Pomerantz (1986) says that this kind of description of an event provides more than just information about the amount of time spent on an activity. If Jill had said "every night" it would have conveyed the same information in terms of what percentage of the nights she read to her daughter. However, when she describes her reading as taking place "every single night" we can hear the extreme nature of Jill's reading as something that was very consistent indeed. In describing her reading in this way, she has provided a sense of herself as a maximally consistent reader and parent-reader.

A similar use of extreme case formulations can be seen in my exchange with Barbara, a parent who worked as an administrative assistant at Stony Creek School, when I asked about her early memories of reading and writing.

Extract 7 Barbara (1:52)(li 13-32)

L: so, from that very early time, I don't know how many memories you have, from before you were five years old

B:umhm

L: um, but can you remember at any point, seeing people reading or writing around you?

B: oh yes a lot

L: umhm, umhm

B: a lot, um, reading, a lot of - as a child I was interested always in books

28 L:umhm
29
30 B: and um, my mum, always bought me books
31
32 L:umhm, umhm
33
34 B: and we went shopping, and and I read a lot of books
35
36 L:umhm
37
38 B: as a matter of fact, a:ll the children, most of them
39
40 L: umhm
41
42 B: I would say ninety-five percent of the students
43
44 L:yep, umhm
45
46 B: um, they love to read books
47
48 L:umhm

An actional sketch of this exchange with Barbara follows: In my first two turns, I invite Barbara to tell me about her early memories of reading and writing. In her first turn, Barbara asserts that she saw reading and writing around her "a lot". In describing how often she saw reading and writing, Barbara invokes a category contrast between seeing reading and writing " a lot" and seeing reading and writing "a little" or " not at all". In terms of this continuum, Barbara constructs her experience as a maximum case – while others may have seen reading and writing around them "a little" or " not at all", she saw these activities " a lot". In line 23, I provide a minimal affirmation and Barbara goes on to repeat " a lot of" and "reading". She then begins a new assertion about her interest in books as a child. She tells me that she was "always" interested in books. Again, Barbara uses an extreme case formulation as to describe her childhood interest in books. Given that our previous utterances have been focused on "reading" and the way that "reading" is an activity commonly bound to books, Barbara can be heard to describe

herself as "always" interested in reading. As noted by Pomerantz (1986), extreme case formulations like this provide a sense of the time invested in this activity. It is as though I asked Barbara "how much time did you spend interested in books/reading?" and she replied " **all** the time possible" or "all the time in the world".

Barbara then goes on to describe her mother as someone who "always" bought books for her, and in doing so, describes herself as someone who "always" had books bought for her, or who had books bought for her "**all** of the time". I again provide a minimal affirmation and Barbara goes on to assert that she read " a lot" of books. In other words, that once again, her experience was a maximum case experience. Following yet another minimal affirmation from me, Barbara tells me that as a "matter of fact", " all children" or at least " most of them" "love to read books". In this way, Barbara begins to present yet another extreme case formulation: "all" the children, but then downgrades this estimation to a category contrast of "95 %" or "most of them" versus 5% or some of them. It is as though, I have asked Barbara how many children/students love to read books and she has assessed this number as the maximum (all) and then downgraded this assessment to almost the maximum possible (most). It bears noting that I have not actually asked Barbara this question, and yet somehow she feels compelled to tell me this "matter of fact".

Similar kinds of exchanges could be seen throughout the data, particularly when participants spoke of their own, their friends' or their families' reading practices. Often these extreme case formulations came through an assertion about someone being an "avid" reader. Take for example the following exchanges with Mark and Jolene. When I asked Mark to compare his feelings about reading and writing to those in his

"community", he emphasized that while some of his friends were "avid avid" readers of fiction and some of them were "constantly devouring fiction", he "seldom" read fiction. In doing so, he created a number of extreme case formulations.

Extract 8 Mark Interview 1 (1:27:54)(li 1034-1050)

L: okay, do you think that the way that you feel about reading and writing is different or the same from people in your community?

M: in my community?

L: yeah

M: well, community, my circle of friends, my reading habits are different in that I read very little fiction and I have very good friends who are avid avid readers of fiction, they are constantly devouring novels, and I seldom am, and if I do read a novel it's probably fifty years old, so I sort of deliberately avoid reading things that are particularly popular

L: yeah

When I asked Jolene to reflect on how she felt about reading and writing in comparison to others in her family or community, she told me she was "extremely passionate" about reading and writing and that how she felt was "probably more than most people".

Extract 9 Jolene (1:00:10)(li 384-400)

L: Do you think that the way that you feel about reading and writing, like how useful they are, or how enjoyable they are, is about the same, or different, in some way from how people in your community and in your family felt?

J: hmmm, yeah, I think I am extremely passionate ((laughs)) about it

L: umhm

393
394 J: which is probably more than most people
395
396 L: about?
397
398 J: about both reading and writing
399
400 L: umhm

In both of these exchanges, Mark and Jolene can be heard to assert the extreme nature of their own and their friends' reading practices/love of reading. As noted by Pomerantz (1986), extreme case formulations can be seen as useful tools for countering anticipated challenges. In using extreme case formulations, it is as though a person is saying s/he is aware of a continuum of possibilities but s/he is convinced of where this case lies on that continuum.

However, these kinds of maximum category contrasts can also be seen as invitations for evaluation. In essence, when a person uses an extreme case formulation, s/he is saying, "this case is the most (or the least) example of such a case". In doing so s/he both displays **and begs** an evaluation. Recognizing how often the participants used extreme case formulations during our discussions and how often my questions invited them to do so, helped me to see how often I was being positioned/was taking on the position as an evaluator of reading and readers. This recognition in turn, highlighted for me how our talk was not only enmeshed in assumptions about unequal relationships between parents and teachers and assumptions about unequal relationships between teachers and teacher-librarian-researchers, but also how these exchanges were **perpetuating** such unequal social relations. While the parents and teachers I interviewed frequently positioned themselves as evaluators of reading and readers, I was the only participant who was consistently positioned/positioned myself in this way. At no point in

any of the interviews did the participants indicate that what I thought about reading/readers was irrelevant and the participants consistently left spaces in their talk for me to provide affirmation. While many of these patterns of interaction can be attributed to the institution of "the interview", it bears noting that at no point did anyone indicate an indifference to my opinion about reading/readers or their reading practices.

My discussion with Michelle about her memories of reading in elementary school provides a particularly clear illustration of how reading was constructed as a "good thing", how being a reader was constructed as a valued identity and how I was constructed as an arbiter of reading and readers. When I asked Michelle what she read during elementary school, she told me that she read "Judy Blume" and that she "did a lot of origami". At that point, as shown below, I asked Michelle whether she "read" the instructions in her origami books or not. Michelle's reply clearly constructed reading as a good thing, being a reader as a valued identity and me as an arbiter of reading.

Extract 10 Michelle (32:41)(li 390-404)

L: and (.) would you have to read the instructions on how to do the origami?-

M: oh yeah

L: okay

M: after a little while you skip the instructions

L: yeah

M: and you follow the picture, but I guess it's some form of reading, I hope

L: oh it is absolutely it is

In terms of our interactions, this excerpt could be sketched as follows: In my first turn, I offer that Michelle could be "reading" the instructions while she creates her origami and I offer a request for her to reflect on whether this is what she was doing at the time. As can be seen in line 393-401, Michelle offers that *initially* she did "read" the instructions and that later she would "just follow the pictures". In doing so, Michelle begins to set up a dichotomy between "reading" and "following pictures". However, within this same turn on line 401, she then suggests that "following the pictures" could actually be seen as "some form of reading". Michelle then offers a kind of plea that this is the case via the hedge "I guess" in line 401 and the tag "I hope" in line 402. Both of these words work to weaken her epistemic stance and in doing so invite my confirmation. At Michelle's plea, I provide this confirmation of her description of "following pictures" as a "form of reading" and use the intensifier "absolutely" to indicate the strength of my agreement with her description. We then continue our conversation about her memories of "reading".

Michelle's plea that "following the pictures" could be considered to be "some form of reading" and my quick acceptance of this plea suggests that we were constructing reading as a social good and being a reader as a coveted identity. It would be unlikely that Michelle would make a plea for an undesirable identity or that I would be so quick to assure her that an activity that she engaged in was "absolutely" "reading" unless "reading" was generally considered to be a "good thing". Similarly, Michelle's plea that "following pictures" could be considered to be a "form of reading" and my response positions me as a person who could tell her whether this is the case or not. In other words,

in this exchange, Michelle and I work together to construct reading as a good thing and to position me as an arbiter of reading.

This kind of evaluation of reading as a good thing and of me as someone with the authority to validate reading/readers can also be seen in the following excerpt where Michelle and I discuss the kinds of reading she might do on the weekends or after work.

Extract 11 Michelle (13:01) (li 256-336)

L: So on the weekends, or whatever, where would you use reading? like for instance, like, if you were going shopping

M: [oh yeah

L: [or are you guys the member of any church or anything?

M: yeah, no, um, it would be at the grocery store, shopping mall, or what not (.) actually Nina and Allen like going to the grocery store

L: umhm umhm

M: because they have this new self-scan system

L: oh

M: so of course they like picking up the products

L: unhunh

M: and self scanning it, and following the instructions on the self-scan

L: oh

M: um, and so so that's, you know, that's great, they do the check out

L: (query about the self scan omitted)

M: (answer to query omitted)

M: it's so simple, and, you know, the kids just love that, but, you know, they're still following the instructions

L: umhm

M: and if you don't have the product number, you have to look for the product

L: yup

M: so it would categorize everything and you would follow the instructions to find the product you were looking for

L: right

M: and whatnot and so that's very good

L: yeah yeah so [they're

M: [very

L: yeah, so you're using reading, they're using reading

M: oh they are

L:[[just even (?)

M:[[like I'm not even paying attention at that point

L: ((laughs)) right

M: you know, unless it says beep and get a cashier otherwise

L: yeah they (?)

M: they follow the instructions

L: oh that's so nice yeah

M: so that's great

L: yeah, so okay, so sort of, grocery store shopping

M: oh yes

336 L: okay, and then any other sort of shopping on the
337 weekend?
287

In terms of our interactions, this excerpt could be sketched as follows: In my first turn, I initiate a new topic by asking Michelle to tell me about "where she might use reading" on the weekends. I offer that she might use reading when she goes "shopping". However, before Michelle can offer a full reply, I ask another question about whether she and her children are members of "any church or anything". In doing so, I suggest that "church" could be another place where Michelle might use reading. Michelle replies that she and the children are not members of a "church or anything" and offers that "it" (a place where she would use reading) would be at the grocery store or shopping mall. Michelle then offers that her children like going to the grocery store because they have a new "self-scan system". I then signal that what Michelle has said is of interest to me ("oh") (Bolden, 2006), and Michelle describes what the children do with the scanner. Michelle includes in her description of the self scan that her children like "following the instructions" at which point I again signal an interest in what Michelle is saying.

After Michelle evaluates what her kids do with the scanner as "great", I ask a question concerning how the self-scan actually works and Michelle replies. Michelle then offers that the kids love the simplicity of the self-scan "but" "they're still following the instructions". Michelle's use of the word "still" suggests an upgrade of whatever the children are doing with the self-scan to something more important than just "fun". Given the context of our discussion of reading and our roles as a parent and a teacher-librarian-researcher, this assertion could be heard as "even though they are having fun they are still engaging in something educational" or "even though they are having fun they are still

reading".[8] In line 292, I offer a minimal agreement with Michelle, or perhaps the mere receipt of her utterance and she then goes on to provide more details about the self-scan. She tells me that "if you don't have the product number" you have to "look for" it and repeats that the self-scan requires you to "follow the instructions". Again, I offer a minimal evaluation of what Michelle has told me. Michelle then offers an evaluation of something about the self-scan as "very good". She says "so that's very good". However, it is not exactly clear what aspect of the self-scan she is evaluating. Michelle and I then have moment of overlapping talk where I begin to formulate an utterance, likely about her children ("so they're") and Michelle repeats the word "very" suggesting she may be about to repeat the evaluation she offered in her last utterance. After a brief pause, I offer that Michelle and her children are "using reading". At this suggestion, Michelle agrees that her children are using reading but denies that she is doing so. I then offer an evaluation of what her children are doing as "so nice" and Michelle upgrades this evaluation to "great". At this point we begin to move on to another topic.

In our discussion of weekend grocery shopping with her children, Michelle and I work to produce reading as a good thing and to position me as an evaluator of reading. As can be seen in the data, Michelle goes to some length to convince me that using the self-scan could be considered as reading. In this exchange, it appears to take me awhile to understand why Michelle is focusing on this activity as part of our interview about reading. My limited agreements with Michelle (e.g., "oh" and "umhm") suggest I am not entirely clear why she feels the self-scan is relevant to our talk. However, after Michelle

[8] Further evidence that Michelle may be using "following the instructions" as an equivalent for "reading" in this extract can be seen in the fact that I use "following directions on a box of macaroni" as an equivalent for reading in the very first turns of our interview, presented in Chapter Eight and Michelle uses this same phrase "following instructions" as an equivalent term for "reading" in our discussion about origami presented earlier in this chapter.

suggests that the self scan is "great" and that even though it is "simple" the kids are "*still* following the instructions" and after she notes that there are at times when they are forced to "look for things" and repeats again that one needs to "follow instructions" and that this is "very good", I appear to finally hear her account of using the self-scan as "reading". In line 311, I offer Michelle an account of the self-scan as "reading" and of herself and her children as "readers" by saying "so you're using reading, they're using reading". Michelle then denies this assessment of herself but agrees with my account of her children as readers and we move on to another topic.

It is interesting to note the way Michelle works to establish that the self-scan is reading by describing what her children must do with the self-scan ("follow directions" and "look for things") and by asserting that this is "very good", "great" and more than just fun. It is only after repeated assertions of the "goodness" of what the self-scan requires that I name what Michelle's children are doing with it as "reading" and Michelle agrees with my assessment. In this way, Michelle and I produce the self-scan as reading and reading as a good thing simultaneously. It is Michelle's repeated insistence that the work that her children do with the self-scan is "good" that makes me recognize their work as "reading" and in this recognition I reaffirm for both of us that her children are readers and that reading is indeed a "good thing" .

However, this excerpt also provides evidence of Michelle and my relationship to each other and some information about the cultural production of reading, readers and social in/equality in this data. In this exchange, Michelle repeatedly offers an evaluation of her children's work with the self-scan as reading. She also includes spaces for me to affirm or deny that her children are reading. Eventually, I provide this affirmation and we

conclude this exchange with a repetition of our agreement and move on to another topic. However, significantly it is my recognition of the children's work with the self-scan as "reading" that allows us to move on and it is Michelle who is repeatedly presenting her children's work with the self-scan for my evaluation. Thorough our talk of reading, we assume and construct a world where teacher-librarian-researchers have the final say on what "counts" as reading and parents habitually produce their children for evaluation. Similar kinds of exchanges can be seen in my interview with Penny, another parent at Stony Creek. During a discussion about how her daughters, Aileen and Charlotte, had different relationships to reading as pre-schoolers, Penny concluded her reflection by telling me that, ultimately, it didn't really matter whether her daughters had different attitudes towards being read to, or if they had different tastes in books as young children, because at the time of our interview, they both "completely love books" and "as long as you like reading you're okay". In our exchange, Penny's utterances were designed to include places for my affirmation or denial of her accounts of reading and her daughters as readers. She did not speak as though delivering a monologue, but instead through small pauses and falling intonation signalled spaces for my backchannels and affirmations.

Extract 12 Penny (20:02)(li 373-389)

P: yeah, no, it's sort of interesting to reflect on it, but the cool thing is that it hasn't really made a difference to the fact that they both completely love books

L: yeah, they're into it

P: and you know that as long as you like reading you're okay

L: yeah

384 P: you'll always be able to amuse yourself ((laughs))
385
386 L: yeah, absolutely, okay, so that's sort of the reading
387 and writing in the day to day, and on the weekend, you said
388 cookbooks would come out, and be written in as well as
389 being read any other things?

This exchange could be sketched as follows: In her first turn, Penny asserts that thinking about her daughter's reading practices is "sort of interesting" and then asserts that "the cool thing" is that regardless of any differences in their early reading tastes or desires, both of her daughters "completely love books". I then provide an affirmation that her daughters are "into it" and Penny asserts, that as I likely "know", "as long as you like reading you're okay". I provide a minimal affirmation and Penny then asserts that (if you like reading) then "you'll always be able to amuse yourself" and laughs. I provide a stronger affirmation (absolutely) and then initiate a new topic, inviting Penny to tell me about her reading on the weekend.

In this exchange, I can be heard to affirm Penny's suggestion that liking reading/loving books makes a person "okay" and capable of "amusing" him/herself and that her daughters are both readers and thus are likely to be "okay". We then move on to discuss other topics. In this way, Penny and I produce reading as something that "makes things okay" or as a social good, and produce our own identities: 1) as a person who provides information for evaluation (Penny) and 2) as a person who provide evaluations of reading/readers (myself).

In recognizing that reading was repeatedly being constructed as a laudable activity or as a social good across a wide range of extracts, and in recognizing how I was consistently being positioned/was positioning myself as an evaluator of reading, I began to think about what these constructions could tell us about the institutional relationships

between parents and teachers and between teachers and teacher-librarian-researchers. In addition, I began to consider how the production of reading and readers was specifically related to the production of social in/equality in "research talk" about reading between these participants. Following Baker (1991; 2000), I began to ask what social relations and values were being reflected and constructed in these interviews about reading and readers.

The consistency of a formulation of reading as a social good suggests that one of the constraints on the institutional relationship of parents, teachers and teacher-librarian-researchers is that we must speak of reading as a good thing and of readers as "okay" and as "able to amuse" them/ourselves. On other occasions, the participants and also constructed readers as "better people in society", as "more compassionate", as "more intellectual", as more capable of avoiding "difficulties"/ "trouble", as more capable of securing employment that reflects their "brilliance" and as constructive members of society. In constructing readers in this way, it is impossible not to notice how "non-readers" were also being constructed: as not okay, as not able to amuse themselves, as less good people in society, as less compassionate, as less intellectual, as less capable of avoiding difficulties/trouble, as less capable of securing employment that reflects their "brilliance" and as less constructive members of society. In addition, these constructions of reading and social worth perfectly reproduced age-old narratives about reading noted in Chapters One, Two and Four. The consistency of these formulations across the data set and beyond it, suggest that speaking of readers, and by extension non-readers, in this way may not only be a right but may also an obligation for parents, teachers and teacher-librarian-researchers engaged in reading research interviews.

While the ability to decode various forms of text is often useful, given the current complexity of defining "reading", given the extremely negative evaluations of "non-readers" and given the complexity of ever securing employment that reflects your "brilliance" regardless of what you can do with texts, this construction of reading as a panacea for all social ills seems to contribute more to the production of social inequality than to the production of social equality. In effect, the participants and I can be seen to mystify the complex ways that people come to be valued or how they come to secure work that reflects/doesn't reflect their "brilliance" under a reading rubric. In effect, we are suggesting that success with reading equals success in life regardless of the ambiguity of the term "reading" and regardless of any other social privilege, or constraint.

Similarly, the consistent way that I was positioned as an evaluator of reading/literacy and the consistent positioning of parents/children/teachers as subjects for evaluation, can be seen as creating/maintaining a significant power imbalance between us. In all of our interactions, I am placed in a position to judge other people's reading/literacy practices and who qualifies as a "reader" (read "good person", constructive member of society, etc.) and parents and fellow teachers are subjects for these evaluations. Given the Institutional nature of our talk it would be reasonable to see my privilege as linked to my role as a teacher-librarian-researcher. In this way, the majority of the data in this study reflects and constructs highly unequal social relations and un-egalitarian values. Readers were consistently constructed as more worthy than "non-readers" and I was consistently positioned as an evaluator or arbiter of reading and people's identities as readers/their worth. It is possible that these constructions only hold within the confines of these research interviews. It is possible that outside of these

interactions none of the participants may feel this way about reading or me. However, this analysis is not about what the participants think or feel, it is about what gets represented in our talk. That these constructions were so readily available across the data set suggests that these kinds of unequal relations are deeply enmeshed in the institutions of schooling, and reading research. This analysis suggests these kinds of interviews can provide more information about the institutional relationships between parents and teachers, teachers and teacher-librarians, and research "subjects" and researchers and the institutions of "schooling", "reading", "interviews" and "research" than they can about reading/literacy practices. In addition, this analysis suggests parents, teachers and teacher-librarian-researchers frequently produce unequal social relations and un-egalitarian values when they start talking about "reading".

In the next chapter, I examine excerpts from the data that could be considered as "deviant cases" in order to illustrate some of the alternative ways that the participants and I produced "reading", "readers" and my interests as a "reading researcher". These excerpts suggest some of the ways that parents, teachers and teacher-librarian-researchers can challenge social inequality in research interviews about reading and readers.

CHAPTER EIGHT
THE CULTURAL PRODUCTION OF READING AND READERS: SIGNS OF TROUBLE AND ALTERNATIVE METHODS

In this chapter, I examine excerpts from the data that deviated significantly from the majority. While the majority of the data was marked by an absence of overt negotiation concerning reading, readers or my interests as a reading researcher, these extracts were marked by a range of requests for clarification and a variety of repairs. These excerpts speak most clearly to my interest in how reading, readers and social *equality* could be produced in research interviews as they illustrate some of the ways that parents, teachers and teacher-librarian-researchers can challenge social inequality through their talk of reading and readers.

Signs of Trouble: Producing Reading and Readers with Michelle, Jolene and Anna

In examining the data, five excerpts from three of the eighteen interviews stood out as dramatic illustrations of the ways the participants and I actively produced "reading", "readers" and my interests as a "reading researcher". In these excerpts, the participants and I repeatedly produced requests for clarification and attempts to repair understanding. The most salient examples of this kind of negotiation were evident in my interviews with Michelle, Jolene and Anna. In the next sections, I examine excerpts from each of these interviews in turn.

In examining the transcript of my interview with Michelle, I was struck by the considerable effort that we both invested in creating a usable definition of "reading" for our talk. As can be seen below, during the very first exchanges of our interview, Michelle and I began our interview with a series of turns concerning how to use the word "reading" in our conversation. I initiated this conversation with a long elaboration about the kinds of things Michelle might "read" or what might be considered to be "reading".

Extract 13 Michelle (6:31) (li 98-176)

L: okay so the first part (of the interview) is about what kinds of things that you read in your life (.) right (.) now, um, and it can be for anything, like you know, in-at work, for the kids, for entertainment, for, you know, shopping, whatever, like the whole gamut of things (.) um, and I've only done one interview so far, I just did Jolene, and one of the things that seemed to help was if she just sort of, start at the beginning of her day and goes through her day, then she can get kind of a sense of all of the things that she would be reading in her day

M: oh reading

L: yeah

M: oh what kind of literature I I read?

L: It can be anything

M: hmmm

L: it doesn't have to be literature even it can just be like you know even the directions on the you know the box of macaroni ((laughs)) okay whatever yeah

M: right and I go through my day and think of all the things I've read?

L: yup

M: like where I would be exposed

L: [yeah

M: [to needing to read

L: yep yep

M: um well I my my morning

L: umhm

M: I get out leave whatever and of course I read the TTC bus schedule

L: umhm

M: to see when my next bus comes,

L: umhm

M: I hop on the bus and I read a book throughout um, the whole

L: umhm

M: and I don't pay attention to anything at that point,

L: ((laughs))

M: I just read all the way through

L: yeah

M: all the way through um get off and then of course my whole work day

L: umhm

M: you know, I've got access to email internet all that kind of stuff

L: umhm

M: so the first thing I do is, I obviously check my email, and from there I lead to whatever (.) if it's an instruction book, whether it's looking for information on a sample, researching this product or that product (.) sometimes I go through a lot of that

As can be seen in this exchange, Michelle and I spent numerous turns sketching out a candidate description of "reading". This extract could be sketched as follows: In my first turn, I begin by casting reading as an activity that might be used for a wide range of purposes such as "work", "the kids", "entertainment" and "shopping". In her first turn, line 113, Michelle rejects this candidate construction of reading and offers a re-cast of my inquiry as a question about the "literature" she reads. I then offer a reformulation of my question and attempt to clarify that my question about "reading" is not necessarily a question about "literature". I suggest that "it" (something that Michelle might read) could be "anything". In line 117, Michelle then offers a sign that she does not entirely understand what it is I am interested in and I attempt a repair by directly asserting that "it" (something she might read) "doesn't have to be literature". I then go on to elaborate in lines 119-121, that my question about "reading" includes an interest in activities like following "the directions on a box of macaroni". Following this further description of what "reading" might be, Michelle then offers two requests for affirmation (li 123-124 and li 128-132). When I provide this affirmation, she then begins to describe what she might read in a typical day including texts such as "bus schedules", "novels" and "email".

A range of accounts of reading, readers and my interests as a reading researcher can be seen in the first few turns of this excerpt. As noted by Baker (2002), questions and answers can be analyzed in terms of the accounts they provide. In examining my first question to Michelle, we can see a variety of accounts of reading and readers. For example, I offer that reading is something that is used for a variety of activities including work, parenting, entertainment and shopping. Embedded in this account of reading is an account of readers as people who work, parent, entertain themselves and shop – in other

words, as people who engage in ordinary every day activities. In addition, I provide an account of myself as a "reading researcher" as someone who is interested in a "whole gamut of things". In Michelle's reply to this first question, she also provides an account of reading, readers and my interests as a reading researcher. In recasting my question about reading as a question about "literature", Michelle provides an account of reading as an activity that involves "literature", an account of readers as people who consume "literature" and an account of reading researchers as people who are primarily interested in what "literature" people read.

In constructing reading, readers and my interests as a reading researcher in this way, Michelle could be heard to call on a common ideology of reading that Bialostock (2002) has called this a "literary view of literacy". In his study of white middle class parents' metaphors of literacy, Bialostock (2002), describes "reading books" as a cultural schema that governs the kind of metaphors that people use when they talk about literacy. He suggests that a "literary view of literacy" is often used as a tool for marking class distinction. While Michelle has not referenced "books" per se, her reference to "literature" could be seen as evidence of a "literary view of literacy". As discussed below, even if Michelle did not intend to invoke this view of literacy, there is evidence that this is the way that I heard it in our discussion. In other words, that this ideology of literacy is a readily available resource that I use to make sense of our conversation.

A range of categories can also be seen in these first few turns. Most notably my question to Michelle contains a variety of categories of activities that I link to reading (work, parenting, entertainment, shopping) and in doing so I implicate a range of categories of people as potential readers (workers, parents, those who seek entertainment,

and shoppers). In short, I implicate pretty well everyone as a potential "reader". In narrowing her description of "reading" as something to do with "literature", Michelle mobilizes a different range of categories of people as "readers". In essence she implies that those who consume literature are readers and those who do not consume literature are non-readers. At this point, it is interesting to note that Michelle's use of the word "literature" can be used broadly to refer to any printed material (e.g., pamphlets at the doctor's office are sometimes referred to as "literature") but also has a common connotation as being linked to high art or culture. In this way, in suggesting that consuming "literature" is part of being a reader, Michelle could be seen as describing reading as an activity that is linked to a broad range of people, or as an activity that is linked to a particular category of people – people who consume high art or culture, in other words people with elite status.

However, the point of any discourse analysis like this is not to attempt to "mind read" what it is that Michelle meant by her reference to "literature" and given the relative ambiguity of the word, it is actually impossible to know how Michelle meant me to hear her description of reading. What is possible is to see how I apparently *did* hear her description. My reply following Michelle's question about whether I was interested in the "literature" she reads suggests I heard Michelle as making a comment about reading and social class. In my attempt to re-assert the possibility that reading could be an activity that is used more broadly and that readers may consume things other than "literature", I suggest that "even" following the directions on "a box of macaroni" could be considered to be "reading". In doing so, I invoke a category of people who read, and likely consume in other ways, "boxes of macaroni". As noted by Baker (2002; 2004) categories of people

can be read off the activities they engage in as well as by the ways that they are described. In addition, Baker (2004) notes that there are some activities that are routinely bound to some categories of people. For example, caring about children's well being is an activity generally bound to parents, evaluating children's progress as readers is an activity generally bound to teachers, and designing fun outdoor activities is an activity generally bound to summer camp counsellors. Consuming "*boxes* of macaroni", in my mind at the time of this interview was an activity bound to poor or non-elite people[9]. In creating a contrast between reading "literature" and reading directions on a "box of macaroni" and in attempting to re-categorize the latter as "reading", I can be seen as attempting to counter a description of reading as an elite activity, regardless of whether this is what Michelle meant to convey or not.

This kind of elaborate negotiation concerning how to define reading and readers did not end here in our interview. Following a brief discussion about the kinds of reading she did at work, I then asked Michelle to tell me about the kinds of reading she might do at home after work, or on the weekend. As seen in Chapter Seven, at this question, Michelle provided me with a description of going grocery shopping with her children. As can be seen below, in this exchange, we continued to negotiate our use of the word "reading" and the activities that could be bound to the category "readers".

[9] I have since recognized my limited understanding of the role of "boxes of macaroni" in middle class and elite family diets.

Extract 14 Michelle (13:01) (li 256-336)

L: So on the weekends, or whatever, where would you use reading? like for instance, like, if you were going shopping

M: [oh yeah

L: [or are you guys the member of any church or anything?

M: yeah, no, um, it would be at the grocery store, shopping mall, or what not (.) actually Nina and Allen like going to the grocery store

L: umhm umhm

M: because they have this new self-scan system

L: oh

M: so of course they like picking up the products

L: unhunh

M: and self scanning it, and following the instructions on the self-scan

L: oh

M: um, and so so that's, you know, that's great, <u>they</u> do the check out -

L:(query about the self scan omitted)

M:(answer to query omitted)

M: it's so simple, and, you know, the kids just love that, but, you know, they're still following the instructions,

L: umhm

M: and if you don't have the product number, you have to look for the product

L: yup

M: so it would categorize everything and you would follow the instructions to find the product you were looking for

302
303 L: right
304
305 M: and whatnot and so that's very good
306
307 L: yeah yeah so [they're
308 M: [very
309
310 L: yeah, so you're using reading, they're using reading
311
312 M: oh they are
313
314 L:[just even (?)
315
316 M:[like I'm not even paying attention at that point
317
318 L: ((laughs)) right
319
320 M: you know, unless it says beep and get a cashier
321 otherwise
322
323 L: yeah they (?)
324
325 M: they follow the instructions
326
327 L: oh that's so nice yeah
328
329 M: so that's great
330
331 L: yeah, so okay, so sort of, grocery store shopping
332
333 M: oh yes
334
335 L: okay, and then any other sort of shopping on the
336 weekend?

In terms of accounts of reading and readers, my first turn in this exchange can be seen as an account of reading as something that is routinely done after work and on weekends, when people go shopping and when they attend church. I can also be seen to offer an account of Michelle as a reader through the design of my question. I do not ask her "do you read after work or on the weekends?" implying the possibility that she might

not read. Instead, I ask her "where" she would "use reading" after work or on the weekends. In this way, I suggest that I see Michelle as a reader even though I do not know the details of "where" she might be reading. In her first turns, Michelle offers an account of reading, and of herself as a reader, in her reply, as she asserts that the places she would read would be at the grocery store or in the shopping mall. In this way, Michelle affirms my account of reading as something that can take place while a person is shopping and provides an account of herself as this kind of a reader. Michelle then goes on to provide some information about her children and further accounts of reading. She begins with an account of her children as "liking" to go shopping "because" of the new self-scan system. As discussed in Chapter Seven, Michelle then begins to describe the self-scan system as something that requires a person to "follow instructions". Given our initial exchange, noted above, concerning following "directions on a box of macaroni" as "reading", this reference to "following instructions" could be seen as the beginning of an attempt to build an account of using the self-scan as "reading" or vice versa, as the beginning of an account of reading as an activity that includes things like using the self-scan. If this is the case, then in essence, Michelle can also be heard to be building a case for her children as "people who like to read" as "following instructions" on the self-scan is what makes them like going shopping in the first place.

As noted in Chapter Seven, further evidence that Michelle is building an account of using the self-scan as reading can be seen in her upgrade of using the self-scan to something that is more than just fun ("they're still following the instructions") and through her evaluations of what her children are doing with this machine as a "good thing". However, within this exchange, we can also see Michelle and I building an

account of reading as something that can happen in places like grocery stores and that can happen with new technologies such as "self-scan" machines. In this way, we build an account of readers as people who engage in every day activities and an account of reading as something that is used for every day purposes such as grocery shopping. We can also be heard to be building a case for reading as an activity that happens with tools like the self-scan.

These kinds of overt negotiations about what counts as "reading" and what "readers" do can be seen again about fifteen minutes later in our interview when I asked Michelle to tell me about her memories of reading in elementary school. The following excerpt was used in Chapter Seven to illustrate how Michelle and I produced reading as a good thing and how I was constructed/constructed myself as an evaluator of reading. In looking at this excerpt again, as discussed below, I was struck by the range of accounts of reading and readers that could also be seen in our talk.

Extract 15 Michelle (32:41)(li 390-404)

L: and (.) would you have to read the instructions on how to do the origami?-

M: oh yeah

L: okay

M: after a little while you skip the instructions,

L: yeah

M: and you follow the picture, but I guess it's some form of reading I hope

L: oh it is, absolutely it is

In terms of accounts of reading and readers, this excerpt could be sketched as follows: In my first turn, I present an account of reading as something that could take place while creating origami and of the child Michelle as a potential reader. In her reply, Michelle affirms this account of origami and of herself as a reader. She then goes on to provide another account of herself, of reading and of origami. Michelle asserts that "after a little while you skip the instructions". In this way, she provides an account of reading as something that sometimes happens while a person is doing origami, but often, or habitually, is "skipped" once a person has some experience with the process. In addition, Michelle provides an account of herself as "normal reader" or as someone who "sometimes" skipped reading in the way that "you", or people generally, often do. In lines 393, and 401, Michelle begins to provide an account of reading as somehow different from "following pictures". However, by the end of line 401, she has rehabilitated "following pictures" as "some form of reading" and in doing so she has also rehabilitated *herself* from being a "sometimes reader" to being a reader *even when she is "following the pictures"*. For my part, I affirm Michelle's account of reading and of herself as a reader. I also offer an account of myself as a "reading researcher" who "absolutely" sees "following pictures" as "some form of reading" and who sees "people who follow pictures" as "readers". Throughout our talk Michelle and I can be seen to produce a radically new perspective on reading that is seen nowhere else in the data. In our discussion, reading has expanded to include making meaning from pictures and the category "readers" has expanded to include those who may or may not have facility with alphabetic print but who use images to make meaning.

This kind of direct negotiation concerning a definition of "reading" or what "readers" do, was also apparent in my interviews with Jolene and Anna. During our interview, when I asked Jolene to tell me about the kinds of things that she might read on a typical day she responded with a request for clarification concerning my use of the word "reading". As can be seen below, my question and her reply are the beginning of a series of turns dedicated to defining reading.

Extract 16 Jolene (0:48) (li 8-27)

L: What kinds of things do you read in your life that are not part of any school that you are attending?

J: So you mean for fun?

L: Sure

J: Do you mean other than email computer stuff, that kind of thing?

L: Nope, that counts

J: I usually read the newspaper and all my communications on MSN or email I go on line and check current event things

L: Is that kind of in the morning before you head out for the day?

J: Yeah while the coffee's being made and usually I check my email about four times a day

As can be seen in the data, in this exchange, Jolene treats my use of the word "reading" as a kind of puzzle. In fact, in this exchange we exemplify a kind of interaction known as a puzzle-pass-solution (Antaki & Widdicombe, 1998). In other words, Jolene treats my first utterance as a "puzzle", she responds with a "pass" (in terms of her conversational turn) and her pass forces me to explain myself or to provide a "solution". As can be seen in lines 8-11, and lines 15-18, we actually go through this kind of puzzle-

pass-solution twice in our first few utterances. Once I have established that I am interested in what Jolene reads "for fun" and what she reads on "the computer", she proceeds to tell me about her daily reading routines. In line 23, I offer another question and in this way, I help to signal that Jolene's answer is acceptable to me and that I am ready to move on. Jolene similarly begins to formulate a description of her day and we put our initial "trouble" defining reading behind us.

The interaction in this exchange could be sketched as follows: In my first turn, I initiate a topic and produce a request for Jolene to tell me about her habitual reading practices. In Jolene's first exchange she presents "reading" as a trouble source and probes whether my research interests include what she might read "for fun". In my reply, I affirm that my research interests extend to what people read "for fun" and Jolene produces another question probing whether my interests include reading that she might do "on the computer". When I affirm that I am also interested in this kind of reading, Jolene then begins to outline her daily reading habits including reading "the newspaper", "MSN" and "email" as part of what she reads on a regular morning.

In terms of accounts of reading and readers, my initial question includes an account of Jolene as a reader as I ask her "what kinds of things do you read in your life" rather than "do you read?". In addition, my question includes an account of reading as something that could be done "in connection to school work" or as "apart from school work". Jolene's initial reply contains an account of reading as something that could be done "for fun" or "for something other than fun". I then affirm this account of reading and Jolene provides another account of reading as something that could be done "on the computer" or "not on the computer". Again, I affirm Jolene's account and she goes on to

provide an account of reading as something that can be done to "newspapers", "MSN" and "email". In accepting Jolene's reply I offer an affirmation of these accounts of "reading" and by extension her accounts of readers as people who engage in these activities and we continue our exchange.

In terms of the categories being used in this exchange, I begin the exchange by creating the category contrast of "reading" that is done for school and "reading" that is done for reasons other than school. Jolene refines this contrast by asking if I am interested in reading that is done "for fun" and in doing so she creates another category contrast between "reading for school" and "reading for fun". I affirm this as an acceptable category contrast and Jolene creates yet another category contrast between "reading that is connected to email or computer stuff" and "reading that is not connected to email or computer stuff". Again I affirm this contrast as acceptable and Jolene begins to create categories of things she reads on a regular basis in the morning. Throughout all of these utterances, Jolene and I can be heard to create categories of people who engage in these kinds of reading as well as categories for ourselves as people who understand reading to take these various forms. Similarly, I can be heard to create a category for myself as a reading researcher who is interested in these things.

A similar kind of work was also evident in my interview with Anna. When I asked Anna about her day-to-day reading practices, Anna, like Jolene, responded to my question with a question of her own that forced me to clarify what I meant by "reading".

Extract 17 Anna (4:04) (li 10-56)

```
10  L: what are some of the things you find yourself reading in
11  your life, and in fact I would start with, you know, going
12  through a typical day, getting up in the morning, you know,
13  what kinds of things do you find yourself reading and (?)?
14
```

A: Now I am going to have to tell ask you, what are you asking, whether I'm reading in Chinese or I'm reading in English?

L: ah

A: because I am reading both

L: yes, absolutely

A: everyday

L: yeah, okay, well let's start with just sort of your typical day, you get up in the morning

A: hmmm

L: and you can, you know, tell me what it is you are reading and what language it is in

A: It is hard for me to draw a fine line

L: yeah

A: I'll try my best

L: yeah

A: you know that I I practice Falun Gong, so it's a spiritual practice, so there is a reading component to it

L: umhm umhm

A: the teachings that I read every day

L: umhm

A: just to refresh my memory, and that, I read it in Chinese

L: umhm

This exchange could be sketched as follows: In my first turn, I produce a request for Anna to tell me about her habitual reading practices. I offer that it may be useful for

her to begin in the morning and to list the kinds of things she might read in a day. Anna replies with a request for clarification concerning whether my research interests include a consideration of reading in languages other than English most specifically whether I am interested in what she reads in Chinese. I affirm that I am interested in these aspects of reading and suggest that Anna list what she is reading and note what language it is in as we proceed. Anna then asserts that doing so is difficult for her but that she will "try her best". Anna then begins to list some of the things she reads and the language she reads them in.

In terms of accounts of reading, once again, my initial question offers an account of reading as something that might be done every day and of Anna as a "reader" as I do not ask her *whether* she reads but only *what* she reads. Anna's reply contains a further account of reading as something that can take place in Chinese or in English. In addition, she provides an account of herself as a reader of both Chinese and English and of herself as a "daily reader of Chinese and English". In my reply, I present an account of myself as a reading researcher who is interested in what Anna reads in both languages. Anna then presents an account of engaging in reading in different languages as something that is difficult to describe and concludes with an account of herself as a reader who reads for spiritual purposes, who reads daily for such purposes and who reads daily for such purposes in Chinese.

In terms of categories that are created in this exchange, Anna's first turn includes the categories "reading in Chinese" and "reading in English". In addition, her question infers that there are categories of reading researchers who are interested in one kind of reading or another. In my reply, I suggest that there is a third category of researchers –

those of us who are interested in reading regardless of what language it is in or who are interested in reading in both (perhaps all) languages. Anna then asserts that she is a member of a category of people that reads in both Chinese and English and that she is also a member of a category of people that reads in both of these languages "everyday". I accept Anna's account of herself as a reader, and by extension, her account of reading, and she goes on to create a category of "people who read for spiritual reasons" and "people who read for spiritual reasons everyday", as well as "people who read for spiritual reasons in Chinese" and "people who read for spiritual reasons in Chinese everyday".

In this way, Anna and I, like Jolene and I, and Michelle and I, work together to negotiate how we will use the term "reading" and "readers" as well as what we will consider to be relevant to my research as a "reading researcher". Within all of these interactions, accounts, and categories can be seen particular "versions of the world". As Baker (2004) asserts, in the work done with categories and accounts we can see the local production of versions of a moral order. In this light it makes sense to ask, as Baker (2002) does, "What kind of social world are the speakers making happen in their talk?" and "What kind of social world must speakers assume such that they speak this way?" (p.793).

In returning to my interview with Michelle, it appears that through our talk we are assembling 1) a world where at times reading researchers may only be interested in the "literature" people read, 2) a world where at times "reading" may only mean consuming "literature" and 3) a world where at times only readers of "literature" (read elite people) will be considered to be "readers". However, through our talk-in-interaction we are also

assembling a world where reading researchers may also be interested in a wide range of meaning making activities, including the consumption of texts for "work", "parenting", "entertainment" and "shopping", where reading may include "following pictures" and where "readers" may be non-elite people who consume "directions", "instructions" and "boxes of macaroni". The kind of world we seem to be assuming is one where at times there are vast differences between various forms of meaning making, texts and "readers" and at times there are few, if any, differences between these activities, phenomena and people.

In addition, we appear to take into account some of the ways that reading has been an activity associated with elite people as we confront and challenge this association. We also appear to challenge the notion that only people who consume alphabetic texts are "readers". In our production of reading and readers via our talk of creating origami, Michelle and I suggest the category "readers" does and should include those who primarily make meaning through images. As note in Chapters One, Two and Seven, there are long standing and enduring associations between being a "reader" and being a "good person"/ "middle class/elite person"/ "consumer of alphabetic print"/ "consumer of literature". In this way, when Michelle and I produced reading as an activity that is practiced by "ordinary" people for ordinary purposes, and of reading as an activity that is involves making meaning from pictures, we can be seen to challenge to traditional unequal social relations.

In thinking about my interview with Jolene, it seems that the kind of world we are constructing through our talk is one where people who read "for fun" and "on the computer" are *sometimes* considered to be readers, where reading researchers are

sometimes interested in these activities and where *sometimes* these activities are considered to be "reading". Our talk suggests a world where these kinds of broad understandings of reading, readers and reading research are possible, but where they are not taken for granted. In other words, our interaction reflects and constructs an understanding that broad understandings of reading may not be normative in research interviews between a parent and a teacher-librarian-researcher. Similarly, in my interview with Anna, we appear to be constructing a world where reading in Chinese and reading in English are *sometimes* seen as equally important to reading researchers, where reading in languages other than English is *sometimes* recognized as reading and where people who read in languages other than English are *sometimes* recognized as readers. Our talk suggests that the equivalency of reading in languages other than English and reading in English is controversial, at least within the context of research interviews between a teacher and a teacher-librarian researcher who is white, middle class and speaks English as a first language.

In thinking about the production of reading, readers and social in/equality, it bears noting that in each of the extracts in this chapter, the participants and I make moves to challenge the idea that only some ways of reading and only some people and should be considered as legitimate reading/readers. In my initial exchange with Michelle, we work to broaden a definition of reading from "reading literature" to reading things associated with "work" "shopping" "family" and "entertainment". In my subsequent exchanges with Michelle we construct using new technologies in everyday grocery shopping trips (like the "self-scan") as "reading". In my final exchange with Michelle, we construct using pictures to make meaning as a form of reading. In my exchange with Jolene, we similarly

open up reading as a category that could be applied to a range of activities, texts and purposes. In doing so, we work to establish that people who "read for fun" and people who read "on the computer" are readers. In my exchange with Anna, we establish that people who read in languages other than English are readers and that reading crosses linguistic borders. The analysis presented here suggests parents, teachers and teacher-librarian-researchers are capable and willing to challenge and question unequal social relations and values as well as traditional ideas of "reading"/ "readers".

In the next chapter, I provide a summary of this study and discuss the implications of this analysis for educators, teacher-educators, teacher-librarians, policy writers, researchers, parents and other stakeholders interested in literacy education and social in/equality. I examine some of the challenges that this analysis brings with it for these stakeholders and some of the ways that we can address these challenges. I conclude with directions for further research.

CHAPTER NINE
IMPLICATIONS AND CONCLUSION

"The definition of what is and what is not literacy is always a profoundly political matter." (Woolard & Scheifflen, 1994, p. 66)

" In any specific context, categorizations and the construction of similarity and difference can be treated and analyzed as situated boundary work." (Horton-Salway, 2001;, p.147).

In this chapter, I provide a summary of the dissertation so far and discuss the implications of this analysis for educators, teacher-educators, teacher-librarians, policy writers, researchers, parents and other stakeholders interested in reading/literacy education and social in/equality. I examine some of the challenges that this analysis brings with it for these stakeholders and some of the ways that we can address these challenges. I conclude with a discussion of the significance of this study and directions for future research.

Reading and Re-thinking: The Cultural Production of Reading, Readers and Social In/Equality

In this study, I have considered some of the ways that parents, teachers and a teacher-librarian-researcher produce reading, readers and social in/equality in the context of "research interviews". In Chapter One, I introduced the study and outlined my central research questions. The central research questions for this study were: 1) How are reading and readers produced in research interviews between parents, teachers and a teacher-librarian-researcher? and 2) What kinds of social relations and values are produced in and

through this talk of reading and readers? In Chapter Two, I examined some of the literature that suggests the need to study the cultural production of reading and readers in social interaction. In particular, I highlighted recent studies that suggest a relationship between accounts of reading and the production of social in/equality. In Chapter Two, I also noted that few studies had looked at this problem in terms of social interaction or had examined the cultural production of reading, readers and social in/equality in talk-in-interaction.

In Chapters Three, Four and Five, I outlined some of the theoretical frameworks that have informed this study including socio-cultural and socio-linguistic theories of literacy, socio-cultural theories of learning, theories of cultural production and two approaches to analyzing talk: membership categorization analysis and conversation analysis. In each of these chapters I outlined the origins and tenets of these theories and what they could offer a study of reading, readers and social in/equality in research interviews.

In Chapter Six, I described my method of data generation and analysis and introduced the participants. I also noted the ways that I worked to insure the trustworthiness of my analysis. In Chapter Seven, I examined examples of the cultural production of reading and readers found in the majority of the data. In these excerpts, reading, readers and my interests as a reading researcher were treated as a self-evident. As illustrated via a range of examples, in the majority of the data, the participants and I spent no conversational turns directly defining reading or readers and initially, it was difficult for me to see how reading and readers were being produced in these interactions. However, when I began to look at the data as "Institutional Talk", and when I began to

pay attention to the recipient design in the participants' and my own utterances, I began to see how we were producing reading, readers and social in/equality in and through our talk. In particular, I began to see the data as deeply enmeshed in the institutions of "schooling", "the interview" and "research". In recognizing some of the consistencies across the data, such as a tendency to gloss "reading", or to treat it as self-evident, I began to see these consistencies as evidence of the rights/obligations of teachers/teacher-librarian-researchers and parents involved in "research interviews".

In Chapter Seven, I also noted that the participants and I consistently constructed reading as a "good thing" and being a reader as a valuable identity, often through the use of "extreme case formulations". Through an attention to recipient design, I began to see how the participants positioned me/I positioned myself as a reader, and as an evaluator of reading/readers. I also began to see how we both positioned the participants as "subjects to be evaluated" and that at times we perfectly reproduced age-old assumptions and beliefs about reading as something that made people "better people"(Brandt, 2001; Collins & Blot, 2003). I noted that at times the participants and I went so far as to suggest that reading made people "more compassionate", "more intellectual", more capable of avoiding "difficulties"/ "trouble", more capable of securing employment that reflected their "brilliance" and made people "constructive members of society" and hence that "not-reading" had the opposite effects. In all of these ways we were produced unequal social relations and non-egalitarian values regardless of my conscious desire to do the opposite.

In Chapter Eight, I began to look at examples that represented alternative ways of producing reading and readers in the data set. In these cases, the participants and I

devoted numerous conversational turns to defining reading, readers and my interests as a reading researcher. In the excerpts analyzed in that chapter, the participants and I assembled a social world where reading was a contested term that needed to be defined in order to carry out the business of a "reading research interview". Through our talk-in-interaction, Michelle, Jolene, Anna and I worked to define reading as something that could involve consuming "literature" but could also involve every day activities such as work, entertainment and shopping. We discussed reading as a term that had multiple meanings including consuming text from electronic media, consuming text for the purposes of school and 'fun' and consuming text in languages other than English. However, throughout our negotiations we also constructed a world where these understandings of reading were/are marked as controversial. At no point in our discussions did we indicate that these understandings were dominant or "common sense". In the next section, I consider the implications of this analysis for educators and teacher educators, teacher-librarians, policy writers and researchers. I then discuss the wider significance of this study.

Significance

This study is significant for several reasons. First, in terms of literacy research, this study builds on the work of scholars such as Barton and Hamilton (2000), Cook-Gumperz (2006), Kress (2000), McHoul (1991), Street (1984, 2000a) and Woolard and Schieffelin (1994) as it illustrates how "reading" and "readers" are socially constructed. As seen in Chapters Seven and Eight, the participants and I actively negotiated how we were going to be using the words "reading" and "reader" in and through our talk. While

this kind of negotiation appeared more obvious in some of the interactions, such as my interactions with Michelle, Jolene and Anna, this kind of negotiation was also present in interactions where reading was "glossed" as participants and I used our institutional identities to do some of the work of defining reading.

Second, following the work of scholars such as Baker (1991) and Freebody and Baker (2003), this analysis also illustrates how social relations and values are produced in and through "talk of reading and readers". This study highlights some of the ways that social in/equality is created, sustained and challenged in talk "about reading". The analysis presented in this study suggests that speaking of literacies or readings, rather than Literacy and Reading may help to challenge the production of social inequality. In doing so, this research helps to substantiate some of the claims of scholars connected to the New Literacy Studies. In this study, the use of broad definitions of reading asserted the legitimacy of ordinary (rather than elite) people to be seen as "readers" (read: good people). However, echoing the work of Brandt and Clinton (2002), Cameron (2000) and Collins and Blot (2003), this study also suggests we cannot assume we are creating egalitarian social relations and values merely by speaking of literacies / readings, or of literacy/reading as multiple. The participants in this study, (myself included), produced un-egalitarian social relations and values even while we spoke of "literacies"/ "readings".

Third, this analysis highlights how institutional roles can bring with them the rights and obligations to act in un-egalitarian ways or to reproduce unequal social relations and values regardless of our best intentions. While I thought of myself as committed to creating egalitarian social relations and values with the participants, in my analysis I found myself upholding my obligation as a teacher-librarian researcher to

speak of reading in narrow and vague ways, ways that I see as connected to un-egalitarian social relations and values. Similarly, while I often wanted to interrupt the participants when they presented what I considered to be narrow accounts of "reading" and "readers", I generally respected my obligation as an "interviewer"/ "researcher" to listen, rather than to speak.

Fourth, in terms of research methodologies, this study illustrates how research interviews "about reading" between parents, teachers and a teacher-librarian researcher may tell us more about the institutions of "school", "the interview" and "research" than they do about participants' historical or current literacy practices. While the interview protocol focused on drawing out participants' memories of reading/writing and on their current uses of reading/writing, the actual interview data showed ample evidence of it being "institutional talk". In particular, there was evidence of "inferential frameworks and procedures" and evidence of constraints on what would be considered to be "allowable" contributions (Heritage, 2005). These frameworks were particularly evident in interactions where reading was "glossed" as such utterances were marked as specifically designed for the particular audience and setting of this specific research interview. The overwhelming commonalities amongst the data can also be seen as evidence of particular constraints on what would be considered to be "allowable" contributions. For example, as noted in Chapter Seven, at no point in any of the interviews did any of the participants indicate that they didn't care about reading or that they thought reading was an over-rated pastime.

Fifth, this study builds on the work of scholars such as Baker (2002), Holstein and Gubrium (2004) and Talmy (2008) as it illuminates the usefulness of recognizing

interview data as social interaction in a study of cultural production and social in/equality. The analysis presented here helps to illustrate how approaching interview data as social interaction allows us to see social relations and values being created, maintained and challenged in subtle, moment to moment ways. In contrast to more traditional interview studies that provide content analysis of interview data, this study outlines some of the ways that we can see ideologies being built up and broken down through talk-in-interaction.

Sixth, this study also demonstrates how approaching interview data as social interaction can provide a means for evaluating the cultural production of social in/equality in "research interviews". In doing so, this analysis provides an example of how critical researchers might evaluate the efficacy of their own work via an analysis of what they actually do in their day-to-day research activities.

Seventh, following the work of scholars such as Kitzinger (2000; 2005), Ohara and Saft (2003), Stokoe (2003), Stokoe and Smithson (2001) Talmy (in press a; in press b;) this study demonstrates how microanalytic tools such as membership categorization analysis and conversation analysis could be useful for examining critical questions. This study provides another example of how critical researchers could make use of these kinds of tools to substantiate their claims.

Implications and Directions for Future Research

The analysis presented here holds numerous implications for educators and teacher-educators, teacher-librarians, policy writers and researchers. Some of these implications are connected to issues of "literacy"/ "reading" and others are more focused on issues of research. First, in terms of "literacy"/ "reading", this analysis raises questions

about what we are actually doing when we talk, read and write "about reading". If, as evidenced in Chapters Seven and Eight, "reading" and "readers" are socially constructed, or produced in social interaction, then these constructs and categories are inherently unstable. However, for the most part, educators and researchers continue to speak and write of "reading" and "readers" as known entities, or as things/people that can be identified, assessed and programmed for at a great distance. This study suggests the need to continue to rethink our conceptions of "reading" and "readers" and to continue to popularize some of the work of Street (1984, 2000a) and others who have made clear the difference between autonomous and situated models of literacy.

Second, this analysis highlights the need to ask what kinds of social relations and values we are creating in and through our talk or writing about "reading". While this study speaks specifically to the kinds of social relations and values produced in "research interviews about reading", by extension, it raises questions about the kinds of social relations and values that are being created in other "conversations" "about reading" such as those found in classrooms, policy documents and research journals. This study suggests there is a need to examine the social relations and values that are produced in and through "everyday" and "specialized" talk/writing "about reading". In particular, this study suggests the importance of considering our definitions of reading, or our "reading ideologies", before we enter a classroom/library, write a policy or begin/report on a research project, as we may be unwittingly producing unequal social relations and values through our common sense assumptions about "literacy"/ "reading".

Similarly, this study raises questions about how, or if, we can work for egalitarian social relations and values in our talk/writing of "reading" and "readers". Future

educators and researchers might consider how using terms other than "reading" such as "literacies" or "communication" could launch new accounts of meaning making that support the production of egalitarian social relations and values, as more people may feel comfortable naming themselves as "communicators" than naming themselves as "readers". However, following the work of Brandt and Clinton (2002), Cameron (2000) and Collins and Blot (2003), this study suggests the need to continue to critically evaluate how the New Literacy Studies/Multi-literacies project(s) are taken up in research, pedagogy, policy and practice. As demonstrated in this study, merely changing how we describe "reading" (e.g. speaking of "readings" rather than "reading") may not be enough to really change unequal social relations and un-egalitarian values.

Third this study raises questions about how institutional roles such as teacher, teacher-educator, teacher-librarian, parent, policy writer, researcher, student and child may bring with them the obligation to act in un-egalitarian ways or to talk/write/listen in expected patterns. This study suggests the need to examine "common sense" assumptions about the obligations of all of these actors and the ways that such assumptions can challenge or reinforce social inequality. Baker (1991) and others have suggested that many commonplace and expected ways of "speaking as a teacher" work to reinforce unequal social relations and values. Future research might consider how "speaking like a parent", "speaking like a child", "speaking like a teacher-educator", "writing like a researcher" or "writing like a policy writer" may accomplish some of the same or different social work.

Fourth, this study alerts us to the importance of considering interview data as "institutional talk". This study highlights how institutional roles and relationships may be

central to the data we generate in "research interviews". In doing so, this study recommends keeping in mind some of the insights of applied conversational analysis when we conduct our analysis of interview data. Future researchers may find using these insights helps to unlock their data in new and important ways. In particular, these tools may help to reveal some of the ideologies connected to various institutions such as schooling, "the interview" and "research".

Fifth, this study suggests there are many benefits to approaching interview data as social interaction in a study of cultural production and social in/equality. This study recommends analyzing interviews as social interactions in order to illustrate how various phenomena are produced in and through talk in interaction. While this kind of study cannot provide a checklist for how to create social equality, it can help us to see what moves work to reinforce social inequality and what moves tend to promote egalitarian social relations and values. In addition, analyzing interview data as social interaction allows us to examine the impact of our own work as critical researchers in a very immediate way. This study suggests some of the tools of methods of analysis like membership categorization analysis and conversation analysis may be useful for critical researchers interested in approaching interview data as social interaction.

Ultimately, this study reminds us that what we are doing as teachers, teacher-educators, teacher-librarians, researchers and policy writers in "small seminar rooms at the back of the library", in "empty classrooms" and full classrooms, in schoolyards, in offices and libraries is part and parcel of what is happening outside those places, across the street and throughout the cities and countries where we live and work. Citing Raymond Williams, Woolard and Schieffelin (1994) remind us that "a definition of

language is always implicitly or explicitly, a definition of human beings in the world" (Williams, 1977, p. 21; in Woolard & Schieffelin, 1994, p.56). In doing so, they remind us to think about our definitions of literacy/reading as "language ideologies" or as sets of beliefs that are "partial, contestable and contested and interest laden". This study helps to substantiate these claims and recommends deeper consideration of how particular interests are served by particular methods of producing reading.

The challenge for those of us who would like to continue to conduct interviews about reading with parents and teachers is to think of ways that we can play a part in creating new narratives of reading/readers that include everyone as readers/literates (valuable people) without pretending that all literacies are equally valued in school/out of it. As argued by Cameron (2000) and Brandt and Clinton (2002), the recognition of multiple forms of literacy and diverse ways of being readers cannot challenge social in/equality on their own. In order to address the production of social inequality in talk of reading/literacy we will need to consistently re-evaluate how our talk is recognizing or mystifying differences in terms of access to resources and wealth and whether, or how, accounts of reading are being used to justify unequal social relations. In doing so, we may learn better yet how to break down unequal social relations and build up more egalitarian values.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX I
Semi-Structured Interview Protocol
Adapted with Permission from Dr. Victoria Purcell Gates' Cultural Practices of Literacy Study

Brief Biography
When and where were you born?
Who was in your family at the time of your birth?
What were your parents/the people looking after you doing for work?
Have you moved from the place you were born? (If yes, when and why did you move?)
What languages do you speak/read/write?
What languages did you hear growing up/see around you?

Historical Family and Community Communication/Literacy Practices
When you were a child, what kinds of things did people in your family read regularly?
When you were a child, what kinds of things did your family write regularly?
When you were a child what kinds of things did other people in your community read or write?
Do you think that the way you feel about reading/writing is about the same or different in some way from how people in your community and in your family felt?

Historical School Communication/Literacy Practices
When you were in school what kind of things did you read in elementary school/high school/ post-secondary school as part of school instruction/assignments?
What types of things did you particularly enjoy? Dislike? Find Difficult? Find Boring? Why? Examples?
Were there things that you read outside of school during your years in elementary school/high school/ post-secondary school?
What kinds of things did you write in elementary school/high school/ post-secondary school as part of the school instruction/assignments?
Which of these literacy practices/things did you particularly enjoy? Dislike? Find Difficult? Find Boring? Why? Examples?
Were there things that you wrote outside of school during your years in elementary school/high school/ post-secondary school?
When you were in school, do you remember what you thought about learning to read? About learning to write?
Do you think the reading and writing you did at school prepared you for the kinds of things that you read and write now? Why or why not, or in what ways?

How do you think the reading/writing you did at school similar to or different than the reading/writing you do now as an adult?

Current Literacy Evaluation/Remediation Practices

How do people in school evaluate reading/writing?
If someone is having difficulty with reading/writing how would people inside school assess that problem?
Why is it considered important to assess reading/writing in school?
How are reading/writing remediated in school? Or what kinds of interventions are used in school to help kids who are struggling with reading/writing?
Why is it seen as important to remediate students who have difficulty with reading/writing?
What is the most common explanation for why some students have difficulty with reading/writing?
Why do you think some kids have difficulty with reading/writing?
How do people outside of school evaluate reading/writing?

Historical Literacy Evaluation/Remediation Practices

When you were a kid can you remember any children having difficulty with reading/writing?
Do you remember what was done at the time for these students?
Can you remember what was said at the time about why these students were struggling?
Can you remember what was said at the time about why special measures were being taken with these students? /why people felt it was important for everyone to read?
Can you remember any significant shifts in terms of literacy evaluation in your lifetime – a time when one method of assessment was picked up or dropped?
Can you think of any alternative ways in which literacy could be assessed beyond the assessments you have mentioned?
Can you think of any alternative ways that students who are struggling with literacy could be supported beyond those you have mentioned?

APPENDIX II

Transcription Symbols

(A Simplified Version of the Jeffersonian Transcription Symbols modified from that presented in Wooffitt, 2001; p. 62)

(.)	A period inside a bracket indicates a brief pause.
?	A question mark indicates a rising inflection.
-	A dash indicates a sharp cut off of a prior word or sound.
Under	Underlined words indicate speaker emphasis.
,	A comma indicates a continuing intonation.
[ ]	Square brackets indicate the onset and end of overlapping talk.
[[	A double left-hand bracket indicates that speakers start a turn at the same time
(?)	Bracket with a question mark indicates an unclear fragment.
:	Colon indicates that the speaker has stretched the preceding sound or letter.
((laughs))	A description inside a double bracket indicates a non-verbal sound.

The University of British Columbia
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Behavioural Research Ethics Board

Certificate of Approval

PRINCIPAL INVESTIGATOR	DEPARTMENT	NUMBER
Anderson, J.G.	Language and Literacy Educ	**B05-0255**

INSTITUTION(S) WHERE RESEARCH WILL BE CARRIED OUT

CO-INVESTIGATORS:
Moffatt, Lyndsay, Language and Literacy Educ

SPONSORING AGENCIES

TITLE :
Discourses of Literacy and Learning in an Urban Community

APPROVAL DATE	TERM (YEARS)	DOCUMENTS INCLUDED IN THIS APPROVAL:
APR 1 [illegible]	1	April 1, 2005, Contact letter / Consent form / March 10, 2005, Questionnaires

CERTIFICATION:

The protocol describing the above-named project has been reviewed by the Committee and the experimental procedures were found to be acceptable on ethical grounds for research involving human subjects.

Approval of the Behavioural Research Ethics Board by one of the following:
Dr. James Frankish, Chair,
Dr. Cay Holbrook, Associate Chair,
Dr. Susan Rowley, Associate Chair
Dr. Anita Hubley, Associate Chair

This Certificate of Approval is valid for the above term provided there is no change in the experimental procedures

The University of British Columbia
Office of Research Services and Administration
Behavioural Research Ethics Board

Certificate of Approval

PRINCIPAL INVESTIGATOR	DEPARTMENT	NUMBER
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INSTITUTION(S) WHERE RESEARCH WILL BE CARRIED OUT

UBC Campus ,

CO-INVESTIGATORS:

SPONSORING AGENCIES

TITLE :

Cultural Practices of Literacy Study

APPROVAL RENEWED DATE	TERM (YEARS)	
AUG 2 9 2005	1	

CERTIFICATION:

The protocol describing the above-named project has been reviewed by the Committee and the experimental procedures were found to be acceptable on ethical grounds for research involving human subjects.

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